

6 WORLD 9 NATION 2 killed in Russian-held Kherson Malian defence chief killed as jihadist, rebels seize towns and military bases Shah says Central forces will stay in Bengal for 60 more days after polls AAP's mask is off, it gave RS seats on basis of money: Cong

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Seven AAP MPs officially part of BJP parliamentary party AAP to move court for disqualification of 7 rebels

NEW DELHI, April 27: Rajya Sabha Chairman C P Radhakrishnan on Monday officially accepted the seven rebel Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MPs joining the BJP, but AAP said it will press on for their disqualification under the anti-defection law and is prepared to move court on the issue.



With this, the strength of Arvind Kejriwal-led party in the Rajya Sabha is reduced to three from 10, while the BJP's tally has increased to 113 in the 245-member House after the Secretariat included the seven MPs in the list of BJP members.

approach the court. It is wrong to break a party in this manner," he said. AAP had on Sunday moved the petition before the Chairman seeking the termination of membership of these seven MPs. Singh said that their petition has not yet been considered by the Chairman.

but not all seven". In a video on social media, Chadha said; "Today, this political party is trapped in the hands of some corrupt and compromised people. They don't work for the country but for their own personal gain."

Duty-free access to 100 pc domestic exports okayed

India, NZ ink 'once-in-a-generation' trade deal; to be implemented year end



NEW DELHI, April 27: India and New Zealand on Monday inked a 'once-in-a-generation' trade pact, giving duty-free access to 100 per cent of domestic exports, including textiles, leather footwear, and gems and jewellery, in the island nation.

Issue is under discussion with both Iran, US: MEA on Chabahar port

NEW DELHI, April 27: With the US sanctions waiver for Iran's Chabahar port ending on April 26, India on Monday said the issue is "under discussion" with both Iran and the US, while adding that the "current conflict is also a complicating factor".

Campaign for current election cycle ends, voters to have last word

KOLKATA, April 27: The campaign for the current election cycle ended on Monday as canvassing for the final phase in West Bengal concluded with a bitter war of words between rival parties over cross-border infiltration, corruption, unemployment and the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.



Voting across 142 constituencies in the second and final phase in the state will take place on April 29 after the first leg registered a record turnout of 93.19 per cent.

"Viksitto Bangla" with jobs and industrial revival, insisting that the state is ready to make its move from the reign of the TMC-induced 'bhoy' (fear) to the BJP's 'bharosa' (trust).

Justice must be seen to be done: Kejriwal on refusal to appear in excise case before HC judge

NEW DELHI, April 27: Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal has written to Delhi High Court Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma, saying he will not appear in the excise case personally or through a lawyer before her, the party said on Monday.

lion or as an insult to judiciary," Kejriwal said in his video. The Delhi chief minister wrote in the letter, "I have decided that I shall not participate in the further proceedings in this matter, either in person or through counsel. I do not take this step lightly.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and a host of leaders from other states campaigned extensively, attacking the TMC over law and order, crimes against women, political violence, infiltration and corruption.

India submits its revised targets for 2031-35 to the UN's climate change body

NEW DELHI, April 27: India has submitted its revised climate targets for 2031-2035 to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), committing to attain at least 47 per cent reduction in the emission intensity of its GDP (emission per unit of GDP) from the 2005 baseline by 2035.

respectively," said the document. The country also noted its minimal historical contribution towards global warming and called for global action from developed nations to tackle climate change. It said, "The historical accumulation of greenhouse gases (GHGs) since the Industrial Revolution has caused global warming, a problem that has been exacerbated by the inadequate response of developed countries."

Fossil bed dating back to Holocene period discovered

NEW DELHI, April 27: A fossil bed belonging to the middle-to-late Holocene period, approximately 8,000 to 12,000 years ago, was discovered at Panaiyur area in Tamil Nadu's Thoothukudi district, Union Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav said on Monday.

Six-month programme aims to boost heritage research and preservation Gauhati University introduces Tai-Ahom language course

GUWAHATI, April 27: Gauhati University has launched a six-month Certificate Course in Tai-Ahom Language and Medieval Manuscriptology under its Centre for South East Asian Studies, in line with the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.



language and Assam's historical is a collective responsibility and crucial for safeguarding the region's civilisational legacy.

Vice-Chancellor Nani Gopal Mahanta, who formally inaugurated the course, emphasised the role of language in shaping identity. "Language is the soul of a people; its rejuvenation marks the resurgence of cultural self-respect," he said, adding that Indigenous Knowledge Systems must be strengthened through research and innovation.

Dinesh Trivedi appointed India's next envoy to Bangladesh amid efforts to reset tie

NEW DELHI, April 27: Former Union minister Dinesh Trivedi was appointed India's next High Commissioner to Bangladesh on Monday amid efforts by the two countries to repair frayed bilateral ties.

He will succeed Pranay Verma, who has been appointed as New Delhi's next ambassador to Belgium and the European Union (EU). The relations between India and Bangladesh witnessed a major downturn after the Yunus-led interim government came to power following the collapse of the Sheikh Hasina government in August, 2024.

Two-phase programme tomorrow, May 2 to ensure accuracy and transparency Cachar gears up for counting with expert-led training sessions

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, April 27: The Cachar district administration has rolled out a comprehensive training plan for counting personnel ahead of the Assembly Election 2026, aiming to ensure a smooth, accurate and transparent vote counting process.
The two-phase training programme will be held at Government Boys Higher Secondary School Silchar on April 29 and May 2, beginning at 10:30 AM.
To strengthen preparedness, a team of Assistant Level Master Trainers and Master Trainers—drawn from leading academic institutions such as Assam University, Silchar Polytechnic, Gurucharan College, Cachar College and Nehru College—has been deputed to conduct the sessions.



Key trainers include Pankaj Goswami, Sumita Bhattacharjee, Avinoy Paul, Meghamala Mahanta, A Pushpalata Singh, Soumitra Nath, Hemanta Kumar Bora, Debasish Chakraborty and Jaydeep Chakraborty, among others.

tailed counting procedures and adherence to Election Commission guidelines.
“The objective is to equip personnel with clarity and precision so that the counting process remains error-free and transparent,” an official statement noted.
Trainers have been instructed to report at least 30 minutes in advance to facilitate smooth coordination. A reserve panel comprising Kiriti Bhusan Dey and Rahul Kanti Nath has also been kept on standby to address any contingencies.
The initiative, as per a release issued by the Regional Office of Information and Public Relations, Barak Valley Zone, underscores the administration’s focus on ensuring a credible and efficient counting process.

Tamulpur reviews flood preparedness



HT Correspondent
KOKRAJHAR, April 27: A district-level meeting on flood preparedness ahead of the monsoon season was held at Tamulpur under the chairmanship of Simi Karan, District Commissioner and Chairperson of the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA).
The meeting focused on strengthening coordination among departments to effectively manage potential flood situations. Detailed discussions were held

on emergency response mechanisms, protection of critical infrastructure, road connectivity, relief camp management, damage assessment and reporting systems.
Officials from key departments including Women and Child Development, Education, Veterinary, Social Welfare, Public Health Engineering, Public Works Department, Water Resources, Agriculture, Soil Conservation, Power and Health were directed to remain fully prepared and maintain a high level of alertness. The District Commissioner also instructed departments to identify and inspect potential relief camp sites in advance and ensure that departmental disaster management plans are updated and ready for implementation.
The meeting was attended by Assistant Commissioner Bidisha Bora, District Project Manager Dr Sushanta Borgohain, along with officials from police, SSB and other security agencies, besides officers from various departments.

Pratima Goswami’s ‘Europe Loi Jao Aahok’ unveiled at Nagaon Press Club

Travelogue praised for blending personal experience with history and culture



HT Correspondent
NAGAON, April 27: Author Pratima Goswami’s travelogue Europe Loi Jao Aahok was formally released by noted storyteller Dhruvajyoti Sarma at a function held at the Nagaon Press Club recently.
Addressing the gathering, Sarma highlighted the essence of travel literature as a blend of curiosity, experience and imagination.
“Travel writing does not merely introduce new places, it opens up new worlds of thought and perspective,” he said, tracing its roots from ancient writers like Pausanias

to iconic travellers such as Marco Polo.
Placing the discussion in an Indian context, he noted that while travel literature in Assam is relatively recent, elements of it can be found as early as the Ahom era.
He cited Srimanta Sankaradeva’s Gurucharita as a notable example.
Reviewing the book, Sarma remarked that it hardly feels like a debut work.
The travelogue captures Goswami’s experiences across Europe, covering preparations, histor-

ical insights, social observations, and glimpses of art and architecture.
Speaking on the occasion, the author said the book evolved from her travel notes shared on social media.
“Encouragement from friends and well-wishers inspired me to compile these experiences into a book,” she said, adding that the work is dedicated to her late parents, Dalim Chandra Goswami and Hiranya Goswami.
Advocate Prashanti Goswami expressed pride in the family’s first published book, while publisher Aminul Islam of Ananda Prakash said the work offers insights into Europe’s history, society and culture through a personal lens.
Among others who spoke at the event were Ashokram Bhattacharya, Papul Bora, Manoj Chauhan and Kanak Hazarika.
The programme was attended by several dignitaries, including singer and social worker Nabanita Sarma and cultural activist Mukul Barthakur.

Khatkhathi Police seize 8.22 grams in anti-narcotics operation



HT Correspondent
BOKAJAN, April 27: In a late-night anti-narcotics operation, Khatkhathi Police apprehended a youth and seized suspected heroin at the Assam-Nagaland interstate border on Monday.

The operation was carried out around 8 pm at Dudu Colony Tila Basti based on specific intelligence inputs regarding the movement of contraband.
A police team laid an ambush near the border and intercepted the suspect while he was entering Assam from Dimapur.
The accused has been identified as Belamsingya Kangpu, a resident of Pessu village in Tuensang district of Nagaland.
During a search, police recovered approximately 8.22 grams of suspected heroin concealed in plastic containers on his person.
The operation was led by Officer-in-Charge Surya Kumar Bora, along with SI Amar Jyoti Gogoi, SI Jibon Saikia and ASI Shrestha Bordoloi.
Police have taken the accused into custody and registered a case under relevant sections of the NDPS Act.
Officials said further investigation is underway to trace forward and backward linkages and ascertain whether the accused is part of a larger inter-state drug trafficking network.

12 injured in Bokajan road mishap

HT Correspondent
BOKAJAN, April 27: At least 12 people were injured in a head-on collision between a passenger bus and a goods vehicle at Kuligaon under Bokajan police station in Karbi Anglong on Monday afternoon.

According to reports, a bus bearing registration number AS 09 AC 8781 collided with a Bolero pickup truck (NL 01 AE 1099) carrying cement. The impact was severe, forcing the pickup off the road while the bus came to a halt after ramming into the rear of the vehicle.
All injured passengers were rushed to Bokajan Community Health Centre with the help of local residents and police.
Medical personnel are attending to the injured, and their condition is reported to be stable.
Police teams reached the spot soon after the accident, managing traffic and initiating clearance of the damaged vehicles. Officials confirmed that no fatalities have been reported so far. The exact cause of the accident is yet to be ascertained. Police have launched an investigation to determine whether factors such as speeding or mechanical failure contributed to the collision.

Police send body for post-mortem; unidentified body found hanging

HT Correspondent
JAGIROAD, April 27: An unidentified man’s body was recovered on Monday morning near the railway stretch between Tetelia and Khetri railway station, officials said.

According to Officer-in-Charge of Jagiroad Government Railway Police, Rajnikant Bharali, the body—believed to be of a man aged around 30-35 years—was found hanging from a down home signal.
The deceased, approximately 5 feet 5 inches tall, was reportedly wearing blue sporting jeans and had a garland around his neck at the time of recovery.
Police personnel from Jagiroad GRP, along with officials from the Mayong Revenue Circle, rushed to the spot after receiving information.

Railways launch ‘Rail Yatra Vritant’ contest

Cash prizes announced; entries open till July 31

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, April 27: The Ministry of Railways has announced the “Rail Yatra Vritant Puraskar Yojna 2026,” a national-level competition inviting citizens to share their rail travel experiences in Hindi, with the twin aim of improving railway services and promoting the use of the language.
The initiative encourages both the general public and railway personnel to document memorable rail journeys, with selected entries contributing insights for enhancing passenger facilities.
Winners of the competition will receive cash prizes along with citations.
The first prize carries ₹10,000, followed by ₹8,000 for the second prize and ₹6,000 for the third. Additionally, five consolation prizes of ₹4,000 each will also be awarded.
Participants are required to submit original travelogues in Hindi, with a word limit between 3,000 and 3,500 words.

Entries must be typed in double spacing with proper formatting, including margins, page numbering and complete personal details.
Applicants in government service must declare that no vigilance or disciplinary cases are pending against them, while non-government participants must certify that no criminal case is pending.
All entrants must also confirm that their submission is original and has not been awarded elsewhere.
Entries, to be submitted in duplicate, must reach the designated office of the Assistant Director, Hindi (Training), COFMOW Railway Office Complex, Tilak Bridge, New Delhi, by July 31, 2026.
Submissions received after the deadline or without the required copies will not be considered.
Officials said the initiative aims to celebrate the emotional and experiential aspects of rail travel while using public feedback to further improve services across the railway network.

Tezpur University launches Yoga Mahotsav 2026

HT Correspondent
TEZPUR, April 27: Tezpur University inaugurated its Yoga Mahotsav 2026 at the Community Hall, marking the beginning of a series of activities leading up to the International Day of Yoga on June 21.

The programme is part of a broader 60-day campaign promoting yoga and holistic well-being.
Addressing the gathering, Prof Papori Baruah, Head of the Centre for Yoga and Sports Sciences, highlighted the scale of participation, stating that around 730 students have registered for the yoga camp being organised in collaboration with the university’s National Service Scheme (NSS) unit.
Delivering the inaugural address, Pro Vice-Chancellor Amarendra Kumar Das emphasised the importance of yoga in maintaining balance in modern life.
“Yoga is not merely a physical exercise but a holistic discipline that nurtures mental clarity, emotional stability and spiritual well-being,” he said. Guest of Honour Nayan-deep Deka Baruah, Dean of the School of Sciences, spoke on the scientific aspects of yoga, noting its role in improving concentration, reducing stress and fostering a healthy mind-body connection essential for academic success.
The Mahotsav will feature a range of activities, including yoga camps for adults and children, competitions, community outreach programmes, artistic yoga workshops, street plays, student seminars and a national conference.

Rongjali Bwisagu Festival concludes

Two-day celebration highlights culture, community spirit



HT Correspondent
HOWRAGHAT, April 27: The 26th annual Rongjali Bwisagu festival concluded successfully at Gorokhia Pukhuri village playground under Howraghat constituency in Karbi Anglong, drawing enthusiastic participation from local residents.

Organised over two days on April 26 and 27 by the Gorokhia Pukhuri Village Development Committee, the festival showcased the rich cultural traditions of the region through a series of programmes and community gatherings.
The concluding day featured an open session and prize distribution ceremony presided over by Dhanen Brahma, while the introduction of guests was conducted by Dharmendra Khaklary.
The session was inaugurated by Pinky Brahma.
The event was attended by several notable personalities, including chief guest Lakshindra Brahma, along with social worker Pabitra Brahma and other invited guests from literary and social circles.
As part of the celebrations, Urmila Das was felicitated for her outstanding performance in the HSLC examinations.
Winners of various sports and cultural competitions held during the festival were also honoured, with the prize distribution conducted by Dipen Swargiary.
The festival concluded on a vibrant note, reflecting the community’s commitment to preserving cultural heritage while strengthening social unity through collective celebration.

Two drug peddlers held in Tinsukia

HT Correspondent
MARGHERITA, April 27: In a targeted anti-drug operation, Tinsukia Police apprehended two alleged drug peddlers and seized ganja during a search operation at Powai Sidehing on Monday evening. The accused, identified as Hanif Ali and Mukesh Shah, both residents of Stationpara in Digboi, were intercepted while travelling on a scooter.
Acting on a specific tip-off, a police team led by Faiyaz Ahmed, DSP (Operations), conducted a search of the vehicle and recovered 2.17 grams of ganja packed in two polythene bags.

The police also seized the scooter bearing registration number AS 23 AD 5978, cash amounting to ₹3,970 and two mobile phones from their possession.
During preliminary interrogation, the accused reportedly confessed that they were transporting the contraband from Tinsukia for supply in the Margherita area.
Following the operation, the arrested individuals were handed over to Digboi Police for further investigation. Police officials stated that the action is part of an ongoing crackdown against narcotic substances in the district.
Under the leadership of DSP Faiyaz Ahmed, several similar operations have been carried out in recent months to curb drug trafficking.
Local residents have appreciated the prompt action by the police, describing it as a strong step towards ensuring a drug-free environment in the region.

Tezpur Sahitya Sabha opens children’s library

HT Correspondent
TEZPUR, April 27: Tezpur Sahitya Sabha inaugurated a children’s library stocked with nearly 2,000 books in five languages—Assamese, English, Hindi, Bodo and Bengali—marking a significant step towards promoting reading habits among young learners.
The books have been sourced from institutions such as the National Book Trust, Sishu Sahitya Nyas and other children’s publishers.
The inauguration was followed by a lecture on “Selection of Books for Children’s Libraries in Assam,” organised in collaboration with the Puspakanta Das and Swarnalata Das Memorial Trust.
Presiding over the programme, Sabha president Dhrubajyoti Das expressed hope that the initiative would contribute to the intellectual and psychological development of children.
The event was conducted by former secretary Pankaj Baruah, while secretary Dr Pallab Bhattacharya delivered the welcome address.
Inaugurating the library, noted children’s writer Swadhinata Mahanta emphasised that despite the rise of digital platforms, printed books remain irreplaceable in shaping a child’s mindset. She stressed the importance of guiding children in selecting appropriate reading materials.
Speaking as a distinguished guest, Bijit Borthakur highlighted the significance of cultivating reading culture and noted that the choice of books plays a crucial role in shaping an individual’s outlook.

HYBE India brings auditions, Pop-Up Park to Guwahati

Global music platform opens doors for young talent from Northeast



HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, April 27: HYBE India is set to bring a major opportunity for aspiring performers to the city, with an on-ground audition and a fan-focused pop-up event scheduled for early May.
The first leg of HYBE India’s in-person audition tour will kick off in Guwahati on May 3 at the Radisson Blu Hotel Guwahati from 10 am to 5 pm. Participants are required to pre-book their slots through BookMyShow.
Ahead of the auditions, the city will host the HYBE India Pop-Up Park on May 2 at City Centre Mall Guwahati from 4 pm onwards.

The event will be open to all and is designed as an immersive fan experience featuring interactive zones, exclusive audition merchandise and a range of entertainment activities.
Visitors can engage in experiences such as the Weverse Fan Letter Zone and Listening Party Zone, along with activities like Random Play Dance, K-Quiz contests and a live K-pop DJ party.
The pop-up will also feature booths and interactive experiences from brands including Samsung, Kia, H&M, Shoppers Stop and Nongshim, along with styling stations, photo booths and giveaways.

The audition is part of a 15-city global tour aimed at identifying emerging talent from India and the diaspora.
It is open to female participants born between 2005 and 2011, who can showcase skills in singing, dancing or rap before HYBE’s global evaluation team. For those unable to attend in person, online auditions are also underway and will continue till July 31.
Officials said the initiative offers a rare opportunity for young talent from the region to access international training and performance platforms, placing Guwahati on the global entertainment map.

Ayub Uddin Ahmed gets Gramya Shiroratra Award

HT Correspondent
BILASIPARA, April 27: Eminent teacher Ayub Uddin Ahmed from Bilasipara has been conferred the prestigious ‘Assam Gramya Shiro-ratra Award’ in recognition of his significant contribution to the field of education.
The award was presented by the Assam Gariyasi Puthi Sangrakshan aru Sahitya-Sanskriti Bikash Mancha at a ‘samaroh’ held at the auditorium of Kamrup Unnati Sadhini Samiti in Nagaon.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

A man should always consider how much he has more than he wants. —Joseph Addison

Employment profiles for cities in India

India, for the first time, has planned to bring out employment profiles for cities having million plus population as well as city level profiles of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises. The former, as is proposed, will provide key labour market indicators, such as Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), Worker Population Ratio (WPR), and Unemployment Rate. The latter will capture the scale, structure, employment, and economic performance of the urban informal sector. A consultation paper on the proposed framework for generation of city-level estimates based on the existing PLFS and ASUSE data is now uploaded on the MoSPI website for wider consultation of stakeholders. The views of Stakeholders are invited to review and suggest improvements to the proposed framework, indicators, methodology, and dissemination strategy; to refine it based on the feedback. Suggestions, feedback and comments may be sent to the ministry by May 15, 2026. These reports will be based on existing data from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) and the Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE), both of which already allow statistical estimation at the city level, though generally considered of poor quality, which do not reflect the hard reality on the ground and conceals the frightening reality of unemployment. The methodologies for both surveys are still being contested as faulty and unreliable by experts, while the Modi government claims these data are realtime and reliable.

Using data from these and the KLEMS data of the Reserve Bank of India, the Modi government claims reducing unemployment rate to just about 3 per cent, which is contested by Experts, who claim that India has fallen into an unemployment crisis. It is in this backdrop in which people are demanding for more reliable data from the Modi government, the invitation for comments and suggestions from stakeholder by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) for the proposed framework, indicators, and dissemination strategy for generation of city-level statistical reports has acquired significance.

The government has proposed two annual thematic reports - the first will present the Employment Profile of Million-Plus Cities, and the second will present a City-Level Profile of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises. This proposed development of city-level statistical reports marks an important step, says MoSPI, in aligning India's statistical system with the realities of a rapidly urbanising economy. By bringing cities into sharper analytical focus, the initiative seeks to bridge critical data gaps and support informed decision-making at all levels of governance.

Preparing for Monsoon: Are we ready this year?

By: Mowsam Hazarika

As the southwest monsoon approaches, it brings with it a familiar mix of anticipation and anxiety. In a country like India—and particularly in a region like Assam—the monsoon is not merely a seasonal phenomenon; it is a defining force that shapes agriculture, livelihoods, infrastructure, and public health. The question that inevitably arises each year is: are we truly prepared?

The importance of monsoon preparedness cannot be overstated. For farmers, timely rainfall determines crop success or failure. For urban residents, it often exposes the fragility of drainage systems. For rural communities along riverbanks, especially in flood-prone areas of Assam, it can mean displacement, loss of property, and even threats to life. Despite decades of experience with seasonal flooding and heavy rainfall, preparedness often remains reactive rather than proactive. One of the most pressing concerns is flood management. Assam, crisscrossed by mighty rivers like the Brahmaputra and Barak, faces annual floods that affect thousands of villages. While embankments have been constructed over the years, their maintenance remains inconsistent. Breaches during peak monsoon are not uncommon, raising serious questions about the quality of pre-monsoon inspections and repair work. Preparedness should begin months in advance, with scientific assessment of vulnerable points and timely strengthening of weak sections.

Urban flooding is another growing challenge. Cities like Guwahati experience waterlogging even after moderate rainfall. Rapid urbanisation, unplanned construction, and encroachment on wetlands have reduced the natural drainage capacity. Stormwater drains are often clogged with garbage, reflecting a failure not just of municipal systems but also of civic responsibility. Effective preparedness would require systematic cleaning of drains, strict enforcement against encroachment, and a long-term vision of sustainable urban planning.

Public health is equally at risk during the monsoon. Waterborne diseases such as diarrhoea, cholera, and typhoid tend to rise with contaminated water supplies. Mosquito-borne diseases like dengue and malaria also see an increase. Health departments must ensure the availability of medicines, strengthen surveillance systems, and conduct awareness campaigns. Access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities becomes crucial, particularly in flood-affected areas.

Agriculture, the backbone of rural Assam, remains highly vulnerable. While good rainfall is essential, excessive or untimely rain can damage crops. Farmers need timely advisories, access to resilient crop varieties, and support through crop insurance schemes. Strengthening extension services and ensuring the availability of seeds and fertilizers before the onset of monsoon can significantly reduce risks. Disaster preparedness at the community level is often overlooked but is critically important. Early warning systems, evacuation plans, and relief shelters must be in place well before the rains begin. Local administrations should conduct mock drills and involve community organisations in preparedness activities. Empowering people with information and resources can make a significant difference in reducing the impact of disasters.

Another aspect that demands attention is coordination among various departments—water resources, urban development, health, agriculture, and disaster management. Preparedness cannot function in silos. An integrated approach, supported by real-time data and efficient communication systems, is essential for timely response and mitigation.

Climate change has added a new layer of uncertainty. Rainfall patterns are becoming increasingly erratic, with intense downpours occurring over short periods. This calls for a shift from traditional approaches to more adaptive and resilient strategies. Investing in climate-resilient infrastructure, improving forecasting systems, and promoting sustainable practices are no longer optional—they are necessary.

Ultimately, preparedness is not just the responsibility of the government. Citizens, too, have a role to play. Avoiding littering, respecting natural drainage systems, staying informed about weather alerts, and cooperating during emergencies are all part of collective responsibility. As we stand on the threshold of another monsoon, the question "Are we ready?" remains both relevant and urgent. The answer lies not in last-minute measures but in sustained, planned, and inclusive efforts. The monsoon will come, as it always does. Whether it brings relief or distress depends largely on how prepared we are today.

India's sovereign struggle in the shadow of sanctions



DEGREE OF THOUGHT

By: Satyabrata Borah

The concept of national sovereignty is often discussed in hushed tones within the halls of power, but its true weight is felt only when a country faces a choice that carries a heavy price tag. India currently finds itself in such a position, standing at a crossroads where the path forward is obscured by the shadow of global geopolitics and the heavy hand of a long distance ally. For decades, New Delhi has prided itself on a foreign policy that refuses to be tethered to any single bloc, a philosophy that has allowed it to navigate the choppy waters of the Cold War and the subsequent era of unipolarity with a certain degree of grace.

But today, that independence is being tested in a way that feels uncomfortably personal. The specific catalyst for this tension is the Chabahar port in Iran, a project that was supposed to be India's gateway to Central Asia and a symbol of its strategic reach. With the United States allowing the sanctions waiver for this project to lapse, the silence from Washington speaks volumes. It is a signal that the era of special exemptions might be closing, replaced by a rigid demand for alignment that leaves little room for the nuances of regional necessity.

The history of Chabahar is a long and winding road, marked by moments of intense optimism followed by years of stagnation. It was back in 2003 that Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee first envisioned this project as a vital link that would bypass the geographic hurdles posed by a difficult neighbor. The idea was simple but profound: create a maritime and land corridor that would connect the Indian Ocean to the heart of Eurasia. For a country that is effectively landlocked to its west due to persistent friction with Pakistan, Chabahar was not just about trade; it was about breaking a strategic siege.

It was about ensuring that India could reach Afghanistan and the resource rich republics of Central Asia without asking for permission from those who would rather see it fail. For years, the project remained a dream deferred. The pressures of the international community regarding Iran's nuclear ambitions meant that successive Indian governments had to move with extreme caution. The Manmohan Singh administration found itself walking a tightrope, trying to keep the flame of the project alive while responding to the growing demands of a blossoming partnership with the United States. They managed to build the Zaranj-Delaram highway, a physical testament to India's commitment to Afghan stability, but the port itself remained a work in progress, stalled by the complex mechanics of global diplomacy.

When the nuclear deal was signed in 2015, it felt like a new dawn. The Modi government moved quickly to

formalize the trilateral agreement with Iran and Afghanistan. It felt as though the stars had finally aligned. India committed hundreds of millions of dollars, sent equipment, and began the hard work of turning a quiet coastal town into a bustling hub of commerce. The port became a lifeline, especially as the security situation in the region shifted and the traditional routes grew more precarious. It was through Chabahar that India sent thousands of tons of wheat and life saving medicines to the people of Afghanistan, proving that the project had a humanitarian soul that transcended mere balance sheets. But the return of aggressive sanctions under the Trump administration changed the math overnight. The United States began a campaign of maximum pressure on Tehran, and India was caught in the middle. Initially, a carve out was granted, a recognition that India's role in Afghanistan was beneficial to everyone involved. But that window has now slammed shut. The lapse of the waiver on April 26 is not just a technicality; it is a direct challenge to India's right to choose its partners based on its own national interests.

There is a growing sense in New Delhi that the list of demands coming from Washington is getting longer and more intrusive. It started with oil. India was once one of the largest buyers of Iranian crude, a relationship that provided energy security and favorable credit terms. Under pressure, those imports were cut to zero. Then came the directives regarding Venezuela, another traditional energy partner. More recently, the conflict in Europe brought fresh demands to stop purchasing Russian oil, despite the fact that these purchases were essential for keeping the Indian economy afloat during a period of global volatility.

Now, the crosshairs are on Chabahar. If India walks away from this project, it is not just losing a port; it is losing a piece of its identity as a sovereign actor. The financial loss of over six hundred million dollars is significant, but the damage to India's reputation in the region would be far greater. If a rising power cannot pro-

tect its own investments or fulfill its promises to its neighbors because of the dictates of a distant power, its claims of leadership begin to ring hollow. The current global landscape makes this situation even more delicate. The war in West Asia has set the region on edge, making any engagement with Iran a lightning rod for criticism. There are voices that argue for a pragmatic retreat, suggesting that India should wait for the dust to settle before trying to rebuild what has been lost. This perspective suggests that maintaining a smooth relationship with the United States is more important than a single infrastructure project, no matter how strategic it may be. They point to the growing cooperation in technology, defense, and space as evidence that the partnership with Washington is the primary engine of India's future growth.

But this logic ignores a fundamental truth: a partnership between unequals is not a partnership; it is a client relationship. If India accepts the idea that its foreign policy must be cleared by a third party, it sets a precedent that will be impossible to ignore in the future. Today it is a port in Iran; tomorrow it could be a trade agreement in Southeast Asia or a military purchase from a non Western source. The appetite for control tends to grow with every concession.

The pressure is not limited to bilateral projects. The rhetoric coming out of the United States has expanded to include threats against members of the BRICS grouping and any nation that seeks to create alternative financial systems. This is a direct shot across the bow for India, which has always sought to diversify its global engagements. India does not view the world as a zero sum game where one must choose between the East and the West. It sees itself as a bridge, a civilization state that can talk to everyone. By trying to force India into a corner, the United States risks alienating a partner that it desperately needs for its own Indo Pacific strategy. You cannot ask a country to be a pillar of regional security on one hand while systematically undermining its strategic autonomy on the other. It is a contradiction that cannot hold for long without causing deep resentment. The withdrawal of Indian personnel from Chabahar and the talk of transferring stakes to Iranian companies are signs of a tactical retreat, but they also reflect a deep sense of frustration. There is a feeling that India is being asked to sacrifice its long term interests for the short term political goals of an American administration.

The investment in Chabahar was supposed to be a generational commitment. It was meant to connect India to the International North South Transport Corridor, opening up markets in Russia and Europe that are currently difficult to reach. If this

link is severed, India's ambitions of becoming a global manufacturing hub will face a significant logistical bottleneck. It will remain dependent on a limited number of trade routes, many of which are vulnerable to the whims of geopolitical rivals.

The struggle over Chabahar is a microcosm of the struggle for a multipolar world. For decades, the global order has been defined by the rules and interests of a few powerful nations. But the rise of new powers, including India, was supposed to usher in a more balanced era where different perspectives could coexist. If the United States continues to use its financial and military leverage to squash independent initiatives, it is essentially signaling that it is not ready for a world of equals. This approach might yield short term compliance, but it builds long term instability. It forces countries to look for ways to circumvent the existing system, leading to the very fragmentation that the West claims to fear.

The path forward requires a rare blend of courage and cleverness for India. It cannot afford a total rupture with the United States, given the deep ties that bind the two nations. But it also cannot afford to be a silent spectator to its own marginalization. The decision on Chabahar will be a defining moment for the current leadership. If they choose to stay the course, they will face the wrath of American sanctions, which could hurt the economy and complicate other areas of cooperation. If they retreat, they will be seen as a power that can be pushed around, a perception that will embolden its rivals in the neighborhood. There is no easy answer, no magic formula that can satisfy both sides.

The tragedy of the situation is that India's goals in Chabahar are not inherently anti-American. A stable, prosperous Afghanistan and a well connected Central Asia are goals that Washington has claimed to support for years. By facilitating trade and providing an alternative to Chinese dominated infrastructure, India is actually contributing to regional balance. It is a classic case of a policy that serves the interests of multiple parties, yet it is being sacrificed at the altar of a singular obsession with isolating Iran. This kind of tunnel vision often leads to unintended consequences. By pushing India out of Chabahar, the United States is leaving a vacuum that will inevitably be filled by others, likely those who are much less friendly to Western interests.

It is important to remember that foreign policy is not just about treaties and trade deals; it is about the soul of a nation. It is about the right of a people to chart their own course and define their own destiny. India has spent the better part of a century trying to reclaim its place in the world after colonial rule. To give up

that hard won independence now, even under the guise of pragmatism, would be a bitter pill to swallow. The streets of New Delhi and the corridors of South Block are filled with people who remember the era when India was told what to do and what to buy. They are not eager to return to those days. The lapse of the waiver is a test of resolve, a moment to decide if the phrase sovereign autonomy is a living reality or just a convenient slogan used in speeches.

The coming months will be telling. Will India find a way to navigate the sanctions minefield, perhaps by using creative financial mechanisms or by engaging in a high level diplomatic offensive to convince the Americans of the project's value? Or will the cranes at Shahid Beheshti terminal fall silent, becoming monuments to a dream that was crushed by the weight of global power politics? The implications go far beyond the concrete and steel of a port. This is about whether a rising India can truly be an independent pole in a multipolar world, or whether it is destined to be a junior partner in someone else's grand strategy.

The world is watching and the stakes could not be higher. The ability to say no, to stand one's ground when the pressure is at its peak, is the true mark of a great power. If India loses that ability, it loses a part of itself. The port of Chabahar might be thousands of miles away from the capital, but the battle for its future is happening in the very heart of the Indian state. It is a battle for the right to think, act, and lead as a sovereign nation, free from the dictates of those who believe they have the right to slice away at the independence of others. In this high stakes game of geopolitical chess, the next move will define India's place in the world for a generation to come. It is a turning point that will either solidify India's status as a global leader or mark its transition into a state that follows rather than leads. The costs of the former are immediate and painful, but the costs of the latter are permanent and profound.

There is a certain dignity in choosing the hard path, in refusing to let the light of an independent foreign policy be extinguished by the winds of external pressure. Whether that dignity can survive the cold reality of sanctions and diplomatic isolation is the question that now hangs over the nation. The answer will tell us everything we need to know about the future of the international order and India's role within it. It is a time for steady hands and clear eyes, a time to remember that the true value of a nation is not measured in its treasury alone, but in its will to remain free. The story of Chabahar is still being written, and the final chapters will reveal the true character of those who hold the pen.

Transformation of family system and its consequences

Family is the most fundamental and indispensable foundation of human society, which not only ensures the continuity of lineage but also carries sociality, emotional cohesion, morality, and culture from one generation to another. It is the primary institution of an individual's life, where the first lessons of love, cooperation, and responsibility are learned. The intimacy embedded within the family determines an individual's psychological stability and the overall equilibrium of society. However, due to the rapid and unprecedented wave of changes sweeping across the world today, the structure, functions, and internal relationships of this traditional family system have undergone deep and widespread transformation. In the agrarian societies of the past, the joint family system was the primary base, where multiple generations lived together and provided strong economic and social security based on land and shared resources. In this system, family was not merely a place of residence; it was a unit of production, a center for the transfer of knowledge and wisdom, and a base of social control. But with the strengthening of the idea of individual independence, migration of people from rural areas to towns and cities in search of employment, and the spread of modern education, the bonds of joint families have gradually loosened. As a result of this historical transformation, the emergence of nuclear or small families has increased, where only the husband, wife, and their unmarried children live together. While this new structure has provided individuals with sufficient freedom to fulfill their careers, ambitions, and personal choices, it has simultaneously narrowed the scope of social connection, kinship, and collective responsibility. In this confined environment, the burden of mental stress, emotional insecurity, and loneliness on individuals has increased, which has become a major psychological issue of modern society. These changes have not only affected the external structure of families but have also deeply influenced their internal values and emotional understandings, thereby redefining the very foundation of society.

Among the key factors behind this extensive transformation of the family system, the spread of women's education and their economic empowerment have played a decisive role. In earlier societies, there existed a rigid division of gender roles within the family, where men handled economic activities outside the home, and women played a central role in household responsibilities, child-rearing, and caregiving. However, the advent of modern education and economic independence has encouraged women to step beyond these traditional roles and showcase their abilities and talents in every sphere of soci-

ety. Today, women occupy high positions and have become significant contributors to the economic foundation of the household. As a result, the distribution of power within the family has become more balanced and democratic than before. The dominance of the male or the head of the family in decision-making has declined, and mutual discussion, consensus, and equal participation between husband and wife have gained importance. However, this dual role has placed a heavy burden on working women, who must balance workplace competition with household responsibilities. This situation can affect their mental and physical health. Moreover, the changing roles of men and women within the family have created deep conflicts among those who still believe in traditional values and customs, often leading to instability and dissatisfaction in family relationships. It has become essential for men to learn to share household duties and participate in childcare, which requires a significant transformation in social mindset.

The most sensitive and far-reaching consequence of this structural transformation of the family is the complexity it has created in the process of child upbringing and socialization. In the joint family system of the past, a child's socialization was not limited to parents alone but was also shaped by grandparents, uncles, aunts, and other relatives. This system provided children with the opportunity to gain social knowledge, moral education, and experience from a larger family, helping them develop a more mature and socially strong personality. However, in today's nuclear families, providing sufficient quality time to children has become a major challenge for working parents. Due to their busy schedules, children often experience a lack of emotional closeness, guidance, and affection from their parents. To compensate for this absence, children have become increasingly dependent on daycare centers, private tutoring systems, or electronic media. Although these arrangements offer certain conveniences, their role as substitutes for the emotional warmth and personal care of a family is limited. This situation can lead to feelings of insecurity, mental stress, and emotional vulnerability among children, making them emotionally fragile and causing difficulties in forming relationships in the future. Furthermore, the absence of moral and social education traditionally passed down from earlier generations has deeply impacted their process of socialization, resulting in moral decline and social instability within society. Due to the lack of proper guidance, children are often compelled to make wrong decisions.

The impact of these social transformations on the concept and stability of marriage is also very evident. In modern society, the emphasis on individual independence and self-realization has led to marriage no longer being considered an indispensable and unchangeable social bond as it once was. Today, the objective of marriage is not merely the continuation of lineage or social obligation, but rather personal happiness, emotional satisfaction, and mutual understanding. As a result, when dissatisfaction or conflict arises in married life, individuals tend to opt for divorce more easily, leading to a steady increase in divorce rates. While divorce may liberate two dissatisfied individuals, it has also resulted in the rise of single-parent families, which face significant social, economic, and emotional challenges. The greatest impact of divorce is felt on children's psychology. Children experience emotional trauma due to parental conflict and separation, which can negatively affect their mental health, education, and ability to form future relationships. Additionally, trends such as delayed marriages, live-in relationships, and marriages based on gender equality are reshaping the traditional definition of family. While these new forms of relationships respect personal choice, their lack of social acceptance, legal security, and long-term stability sometimes creates new complexities, raising questions about social moral stability. Addressing these issues requires a reassessment of social policies.

One of the most profound and humane consequences of the changing family system is the crisis in the care and security of elderly and ailing members. In the joint family system, caring for the elderly and the sick was a natural, moral, and collective responsibility, where family members were emotionally committed to one another. However, with the rise of nuclear families and busy lifestyles, working members often cannot provide adequate time and care to their aging parents. Many elderly individuals are forced to live alone, leading to a lack of physical care as well as deep emotional loneliness. This condition increases feelings of insecurity, depression, and anxiety among them. Consequently, dependence on old-age homes and institutional care centers has increased, which stands in contrast to traditional social values and ethics. Society's indifference towards the elderly reflects the erosion of human relationships and growing selfishness. This is not only a crisis for the elderly but also for society as a whole, as the younger generation fears facing similar insecurity in their old age. Building a new culture of intergenerational cooperation and understanding is essential to address this issue.

With the disappearance of the emotional safety net of joint families, individuals are now forced to confront life's challenges alone. The constant competition and pressure of modern life have led to an increase in mental health issues such as anxiety, depres-

sion, emotional instability, and suicidal tendencies. The warmth, closeness, and mutual support among family members have diminished due to busy lifestyles. Instead of spending quality time together, people are increasingly focused on personal entertainment, digital media, and workplace competition, resulting in growing emotional distance. This emotional disconnection has made individuals more self-centered and less sensitive. Family, which was once a refuge from all hardships and a source of mental peace, has now been reduced to merely a residential space where each member remains confined within their own world. These psychological issues pose a challenge not only to individuals but also to the overall stability and productivity of society, as a mentally unhealthy society cannot function effectively. The emotional decline of the family is therefore a serious concern for the future.

Considering all these complex consequences, it has become imperative to adopt thoughtful, effective, and collective measures for the well-being of families. Although returning to the traditional joint family system may not be realistic, it is essential to restore emotional connections and mutual understanding among family members in the context of modern society. Flexible work schedules and provisions like parental leave for working parents can help them devote more time to their children and families. Such policies not only benefit working individuals but also support the healthy development and mental stability of children. As women participate more in the workforce, men must also develop the mindset to share household responsibilities and childcare equally. Building a new social perspective based on gender equality is crucial in this regard. Additionally, government and non-government organizations should establish community care centers and intergenerational programs for the care, inclusion, and well-being of the elderly. Recognizing the experience of elderly individuals as a valuable resource and involving them in social and economic activities can improve their mental health and enable them to remain active contributors to society. Social reforms and educational initiatives are equally important in addressing these transformations. The education system must emphasize human values, empathy, mutual respect, and cooperation. Incorporating lessons on the importance of family, emotional understanding, and social responsibility into school curricula can prepare future generations to face these challenges. To rebuild the family as a loving, secure, and emotionally supportive institution, individuals must rise above personal interests and work towards collective well-being. Reducing emotional distance caused by digital media requires families to cultivate the habit of spending quality time together. Only when this most fundamental unit of society remains healthy and strong can we hope for a stable, moral, and progressive society.

By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuyan

South Asia's energy crisis exposes its import dependent fault lines

By: R Suryamurthy

The energy crisis gripping South Asia in 2026 is not simply the fallout of a distant geopolitical confrontation; it is the clearest evidence yet of a systemic fragility that policymakers have long acknowledged but persistently under-addressed. The disruption of the Strait of Hormuz—through which roughly 20 per cent of global oil and a significant share of liquefied natural gas flows—has once again demonstrated how deeply the region's economic stability is tethered to external supply chains. What makes this moment particularly consequential is not just the scale of the shock—Asian LNG prices spiking by over 140 per cent, crude briefly breaching \$119 per barrel—but the speed with which it has translated into domestic distress: fuel queues, fertiliser shortages, power outages, and rising inflation that is already eroding fragile post-pandemic recoveries.

The numbers tell a stark story. South Asia imports close to 80–85 per cent of its crude oil requirements, with India alone accounting for nearly 5 million barrels per day of imports, about half of which transit through Hormuz-linked routes. Pakistan and Bangladesh, meanwhile, rely on Gulf suppliers for up to 70–100 per cent of their LNG needs, embedding a structural exposure that leaves little room for manoeuvre when supply chains tighten. In Bangladesh, natural gas fuels over 70 per cent of power generation; in Pakistan, the figure hovers around 35–40 per cent, but with rising LNG dependence over the past decade. This concentration risk has turned a geopolitical choke point into an economic fault line.

The macroeconomic consequences are already materialising. Multilateral institutions have warned that a prolonged disruption could shave off over 1 percentage point from GDP growth across developing Asia while pushing inflation up by 2–3 percentage points. In South Asia—where food and energy account for a disproportionate share of household expenditure—the pass-through is immediate and regressive. Transport costs have surged, agricultural input prices have risen due to fertiliser disruptions, and electricity tariffs are under upward pres-

sure as utilities grapple with higher fuel costs. The result is a classic stagflationary squeeze, with growth slowing even as living costs climb. Yet the crisis is uneven in its impact, revealing the contours of resilience and vulnerability across the region. India, with roughly 70–75 per cent of its electricity generated from coal—most of it domestically sourced—has managed to avoid widespread blackouts. Its coal production, now approaching 1 billion tonnes annually, and stockpiles sufficient for nearly three months of consumption, have provided a crucial buffer. But this resilience comes at a cost: a temporary but significant retreat from climate commitments, as coal plants operate at full tilt and even substitute for household gas in some cases.

Pakistan and Bangladesh, by contrast, are bearing the brunt of the shock. In Pakistan, fuel prices have surged by as much as 40–50 per cent in certain regions, triggering widespread rationing and industrial slowdowns. Bangladesh has faced rolling blackouts as LNG shortages constrain power generation, with its export-oriented garment sector—responsible for over 80 per cent of export earnings—under acute stress. Sri Lanka, still emerging from its 2022 economic collapse, is once again confronting fuel shortages that threaten to destabilise its fragile recovery.

The policy response, so far, has been reactive and short-term. Governments have leaned heavily on demand suppression—shortened work weeks, remote schooling, fuel rationing—while scrambling to secure alternative supplies and ramp up coal generation. India has cut fuel taxes to cushion consumers, while others have raised prices to curb demand. Regional cooperation has flickered into view, with India supplying emergency fuel to neighbours, but remains far from institutionalised.

What is missing, and what this crisis underscores with renewed urgency, is a structural rethinking of energy security—one that moves beyond the binary of imported fossil fuels versus intermittent renewables. In this context, bioenergy—particularly biogas—offers a compelling, yet underutilised, pathway.

The potential is substantial. India alone generates an estimated 500–550 million tonnes of agricultural residue and organic



waste annually, alongside vast quantities of cattle dung—over 300 million tonnes per year. According to government estimates, this feedstock could support the production of over 60 million cubic metres of biogas per day, translating into roughly 25–30 GW of equivalent energy capacity. Yet, as of 2025, installed biogas capacity—across both household and industrial-scale plants—remains a fraction of this potential, with compressed biogas (CBG) production under the SATAT (Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation) initiative still in its early stages.

Across South Asia, the story is similar. Bangladesh, with its dense agricultural base and livestock sector, has the technical potential to generate over 7–10 billion cubic metres of biogas annually, enough to significantly offset LNG imports for cooking and small-scale industry. Pakistan's livestock population—one of the largest in the world—offers comparable

opportunities, with estimates suggesting biogas could meet up to 20–25 per cent of rural energy demand if scaled effectively. Nepal and Bhutan, already leveraging hydropower, could integrate biogas into decentralized energy systems, reducing reliance on imported LPG.

The advantages of biogas are not merely theoretical. Unlike solar or wind, it provides dispatchable, round-the-clock energy; unlike imported LNG, it is domestically sourced and insulated from global price shocks. It also addresses multiple policy objectives simultaneously: waste management, rural income generation, and emissions reduction. Compressed biogas can be used as a transport fuel, substituting for CNG, while digestate—the byproduct of biogas production—serves as an organic fertiliser, reducing dependence on imported chemical inputs.

And yet, despite these advantages, biogas remains marginal in policy prioritisa-

tion, overshadowed by the scale and visibility of solar and wind projects. This is a strategic oversight. If the current crisis has exposed the risks of overdependence on imported fuels, it has also highlighted the limitations of relying solely on large-scale, grid-connected renewables without complementary, decentralised solutions.

What, then, needs to change?

First, governments must treat energy diversification as a matter of national security, not merely environmental policy. This requires accelerated investment not only in solar and wind—where South Asia has already made significant strides, with India targeting 500 GW of non-fossil capacity by 2030—but also in bioenergy, storage, and grid modernisation. Biogas, in particular, should be scaled through targeted subsidies, guaranteed offtake agreements, and integration into city gas distribution networks.

Second, regional energy cooperation must move from rhetoric to reality. South

Asia's fragmented energy markets are a missed opportunity. Cross-border electricity trade—linking Nepal and Bhutan's hydropower with India and Bangladesh's demand centres—can provide a stabilising backbone, reducing the need for imported fuels. A regional grid, coupled with shared storage and balancing mechanisms, would enhance resilience against external shocks.

Third, demand-side efficiency must become a permanent feature, not a crisis response. South Asia's transmission and distribution losses—often exceeding 15–20 per cent—represent a vast, untapped source of "virtual energy." Investments in smart grids, efficient appliances, and urban planning can significantly reduce demand without compromising growth.

Fourth, pricing reforms are essential. Energy subsidies, while politically sensitive, often distort consumption patterns and discourage investment in alternatives. A calibrated approach—protecting vulnerable households while allowing prices to reflect true costs—can drive behavioural change and fiscal sustainability.

Finally, the crisis demands a shift in mindset. Energy security cannot be built on the assumption of stable global markets; it must be grounded in domestic capability and regional interdependence. The economics are increasingly aligned with this vision: solar-plus-storage costs have fallen to around \$40 per MWh in many contexts, undercutting coal and gas, while biogas offers a scalable, locally anchored complement.

The immediate outlook remains uncertain. If disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz persist, South Asia could face a prolonged period of volatility, with cascading effects on growth, inflation, and social stability. But crises, by their nature, also create openings. The question is whether this moment will be used to entrench short-term fixes—more coal, more subsidies, more vulnerability—or to catalyse a structural transformation.

Because the lesson is now unmistakably clear: energy imported is energy exposed. And unless South Asia rewires its energy systems—diversifying sources, decentralising production, and deepening regional integration—it will remain, as it is today, perilously susceptible to the next shock, whenever and wherever it emerges. (IPA Service)

World Wish Day – April 29, 2026

The Power of a Wish: Healing hearts, inspiring lives

By: Lalit Garg

Every year on April 29, World Wish Day expresses those tender vibrations of humanity that connect us with one another. It is not merely a day, but a global movement of sensitivity, compassion, and hope. The core purpose of this day is to bring joy and positive energy into the lives of children battling critical and life-threatening illnesses. It reminds us that the true beauty of life lies in bringing a smile to someone else's face. This inspiring day is associated with the globally renowned Make-A-Wish Foundation, which for decades has been fulfilling the wishes of seriously ill children, giving their lives new meaning. The organization does not just grant wishes; it instills hope, courage, and emotional strength in these children, helping them rediscover the will to live.

The history of this day is deeply emotional and inspiring. In 1980, a seven-year-old boy named Chris Greicius, who was battling leukemia, had a simple wish—to become a police officer. When local police learned about his wish, they not only understood it but committed to fulfilling it. On April 29, 1980, Chris was made a police officer for a day, dressed in uniform, and given the full experience with honor and dignity. The smile on his face that day was not just a child's joy—it was a living testament to human compassion. Sadly, he passed away just a few days later, but his small wish laid the foundation for a global movement. Inspired by this incident, the Make-A-Wish Foundation was established, which has since grown into a vast global organization. Today, it operates in nu-

merous countries and has fulfilled the wishes of millions of children. It stands as proof that even a small initiative can bring about a profound transformation in the world.

In today's fast-paced world, where individuals are often entangled in personal ambitions and self-interest, this day serves as a powerful reminder. It urges us to reflect—are our wishes only for ourselves, or can we bring light into someone else's life? As human sensitivities decline and relationships become increasingly formal, World Wish Day offers an opportunity to revive core human values. Wishes are an integral part of human life. They are not merely desires but sources of direction and energy. Positive wishes inspire progress, build confidence, and nurture creativity. As thinker Anthony St. Martin once said, "If humans did not have the capacity to fulfill their greatest wishes, they would not even be able to conceive them." This highlights that our wishes are reflections of our inner potential.

World Wish Day also emphasizes that wishes are not just personal—they are social. A single positive wish can transform society. When we fulfill the wish of a sick child, we are not only bringing happiness to that child but also becoming a source of hope for their family and community. It is a process in which both the giver and the receiver are enriched. In the present time, it has become even more essential to channel our wishes in a positive direction. Negative desires lead to stress and dissatisfaction, whereas positive ones bring balance, peace, and fulfillment. Thus, World Wish Day is not just a celebration of wish fulfillment—it is a celebra-

tion of positive thinking and a meaningful life perspective.

In the context of 2026, the spirit of this day can be expressed as: "Share Hope, Ignite Joy." This message teaches us that even small efforts can create significant change in someone's life. A smile, a gesture of kindness, or a compassionate act can become a life-changing experience for someone. Another important aspect of this day is that it encourages social participation. Each of us can contribute in our own way—through financial support, volunteering, or identifying and helping a child in need. In the digital age, social media has also emerged as a powerful platform to spread this message widely.

Undoubtedly, World Wish Day teaches us that the true meaning of life lies not in living for ourselves, but in living for others. When we bring a smile to someone's face, we ourselves experience inner joy—that is true happiness, that is true fulfillment. At a time when the world is grappling with numerous challenges—mental stress, social fragmentation, and a decline in human sensitivity—this day shines as a ray of hope. It reassures us that with small yet meaningful efforts, we can make the world a better place. Therefore, on this World Wish Day, let us resolve not to remain confined to our own wishes, but to embrace the wishes of others as our own. Let us cultivate compassion, empathy, and cooperation within ourselves and become part of this beautiful humanitarian movement. Because, ultimately, even a small wish can bring about the greatest transformation in someone's life—and that is the deepest and truest message of this day.

Peaceful First Phase Election in West Bengal

By: Gouri Sankar Nag

West Bengal politics is always known for its staunch anti-centre attitude. However, in recent times, ever since the BJP's rise to power at the Centre, West Bengal politics under the All India Trinamool Congress has thrown a gauntlet to the mighty political organisation of the BJP. This 2026 election in West Bengal is no exception to this practice. However, the background issues shaping people's perception and aspirations regarding the election are starkly different from those in the 2021 election. It is indeed against this backdrop that the first phase of the election to 152 seats took place on 23rd April, according to the schedule fixed by the Election Commission of India. In the first phase, more than 1 crore 60 lakh male voters and 1 crore 75 lakh female voters are expected to cast their votes. The poll started from 7 a.m. and continued till 6 o'clock in the evening.

As per reports, voting on the whole was held peacefully except some scattered minor disturbances and tension in Murshidabad and Malda districts. These events of successful conduct of polls without major violence speak of the efficacy of the arrangements made by the Election Commission of India. Its significance lies in two factors. The first is obviously the previous experience of violence and death during the 2021 election in Sitalkuchi. The second is the election narrative that the Centre, in collusion with the Election Commission, was out to intimidate innocent civilians, and that was why almost 200 companies of Central security forces were deployed in the districts. But there was no merit to such a narrative, as most voters, aside from some complaints, expressed satisfaction after casting their votes. It is despite the anxiety after deletion of names and subsequent process of appeal and verification by the SIR Tribunal throughout March–April 2026.

Obviously, at different levels of the SIR, a slew of criticisms was labelled against both the procedure and the intent of the Election Commission. Consequently, the entire SIR process, which continued until mid-April 2026, posed a challenge to ensuring that legitimate voters could exercise their rights in a smooth and hassle-free manner. In fact, the SIR process became a symbol of a significant political trend of the modern Indian state. According to the opposition, the modern Indian state in the current neo-liberal age is taking an anti-people stance. This was reflected in the SIR process. According to veteran experts like Professor Ranabir Samaddar of Calcutta Research Group, these anti-people exclusionary tendencies are quite evident in the very approach of the state. That is what makes people concerned and worried. Therefore, it is no wonder that the SIR would be a prime political issue in the hands of the Opposition in the field of electoral politics.

However, after today's election, when most of the people, including

migrant labourers who returned to the state under anxiety, were able to cast their votes, it scripted a new chapter in the electoral history of the state. So while, on the one hand, additional security bolstered the confidence of ordinary voters, the desire to come back to the state from their distant workplaces reflected that people took the issue of voting rights very seriously. This, according to famous political commentator Hannah Arendt, is the right to demand rights. Thus, the vibes of enthusiasm mixed with anxiety were quite evident among the voters this time.

However, today's election reflects two different patterns due to the different clustering of the districts. Firstly, the zone of the entire North Bengal, which is different from South Bengal in terms of its culture, traditions, agricultural system, and influence of both East Bengal and contiguous Assam, reflects a strong communitarian and ethnic bond. Here, we can refer to the Rajbongshi community, Dalit community, and also the predominance of minority communities in many pockets of Malda and Dinajpur. Although North Bengal has witnessed substantial mobility, that has reduced its traditional caste-based loyalty. Another bloc within West Bengal comprises the entire western part, also popularly known as Jungle Mahal. The districts of Bankura, Purulia, and Paschim Medinipur have a sizeable number of indigenous populations. This is a traditional fortress cum bastion of the BJP, much like the Congress stronghold of Malda.

A few statistics regarding this year's election drive home the point about the direction in which the politics of the state is moving. Of the candidates, 23% are declared criminals, with some implicated even in cases of crimes against women. 309 candidates, according to their affidavits, are crepates. Moreover, more than half of the candidates have negligible levels of educational qualification, ranging from class 5 to class 12.

West Bengal, the state of the 19th-century Renaissance, is known for its quality of political awareness and leadership. Naturally, this time their participation would reflect how they perceive different issues, which include the introduction of various popular schemes, the change of the OBC list, youth demand for productive employment, anti-incumbency factor, grassroots developmental promises, and particularly the rise of small Muslim political parties like ISF led by Naushad Siddiqui and the Janata Unnayan Party of Bharatpur's Humayun Kabir. This election is also important because it will be an acid test for the Left and the Congress to prove their strength and resilience.

Finally, a few months ago, Bangladesh underwent its first election after the ouster of Sheikh Hasina. Noticeably Jamaat-e-Islami emerged as the main opposition force in Bangladesh through the election. Noticeably, it dominated most of the districts bordering India. Therefore, it goes without saying that the Election Commission of India deserved praise for tightening security in the bordering states where elections were held.

Why is the common Indian away from insurance?

By: Dr Satyawan Saurabh

India today ranks among the world's fastest-growing economies. High growth rates, the digital revolution, rising incomes, and a strengthening global position—all indicate that the country is progressing economically. But behind this rosy picture lies a reality that often goes unnoticed: the average Indian citizen still lacks access to the most basic means of financial security: insurance. Ironically, in a country rife with uncertainties—illness, accidents, natural disasters, job instability—insurance is still considered an "additional expense" rather than a "necessary safety net."

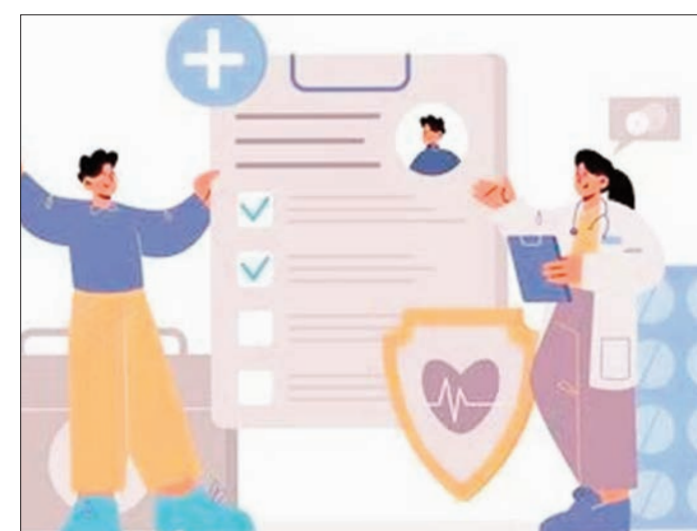
The state of insurance coverage in India is far from satisfactory. Both insurance density and penetration are below the global average. Rural India, which represents the bulk of the country's population, has extremely limited access to insurance. Despite some expansion of life insurance, the situation with health, crop, and property insurance remains worrisome. The question arises: why is insurance coverage not expanding in tandem with the pace of development?

The first and foremost reason for this is a lack of awareness. A large portion of the country still doesn't understand what insurance is and how it can provide security in their lives. In rural areas, insurance is often viewed as a fraud or a scam. Misinformation provided by agents, unclear policy terms, and hassles during claims create distrust among people. As a result, people choose to avoid insurance.

Another major reason is financial priorities. When a family's income is limited and meeting daily needs is challenging, insurance isn't a priority. For the average Indian, food, education, health, and housing come first; insurance comes second. This thinking isn't wrong, but it's also true that a minor accident or illness can devastate an entire family's financial situation—and this is where insurance is most needed.

The third reason is the complexity of insurance products. The products offered by insurance companies are often beyond the understanding of the average person. Lengthy terms, technical jargon, and unclear benefits—all of this combine to make insurance a "complicated" and "convoluted" product. It's difficult for the average person to understand which policy is right for them. Agents often exploit this complexity, selling customers policies that don't meet their needs.

Additionally, the claims settlement process is a major reason for people to shy away from insurance. It's common to hear that companies reject claims citing technical reasons or prolong the



process so much that customers are frustrated and give up. Such experiences spread rapidly through society, creating the impression that insurance is merely a means of collecting money, not a source of assistance in times of crisis.

The weakness of the distribution system is also a significant factor. Insurance remains largely dependent on an agent-based model, which has limited reach. Agents are scarce in rural and remote areas, and even where they exist, their priority is earning commissions, not providing sound advice to customers. The advent of digital platforms has certainly improved the situation, but due to a lack of digital literacy, its benefits are not reaching every segment.

Social and cultural factors are no less important. In Indian society, future uncertainties are often considered "God's will." Risk management thinking is still not widespread. People believe that if bad times come, they will somehow manage them—but this thinking often proves to be counterproductive.

However, in recent years, the government has launched several initiatives to promote insurance. Schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), and Ayushman Bharat have attempted to bring the poor and low-income groups into the insurance market. These schemes have proven that people are willing to adopt insurance if it is affordable, simple, and accessible. However, the reach of these schemes remains limited, and more efforts are needed to bring about widespread change.

The recently passed Insurance Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2025, is considered an important step in this direction. In particular, the concept of a Managing Attorney General (MGA) could open up new possibilities in the insurance sector. MGAs can work at the local level to make insurance products more relevant and accessible. This will strengthen the distribution sys-

tem, spur product innovation, and make the claims settlement process more transparent. If implemented correctly, it could bring about a positive change in the insurance sector. But policy reforms alone are not enough. The real challenge lies in implementing these reforms. This requires first establishing insurance as a "right," not a "product." Just as education and health are considered fundamental needs, insurance must also be recognized as an essential part of social security.

Awareness campaigns can play a crucial role in this direction. Promoting financial literacy in schools and colleges, providing information about insurance in simple language through the media, and conducting awareness programs at the local level are essential. Additionally, insurance products must be made simple and transparent, allowing the common person to make informed decisions without any confusion.

Regulatory bodies also have increased responsibilities. They must ensure that insurance companies prioritize customer interests, simplify and ensure timely claims settlement processes, and take strict action against any misuse. The use of digital technology can be helpful in this regard, but it is equally important to ensure data security and privacy.

Ultimately, it's important to understand that insurance isn't just a financial product, but a social security system. It's the trust that empowers individuals to remain steadfast in the face of uncertainty. Until this trust is strengthened, the scope of insurance will remain limited.

For India, "Insurance for all, protection for all" is not just a slogan, but a necessity. If the country is to become a developed nation by 2047, every citizen must be financially secure. And this is only possible if insurance is made an essential part of the life of the average Indian. Otherwise, this race for development will remain incomplete, with glitter but no protection.

Drone strike hits Ukraine's Odesa, wounding 14

2 killed in Russian-held Kherson

KYIV, April 27: A Russian drone attack before dawn on Ukraine's southern city of Odesa wounded 14 people, including two children, authorities said Monday, in the latest barrage of civilian areas that have been a hallmark of Moscow's full-scale invasion, now in its fifth year.

The drones hit residential neighborhoods and civilian infrastructure, said the head of the city's administration, Serhii Lysak. Russia has repeatedly targeted Odesa, a key Black Sea port for Ukraine. Five of the injured, most of them with shrapnel wounds, were hospitalized, according to the head of the regional military administration, Oleh Kiper.

Meanwhile, a Ukrainian drone strike killed two people in the Russian-occupied part of Ukraine's Kherson region, Moscow-installed Gov. Vladimir Saldo



said Monday. A man and a woman in their 70s died in the village of Dnipriany, he said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Monday that over the past week Russia has fired approximately

1,900 attack drones, nearly 1,400 powerful guided aerial bombs and around 60 missiles of various types at Ukraine.

Ukraine's wartime development of cutting-edge military technology means it is intercepting more than 90% of the drones that Russia launches, Zelenskyy claimed in a post on X. However, Ukraine needs more American-made Patriot air defense missiles that are able to shoot down Russia's ballistic missiles.

Ukraine has recently been helping countries in the Middle East and Gulf region, which are countering attacks on their territory by Iranian drones, with know-how amid the Iran war.

Also, Norway is the latest European country to enter into a joint drone manufacturing agreement with Kyiv, Ukraine's Defense Ministry said Monday.

Zelenskyy noted a recent raft of good news for Ukraine: NATO partners, excluding the United States, have contributed to a financial arrangement to buy American weapons, the European Union has approved a 90-billion-euro (\$106-billion) loan to Ukraine, and the EU intends to place more sanctions on Moscow.

Meanwhile, Ukraine has been assailing oil terminals and refineries deep inside Russia with long-range drones and missiles, aiming to disrupt Moscow's economy.

The Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank, said late Sunday it has seen geolocated evidence that Ukrainian forces conducted at least 10 strikes against Russian oil and gas infrastructure in the past two weeks. (AP)

Malian defence chief killed as jihadis, rebels seize towns and military bases

DAKAR (SENEGAL), April 27: Mali's defence minister was killed in a sweeping attack by jihadis and rebels who seized several towns and military bases, authorities said Sunday, the latest violence in the junta-run country that has long battled militants linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group as well as a separatist rebellion in the north.

The Malian government confirmed the death of the defence chief, Gen. Sadio Camara, in a post on the defence ministry's Facebook page, and expressed its condolences to his family. State-run television also broadcast the announcement of his death by spokesman Gen. Issa Ousmane Coulibaly.

Mali was struck on Saturday by one of the biggest coordinated attacks on its army in the capital, Bamako, and several other cities and towns in an assault that also challenged Mali's security partner, Russia, which has forces on the ground in the West African country.

The government said Sunday the attacks appear to be over, but several questions remain, including who was in control of a key northern city that the separatists claim to have taken.

The government has not provided a death toll from Saturday and previously said only that at least 16 people were wounded in what it denounced as terror attacks.

The separatists have been fighting for years to create an independent state in northern Mali, while al-Qaida and IS-aligned militants have been fighting the government for over a decade.

According to the government statement, Camara's residence was targeted by a suicide car bomber and other attackers on Saturday.

"He engaged in an exchange of fire with the assailants, some of whom he managed to neutralise," it said. "During intense clashes, he was wounded and then transported to the hospital, where he unfortunately succumbed to his injuries."

Separatists claim control of the northern town of Kidal

A spokesperson for the separatist

Tuareg-led Azawad Liberation Front, or FLA, said the Russian Africa Corps troops and the Malian military withdrew from the city of Kidal following the attack on Saturday, after an agreement was reached for their peaceful exit.

"Kidal is declared free," said FLA spokesperson Mohamed El Maouloud Ramadan.

In a statement on state TV late Sunday night, Gen. Oumar Diarra, head of the armed forces, confirmed that the Malian army had left the city and that its forces were repositioning in Anefis, a city about 100 kilometres (62 miles) south of Kidal.

The separatists have been fighting for years to create an independent state in northern Mali.

Kidal had long served as a stronghold of the rebellion before being taken by Malian government forces and Russian mercenaries in 2023. Its capture marked a significant symbolic victory for the junta and its Russian allies.

Militants unite with separatists to coordinate attacks

Saturday's wave of attacks was the first time the separatists joined forces with the al-Qaida-linked group JNIM, which said it was also part of the attack on Kidal and had also targeted a town outside of the capital of Bamako and three other cities on Saturday.

The FLA spokesperson confirmed the coordinated push.

"This operation is being carried out in partnership with the JNIM, which is also committed to defending the people against the military regime in Bamako," Ramadan said.

The separatists called on Russia to "reconsider its support for the military junta" in Mali, saying its "actions have contributed to the suffering of the civilian population."

Wassim Nasr, a specialist for the region and senior research fellow at the Soufan Centre security think tank, said this "coordination, conducting attacks all over the country at the same time," the united push by the two groups and the call for the Russian military to leave was a first. (AP)

Iran's FM Araghchi calls his Islamabad visit 'successful' after arriving in Russia

MOSCOW, April 27: Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, after arrival in Russia on Monday, said that his trip to Islamabad was "very productive" and involved "good consultations" with Pakistan's top leadership, amid uncertainty over the second round of peace talks to resolve the war in West Asia.

Araghchi arrived in Russia after his second visit to Islamabad in the last three days, where he met with Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir on Sunday evening.

"We held good consultations with our friends in Pakistan. The trip was successful. We assessed the outcome of our recent (meetings) and discussed in what direction and under what conditions talks can move on," Araghchi said in a video posted on his Telegram channel upon his arrival in St Petersburg.

Referring to the second round of talks between the US and Iran to resolve the conflict in West Asia, Araghchi said: "Developments have taken place in the negotiations."

"Despite some progress in earlier rounds, the talks failed to reach their objectives due to the Americans' approach, the excessive demands they made, and the wrong approaches they adopted. Therefore, it was necessary to consult with our friends in Pakistan to review the latest situation," Iran's official news agency IRNA quoted him as saying.



Araghchi said that the trip to Pakistan was a good opportunity to review developments related to the US-Israeli war against Iran, expressing confidence that "these consultations and coordination between the two countries will be highly significant."

Araghchi arrived at St. Petersburg's Pulkovo Airport early Monday, where he was welcomed by Russian officials and Iran's ambassador to Russia, Kazem Jalali, the report said.

Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that the Russian president was scheduled to

meet with the Iranian minister.

The first round of peace talks between Iran and the US, held on April 11 and 12, failed to bring the desired result for the parties to the conflict.

The Iranian minister arrived in Islamabad for the second time on Sunday after visiting Oman, where he held talks with Sultan Haitham bin Tariq al-Said on security in the Strait of Hormuz and diplomatic efforts to end the Iran-US conflict.

After Araghchi left for Oman on Saturday, President Donald Trump announced that US negotiators Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner would no longer be going to Islamabad for talks with Iran, contending that Washington held all the cards on the matter.

Trump on Sunday reiterated that the US and Iranian officials can talk by phone for a peace solution to the conflict.

On Tuesday, Trump extended the two-week ceasefire with Iran indefinitely to give Tehran more time to prepare a unified proposal to end the war, just hours before the truce was set to expire.

The war began when the US and Israel jointly attacked Iran on February 28, killing Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and several top commanders. The retaliation by the Islamic Republic extended the war to the entire Gulf region. (PTI)

Justice Dept cites dinner shooting to press preservationists to drop Trump ballroom suit

WASHINGTON, April 27: President Donald Trump's Justice Department is using the shooting at the White House Correspondents' Dinner on Saturday to try to pressure preservationists to drop their lawsuit over his planned USD 400 million ballroom on the site of the former East Wing of the White House.

"It's time to build the ballroom," acting Attorney General Todd Blanche said plainly Sunday on X, posting a letter in which Assistant Attorney General Brett Shumate gave the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which has sued to block construction, until 9 am Monday to dismiss its lawsuit.

If it doesn't do so, Shumate wrote, the government would ask a court to do so "in light of last night's extraordinary events," calling the Washington Hilton — the site of Saturday's gala — "demon-



strably unsafe" for events with the president "because its size presents extraordinary security challenges for the Secret Service."

The White House ballroom, Shumate wrote, "will ensure the safety and security of the President for decades to come and prevent future assassination attempts on the President at the Washington Hilton."

Asked about the letter, Elliot Carter, spokesperson for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, said Sunday the group would review it with legal counsel.

The preservation group sued in December, a week after the White House finished demolishing the East Wing to make way for a ballroom that Trump said would fit 999 people.

Trump says the project is funded by private donations, although public money is paying for the bunker construction and security upgrades.

A crowd of 2,300 attended Saturday night's event at the Hilton, home to one of the few rooms in Washington large enough for the event.

It packs in attendees at round tables whose chairs are back to back, and room to move around is tight.

The dinner is not a White House event — it is run by the White House Correspondents' Association, a nonprofit organisation of journalists from media outlets that cover the president. (AP)

Taiwan court sentences ex-Tokyo Electron staff to 10 years in TSMC trade secrets case

NEW TAIPEI CITY (TAIWAN), April 27: A court in Taiwan sentenced a former employee of Japanese computer chip equipment maker Tokyo Electron to 10 years in prison on Monday in a landmark case over trade secrets of the island's leading chipmaker TSMC.

Tokyo Electron was also fined 150 million new Taiwan dollars (USD 4.8 million) and four other people were sentenced to up to six years in jail.

The heavy sentencing under Taiwan's national security act and other statutes underscores Taiwan's efforts to protect the self-ruled island's advanced technology and semiconductor sector, which are vital for its export-oriented economy as artificial intelligence booms.

TSMC, or Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Corp., is one of the world's most valuable compa-

nies and counts Nvidia and Apple as key customers.

In handing down the 10-year sentence at Taiwan's Intellectual Property and Commercial Court, Judge Chang Ming-huang said Chen Li-ming, who worked at TSMC before moving to Tokyo Electron's subsidiary in Taiwan, was believed to have used his relationships with his former TSMC colleagues to illegally access and collect the chip maker's trade secrets.

Chen photographed, copied and passed along the materials to help Tokyo-based Tokyo Electron improve its bids as a TSMC supplier, according to the court.

Chen's motivation was mainly to "improve his personal work performance," Chang said, but he jeopardised the competitiveness and economic security of Taiwan and its chipmaking industry. (AP)

Pope Leo vows to keep working to overcome differences in meeting with first Anglican female leader

VATICAN CITY, April 27: Pope Leo XIV vowed Monday to keep working to overcome differences with the worldwide Anglican Communion during a meeting with its first female leader, the Archbishop of Canterbury Sarah Mullally.

Leo acknowledged that "new problems" in their relationship have been added onto "historically divisive issues." But he nevertheless vowed to continue the tradition of past popes to continue to try to reunite the churches, deepen bonds of communion, affirm a shared witness, and encourage ongoing collaboration at both global and local levels.

Anglicans split from Rome in 1534, when English King Henry VIII was refused a marriage annulment. Despite a formal theological dialogue that began in the 1960s, big differences remain, especially over the Church of England's decision to ordain women. The Roman Catholic Church reserves the priesthood for men.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Sarah Mullally, prayed with Pope Leo XIV at the Vatican on Monday, an encounter between Christianity's two most famous religious figures that would have been unthinkable just a few years ago, given the divisions between their two churches over women's ordination and her historic appointment.

Mullally thanked Leo for welcoming her on her first foreign visit since she was installed last month as the first woman leader of the Church of England and spiritual leader of millions of Anglicans around the world.

Mullally, whose appointment has split the already divided Anglican Communion, arrived early to meet with Leo in his library. The two then prayed together in the Urban VIII Chapel inside the Apostolic palace for what the Vatican said was a "moment of prayer."

In her remarks to Leo, Mullally said both of them were called to preach the Gospel with "renewed clarity."

"In the face of inhuman violence, deep division, and rapid societal change, we must keep telling a more hopeful story: that every human life has infinite value because we are precious children of God; that the human family is called to live as sisters and brothers," she said.

"We must therefore work together for the common good — always building bridges, never walls; that the poorest among us are closest to the heart of God."

The Vatican didn't immediately provide the text of Leo's remarks to Mullally.

A pilgrimage to Rome amid challenges

Mullally is on what she has called a four-day pilgrimage to Rome that has included visits to the main pontifical basilicas, where she has prayed at the tombs of Saints Peter and Paul and met with top Vatican officials.

Lambeth Palace says her visit is designed "to strengthen Anglican-Roman Catholic relations through prayer, personal encounter, and formal theological dialogue."

"It aims to deepen bonds of communion, affirm a shared witness, and encourage ongoing collaboration at both global and local levels."



Anglicans split from Rome in 1534, when English King Henry VIII was refused a marriage annulment. Despite a formal theological dialogue that began in the 1960s, big differences remain, especially over the Church of England's decision to ordain women. The Roman Catholic Church reserves the priesthood for men.

The first female Anglican priests were ordained in 1994, its first female bishop in 2015, and now Mullally as the first archbishop of Canterbury.

Leo and Mullally have already exchanged greetings, with Leo congratulating her on her installation last month but acknowledging she was taking over at a "challenging" time and that differences still divide the Anglican and Catholic churches.

"We also know that the ecumenical journey has not always been smooth," Leo wrote. "Despite much progress, our immediate predecessors, Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin Welby, acknowledged frankly that new circumstances have presented new disagreements among us," Leo wrote.

He nevertheless vowed to continue dialogue, and in October Leo welcomed King Charles III and Queen Camilla to the Vatican, where they prayed in the Sistine Chapel. Charles is the titular head of the Church of England.

That event, October 25, marked the first time since the Reformation that the heads of the two Christian churches had prayed together.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the first formal ecumenical statement between the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches, signed in 1966 at St. Paul's Outside the Walls basilica by Archbishop Michael Ramsey and Pope Paul VI.

Mullally for her part has expressed solidarity with Leo's peace message, after the American-born pope was harshly criticised by President Donald Trump for his calls for peace in Iran.

An historic meeting that follows the king's visit

George Gross, an expert on theology and the

Suspected pirates seize vessel carrying cement off Somalia

MOGADISHU (SOMALIA), April 27: A cargo vessel carrying cement and flying the flag of St Kitts and Nevis has been hijacked off Somalia's coast, a local maritime security official said Monday.

The ship was seized off the coastal town of Garacad in the Somali region of Puntland, according to an operations officer from the Puntland Maritime Police Force, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to brief the media.

The incident also was reported by the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations, which cited a hijacking incident six nautical miles northeast of Garacad.

The vessel had departed from Egypt and was heading to the Kenyan port city of Mombasa. It was not possible to verify how many people were on board the vessel. The Puntland official said nine pirates boarded and took control of the vessel. This is the second incident in less than a week; on Wednesday an oil tanker was seized in waters off Puntland. (AP)

China says its ties with Pakistan maintain 'robust development'

BEIJING, April 27: China on Monday said its all-weather ties with Pakistan maintained "sound momentum and robust development" this year as it welcomed Pakistan's President Asif Ali Zardari's current visit to the country.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian told a media briefing here.

"Bilateral relations maintain a sound momentum of robust development," he said. Zardari is currently visiting Hunan and Hainan provinces in China. He arrived in China on Sunday on a week-long visit during which he will hold bilateral talks with the Chinese leadership, with a special focus on economic and trade cooperation.

China stands ready to work together with Pakistan to deepen friendly exchanges and cooperation at all levels and between different localities to build an even closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future, Lin said. (PTI)

Modi to attend celebrations marking 50 years of statehood today PM leads mega roadshow in Sikkim



GANGTOK, April 27: Prime Minister Narendra Modi led a mega roadshow in Gangtok on Monday evening after arriving in Sikkim to attend the closing ceremony of 50 years of statehood celebrations. Modi, who wore a traditional Bhutia cap and a Lepcha coat, was received at the Liling helipad by Governor Om Prakash Mathur and Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang. From the helipad, the PM began the roadshow, which concluded at Lok Bhavan, where he will stay overnight. On the open vehicle, Modi was flanked by CM Tamang on his left and state BJP president D R Thapa on his right. Large crowds lined the roads for hours, wav-

ing national flags and waiting to catch a glimpse of the Prime Minister. As his convoy moved slowly through the city, people broke into celebrations. Some enthusiastic supporters chanted "Modi, Modi, Modi", while a few women were seen showering flower petals in his direction. Modi acknowledged the cheering crowds by waving continuously. Tamang was also seen urging the gathered people to cheer for the PM during the roadshow. The route of the roadshow was decorated, with arch gates erected at several points and large cut-outs of Modi placed along the roads. On Tuesday, Modi will visit the Orchidarium in Gangtok. To commemorate the golden ju-

bilee of Sikkim's statehood and showcase the state's ecological and floral heritage, the 'Swarnajayanti Maitri Manjari' Park has been developed as a world-class Orchid Experience Centre.

The PM will also participate in the closing ceremony of Sikkim's 50th statehood celebrations at Paljor Stadium, where he will unveil development projects worth over Rs 4,000 crore.

The projects cover several sectors, including infrastructure, connectivity, healthcare, education, power, urban development, environment, tourism and agriculture.

Modi is also scheduled to address the gathering on the occasion.

He was expected to attend the opening ceremony of the year-long celebrations last year, but could not reach the venue due to inclement weather. However, he addressed the event virtually from Siliguri in neighbouring West Bengal.

Tamang later thanked the people for giving the grand reception to the PM during the hour-long roadshow in the state capital.

"With immense fervour and heartfelt enthusiasm, the people of Sikkim accorded a grand and resounding welcome to Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji on his arrival in Gangtok," he said in a social media post.

Tamang said people from all walks of life gathered in large numbers to greet him, reflecting the deep respect and warm affection the people of Sikkim hold for his leadership.

"It was indeed an honour to join him during the roadshow and witness the overwhelming love and support of the people firsthand," he said. (PTI)

Newly elected TMP members of TTAADC take oath

AGARTALA, April 27: All the newly elected Tipra Motha Party (TMP) members of the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) were sworn in at a simple ceremony held at Khumulwng, West Tripura district, on Monday.

Law Secretary Sankari Das administered the oath of office and secrecy to the newly elected members of the district council in the presence of TMP founder, Pradyot Kishore Debbarma and senior leaders.

Four BJP members who won the elections boycotted the swearing-in ceremony in protest against post-poll violence across the entire state that left over 2000 families homeless.

The TMP had won 24 out of the 28 seats in the TTAADC elections. The BJP had won four seats.

Talking to the media, the TMP chief said the new council will focus on key sectors such as education, health, drinking water and entrepreneurship development.

"We want to bring a change in the system to take Tripura forward. If we want to move forward, we have to change our mindset. Education, healthcare, drinking water and entrepreneurship devel-



opment will take the front seat in the new council," he said.

Pradyot Debbarma said he wants to involve resourceful persons, who are not directly involved in politics but can contribute to guiding the tribal council.

"There are many resourceful persons who are not directly associated with politics but possess knowledge to guide the tribal council in governance and development. I will take them on board for the betterment of the tribal council," he said.

Newly elected MDC Rajeshwar

Debbarma said all the elected TMP members took the oath as the MDCs in the presence of the party supremo, except for four from the BJP.

"We will try our level best to implement the vision of the party supremo, as the people have given a massive mandate in favour of the party.

Discussions are already underway to select the Chairman, Chief Executive Member (CEM) and Executive Members (EMs) of TTAADC. The process is expected to be completed by the first week of May," he said. (PTI)

Three convicted in trespass, assault case

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, April 27: The Court of the Judicial Magistrate First Class, North Garo Hills, has convicted three accused persons in a case involving assault and criminal trespass registered in 2020.

The convicted individuals—Hamton D Shira, Clinton D Shira, and Riksrang D Shira—were found guilty under Sections 323 and 447 of the Indian Penal Code for voluntarily causing hurt and criminal trespass.

The court, in its judgment delivered on April 10, sentenced each of the accused to four years and three months of simple imprisonment.

The case was originally registered at the Women Police Station, Mendipathar, under Sections 447, 325, 354 and 34 of the IPC.

Officials stated that the conviction reflects the sustained efforts and diligent investigation carried out by the police and concerned authorities.

The judgment has been described as a significant outcome in ensuring accountability for criminal acts and upholding the rule of law in the district.

ED cracks down on suspected interstate liquor racket, raids 9 sites in Arunachal

ITANAGAR, April 27: The Enforcement Directorate has carried out coordinated searches at nine locations across Arunachal Pradesh in connection with a suspected large-scale interstate liquor smuggling and money laundering network, officials said on Monday.

The action, taken under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), is part of an expanding probe that points to a syndicate exploiting tax differentials among states.

Officials said liquor designated for sale within Arunachal Pradesh was allegedly diverted and supplied illegally to markets in Assam and other states.

The searches, conducted earlier this week, spanned multiple towns such as Itanagar, Naharlagun, Seppa, Ziro, Daporijo, Namsai and Roing, targeting wholesale liquor businesses suspected of being linked to the network.

According to officials, the investigation stems from a series of FIRs registered by Assam Police over the illegal transportation of liquor from Arunachal Pradesh into Assam.

Inputs from the Assam Excise Department further strengthened



the case. An Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) was registered on October 17, 2024, and later widened through an addendum incorporating 173 additional FIRs.

Earlier searches conducted on February 4 last year, at premises linked to three alleged key operators, believed to be major liquor manufacturers, had revealed indications of a well-coordinated operation.

Investigators suspect that the

network functioned through a chain of manufacturers, bonded warehouses and wholesalers, while masking real ownership using proxy arrangements such as tribal partnerships and dummy licence holders.

During the latest ED operations, the agency found that several wholesale units were operating under proxy licences issued in the names of local individuals, while actual control remained with the suspected masterminds.

Financial scrutiny revealed that between 51 and 90 per cent of total credits in certain bank accounts comprised unexplained cash deposits.

Investigators also flagged a pattern of invoice splitting, with transactions deliberately kept below ₹ 2 lakh to avoid scrutiny. In one instance, more than 200 invoices of identical value of ₹ 1,99,554 were generated within a single month at one location.

On-ground staff reportedly confirmed that records, including stock registers and daily cash collections, were being routed to offices associated with the alleged controllers.

The ED said it seized approximately ₹ 40 lakh in unaccounted cash during the searches.

In a significant finding, 14 seals, some purportedly belonging to the Excise Department of the Arunachal Pradesh government, were recovered from one of the premises. These are suspected to have been used to create fake transport permits to facilitate the unauthorised movement of liquor.

Further investigation is underway, officials added. (PTI)

Kidnap bid foiled, businessman rescued

Swift naka operation by North Garo Hills Police leads to interception

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, April 27: In a swift operation, the North Garo Hills Police foiled an alleged abduction attempt and rescued a businessman within half an hour of receiving the alert on April 25.

According to an official release from the Superintendent of Police, Bajengdoba Police Station received credible information around 3 pm that unidentified persons had abducted a businessman in a silver Ertiga vehicle from the Bolsong area.

Acting promptly, a police team set up a naka (checkpoint) at Masinggre to intercept the vehicle.

At around 3:30 pm, the suspect vehicle was stopped during checking, and the abducted businessman was found inside and rescued safely.

Preliminary inquiry revealed that the miscreants had intercepted the victim along the Bolsong-Agia road, forcibly stopped him, robbed him of cash, and snatched his motorcycle key and mobile phone before attempting to take him away.

Police have identified the accused persons and initiated legal proceedings.

During questioning, one of the suspects reportedly claimed links with an organisation identified as the United Garo People's Forum.

A case has been registered at Bajengdoba Police Station under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, and further investigation is ongoing.

The police reiterated their commitment to act firmly against all forms of crime, including offences carried out under the guise of organisations, and urged the public to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activities promptly.

Khandu seeks Centre's sustained support to strengthen strategic border infra



ITANAGAR, April 27: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu has urged the Centre for continued support to strengthen strategic infrastructure in the state, particularly in border areas.

During a meeting with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in New Delhi on Sunday, the chief minister, while emphasising the importance of connectivity for both national security and local development, highlighted key projects, including the Akajan-Likabali-Bame corridor and sought the timely execution of ongoing works, an official statement said.

Khandu said Arunachal Pradesh has witnessed unprecedented growth in infrastructure in recent years,

especially in the border districts. He said such developments have significantly enhanced India's security preparedness along its international borders, while also improving the quality of life for residents in remote and forward areas.

The chief minister held detailed discussions with Singh on the state's connectivity requirements, with particular focus on the strategically vital Akajan-Likabali-Bame corridor.

The project, which includes the construction of a crucial bridge over the Taro Tamak River, is expected to strengthen links between the plains of Assam and the remote districts of Upper Subansiri and Shi-Yomi in Arunachal Pradesh.

Officials said work on most stretches of this key corridor is being executed by the Border Roads Organisation, which has been playing a key role in developing strategic road networks in the frontier state.

The defence minister assured Khandu that all proposals and infrastructure projects related to Arunachal Pradesh would be considered with due priority.

"We are grateful to Rajnath ji for his unwavering support towards the development of border infrastructure and the transformation of forward areas in Arunachal Pradesh," Khandu said in a social media post after the meeting. (PTI)

Fix responsibility, restore peace in Manipur: North East Students' Organisation

SHILLONG, April 27: The North East Students' Organisation on Monday called for immediate steps to end the ongoing violence in Manipur.

In a statement, NESO, an umbrella organisation of student bodies of all NE states, expressed "deep concern over the recurring cycle of violence and bloodshed" in Manipur, saying innocent lives continue to be lost and the fabric of peaceful coexistence is being eroded.

"These repeated acts of violence against unarmed civilians represent a grave humanitarian concern that strikes at the core of human dignity, security and the fundamental right to live in peace," NESO chairman SB Jyryva said. The organisation said the continuing unrest has caused "immeasurable suffering" to families and communities, leaving behind grief, fear and uncertainty. It extended condolences to the bereaved families and expressed solidarity with all those affected by the prolonged conflict.

"The pain endured by the people is a collective pain shared by the entire North East," Jyryva said.

At the same time, NESO questioned the inability of both state and central authorities to effectively intervene and end the crisis.

"The continued failure to restore peace and normalcy reflects a deeply concerning lapse in governance and responsibility," he said. (PTI)

Nagaland University launches 4-year science courses



HT Correspondent
DIMAPUR, April 27: Nagaland University has introduced new four-year undergraduate science programmes at its Multi-Disciplinary Research Centre (MDRC), expanding opportunities for research-oriented and flexible higher education in the state.

The programmes, offered at the Lumami campus, include core disciplines such as Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Zoology and Botany, along with Ability Enhancement Courses and Value Added Courses aimed at building a holistic academic foundation.

The MDRC will follow a Flexible Choice-Based Credit System, allowing multiple entry and exit options.

Students can earn a certificate after one year, a diploma after two years, a bachelor's degree after three years, and a bachelor's degree with research after four years.

The four-year research track also enables direct admission to PhD programmes as per applicable regulations. Admissions for the programmes have opened from April 27 and will continue till May 18.

The initiative is aligned with the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, focusing on multidisciplinary learning, flexibility and research integration.

Vice-Chancellor Jagadish Kumar Patnaik said, "Aligned with the vision of NEP 2020, these programmes offer flexible exit options, a dedicated research track, and a truly multidisciplinary learning environment.

This initiative reflects the University's commitment to academic innovation, research excellence, and preparing students for the evolving demands of the future."

The university has invited students from across the country to apply, highlighting that the programmes are designed to equip learners with strong academic grounding, practical skills and clear pathways to higher studies and careers.

ZPM secures landslide victory in Aizawl Municipal Corporation polls

AIZAWL, April 27: Ruling Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) on Monday secured a landslide victory in the Aizawl Municipal Corporation (AMC) polls, bagging 17 seats in the 19-member civic body, officials said. Counting for the AMC polls was held in the Aizawl deputy commissioner's office peacefully. The results were declared by the Mizoram State Election Commission.

Main opposition Mizo National Front (MNF), which had won the previous election in 2021 by securing 11 seats, had to settle with only one ward this time, while the Congress also bagged a seat. ZPM had won six seats in 2021.

The ZPM, MNF and Congress fielded 19 candidates each this election. The BJP, which contested 11 seats, drew a blank.

The AMC was established in 2010 under the Mizoram Municipalities Act, 2007. There are 19 wards in the civic body, of which six are reserved for women. All the reserved seats were bagged by the ZPM.

The first AMC polls held in 2010 were won by the Congress, while the MNF swept the subsequent two elections in 2015 and 2021.

A total of 62.77 per cent turnout out of 2.39 lakh voters was recorded in the civic polls held on April 21. (PTI)

Boleng students learn river management

HT Correspondent
BOLENG, April 27: More than 330 students across Boleng town in Arunachal Pradesh participated in a three-day educational exhibition focused on river conservation and sustainable infrastructure, aimed at simplifying complex environmental and development issues for young learners.

The initiative began on April 20 at the Government Upper Primary School in Rengo and later expanded to the PM SHRI Secondary School on April 21, before concluding at the Government Higher Secondary School on April 22.

The programme sought to build awareness around the proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP) and broader themes of river management.

Instead of conventional classroom teaching, the campaign introduced a 12-zone visual walkthrough, where educators guided



students through the journey of the Siang River.

Concepts such as flood control, clean energy generation and balanced regional development were explained in an engaging and accessible manner.

A key feature of the exhibition was the distribution of an anime-style FAQ comic designed to address local misconceptions and present factual information about infrastructure projects in a relatable format.

The approach aimed to encourage critical

thinking and informed understanding among students.

"Integrating complex developmental science with relatable narrative structures is imperative for effective pedagogy. This visual and interactive approach has ignited genuine curiosity among students," a senior school administrator said during the programme.

The initiative was supported by local educational authorities, with active participation from school heads and teachers across the institutions.

Their involvement helped create an open environment for dialogue, enabling students to better understand the region's developmental challenges and opportunities.

Officials noted that the programme played a crucial role in bridging knowledge gaps and promoting informed awareness among the youth, particularly on issues related to river ecosystems and sustainable growth.

Mood of Bengal suggests BJP's victory in polls, will return during oath-taking ceremony: PM

KOLKATA, April 27: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday exuded confidence that the BJP would form the next government in West Bengal after the assembly polls, asserting that he would return to the state for the oath-taking ceremony after results are announced on May 4.

Addressing a poll rally at Barrackpore in North 24 Parganas district on the final day of campaigning for the second and last phase of the assembly elections, Modi launched a sharp attack on the ruling TMC, accusing it of presiding over 'syndicate raj', political violence and economic decline.

"The mood that I have sensed in West Bengal, I can say that I will return during the oath-taking ceremony of the BJP government after May 4," Modi said, drawing loud cheers from the crowd.

Invoking the historical significance of Barrackpore, the prime minister said the region had played a key role in India's first war of Independence in 1857 and was now preparing the ground for political change in West Bengal.

Modi said West Bengal's progress was essential for India's overall development and stressed that the rise of the eastern region was crucial for the country's future.

"My destiny and responsibility are to serve, secure and save West Bengal," he said. Drawing parallels with recent BJP gains in neighbouring states, Modi said, "After Odisha and Bihar, the lotus will bloom in West Bengal too this time."

He alleged that the TMC had betrayed its slogan of 'Maa, Maati, Maanush' and had no vision for the state's development.

Claiming that industries were shutting down while criminal networks flourished, Modi said, "On one hand, mills are closing down and on the other, crude bomb factories are coming up, employing goons, and the TMC's syndicate is expanding." He urged voters to defeat what he called the "syndicate raj".

The prime minister accused the ruling party of resorting to abuse and intimidation instead of governance.

"TMC's only strategy seems to be hurling abuses, issuing threats and spreading

falsehoods. They have targeted me, constitutional institutions and even the armed forces with their derogatory remarks," he alleged.

Reaching out to Matuas, a refugee-origin community influential in several districts of south Bengal, Modi assured them that the BJP government would ensure citizenship and documentation for all eligible people. "I assure the Matua community that you will get citizenship and all necessary documents will be provided to you," he said.

He also struck a strong note on illegal infiltration, saying that genuine Indian citizens will be protected and illegal immigrants will face action.

"No Indian, irrespective of caste or religion, will face any problem, but infiltrators will not be spared," Modi said.

Referring to Bharatiya Jana Sangh founder Syama Prasad Mookerjee, Modi said the BJP had already fulfilled one of his major ideological commitments by abrogating Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir. (PTI)

Managed by Ministry of Tribal Affairs (Government of India) NESTS & Assam State Tribal Educational Society, Tribal Development Department (ASTES)

EKLAVYA MODEL RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL, HOWRAGHAT

Block-Howraghat District - Karbi Anglong State - Assam
Email: emrs.howraghat@gmail.com

ENGLISH MEDIUM

School Estd Year: 2025

School UDISE+ No:- 18190410306

No. EMRS/Howraghat/2026-27/03

CBSE Affiliation No

School No:-

Dated: 22/04/2021

OFFICE OF THE EMRS HOWRAGHAT::

KARBI ANGLONG, HOWRAGHAT

Short Tender Notice

Sealed quotations affixing non-judicial court stamp worth Rs. 8.25 (Rupees Eight and Twenty-Five Paise) only are hereby invited from reputed vendors/firms/individuals having valid GST registration for managing/running the mess facility as per the food menu/diet chart specified below for the students of EMRS Howraghat, Karbi Anglong for the academic session of 2026-2027. The Quotations will be received up to 3:00 PM on the 11th of May 2026 and will be opened on the next day in the presence of the procurement committee and the quotationers. The details are as follows::

Food Chart Menu for the students of EMRS.

Meals & duration	Items to be served	Timings
Pre-Breakfast	Milk 100ml, Nuts (Almonds-4 nuts per student), Tea & Biscuit	06:30 AM-07:00AM
Breakfast	Fried Rice with G. nuts & potato cubes/Puri/Bread (with Butter/lam) Lentils (Kabuli, Chana Dal, Rajma), Pickle, Khichri Milk, Boiled Egg, Tea/Juice, Honey, Fruits	02:55 AM 09:30 AM
Lunch	Rice/Roti, Lentils (Kabuli chana, Chana Dal, Rajma), Mixed Vegetables (Boiled/Fry), Aalo +Green Veg, Onion, Lemon, Green Chilly, Salad, Pickle, Papad	01:40 PM 03:00 PM
Evening Meal	Biscuits/Jhall murhi/Rusk/Noodles/Cake/Samosa/Kachori/Pakoda with Milk or Red Tea/Coffee	06:00 PM-06:20 PM
Dinner	Rice/Lentils (Kabuli chana, Chana Dal, Rajma), Mixed Vegetables (Curry/Fry), Soup/Aalo+ 1 green veg Pickle, green chilly, lemon, Onion, Tomato, Papad, Fish/Chicken/Egg curry/Paneer curry *Fish/Chicken/Egg curry to be served on alternate days. *Paneer curry to be served once a week.	08:00 PM-08:45 PM

Terms & Conditions:-

- The rate should be quoted both in figure and words inclusive of GST as per applicable rate.
- Copy of GST Registration Certificate and PAN Card must be submitted along with quotation papers.
- The Sealed cover should be superscribed with the name of the firms/individuals.
- Earnest money of Rs. 3000/-should be enclosed in the form of demand draft in favour of Principal, EMRS Howraghat.
- The successful quotationer will have to supply the items within the period of given time failing which the offer will be treated cancelled and the earnest money will be forfeited.
- The earnest money of Rs. 3000/- for unsuccessful quotationer will be refunded.
- The Undersigned does not bind himself to accept the lowest rate or quotations or to assign any reason for accepting or rejection of any quotations.
- Payment of bills against all the items rendered will be done subject to availability/allotment of fund from under appropriate head of account.
- The successful vendor will be responsible for running the mess in entirety including the periodic filling/supply of LPG cylinders.
- You can contact the EMRS Howraghat office to request the Tender form. You can also ask via phone or email how to obtain the form.

Email Id:- emrs.howraghat@gmail.com

Sd/-
Principal (i/c)
EMRS Howraghat, Karbi Anglong

Managed by Ministry of Tribal Affairs (Government of India) NESTS & Assam State Tribal Educational Society, Tribal Development Department (ASTES)

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OFFICE OF THE EMRS HOWRAGHAT::

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Name of items: Stationary items

Sl. No.	Name	Frequency	Quantity (per student)	Maximum rate per student
1	Note books A4 size 160 pages Minimum quantity	Yearly	12	Rs. 1975
2	Gel/Ink Pen(Minimum Quantity)	Yearly	10	
3	Pencil Minimum Quantity	Yearly	10	
4	Geomatry Box	Yearly	1	
5	Atlas	Yearly	1	
6	Map for Practice	Monthly as per need	1	
7	Eraser	Yearly	5	
8	Graph Notebook	Yearly	1	
9	Drawing Book	Yearly	1	
10	Water colour/Colour pencil/crayon	Yearly	1	
11	Practical Notebook	Yearly	1	
12	Activity Book	Yearly	1	
13	Scale	Yearly	1	
14	Identity Card	Yearly	1	
15	School diary	Yearly	1	
16	Books	Yearly	1	
17				

Name of items: Uniform

Sl. No	Name	Frequency	Unit for Boy	Girls for Unit	Maximum rate per student
1	Full Pants. (as per colour scheme)	Yearly	2		Rs. 3890 for Boys Maximum Rs. 3580 for Girls
2	Full sleeve Shirt(as per colour scheme)	Yearly	2		
3	Tie	Yearly	1		
4	Sweater full sleeves	Yearly	1	1	
5	Blazer	Yearly	1	1	
6	Track Suit (House Colour)	Yearly	1	1	
7	House T-Shirt (Sports) (House Colour)	Yearly	1	1	
8	Sports Half pant (as per colour scheme)	Yearly	1	1	
9	Socks (as per colour scheme)	Yearly	3	3	
10	Belt with monogram Buckle	Yearly	1	1	
11	School shoes (Black)	Yearly	1	1	
12	Sports Shoes (White)	Yearly	1	1	
13	Woolen Cap(as per colour scheme)	Yearly	1	1	
14	Kurta (As per colour Scheme)	Yearly		1	
15	Salwar (As per colour Scheme)	Yearly		2	
16	Waist coat/Dupatta (As Yearly per colour Scheme)	Yearly		2	
17	House Colour Ribbon	Yearly		2	

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Sd/-
Principal (i/c)
Cum
EMRS Howraghat, Karbi Anglong
Member Secretary, EMRS, Howraghat, Karbi Anglong

'People to vote without fear of Didi's goons'

Shah says Central forces will stay in Bengal for 60 more days after polls

KOLKATA, April 27: Central forces will remain in West Bengal for 60 more days after the assembly polls, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Monday and asked voters to cast their votes without fear of "Didi's goons" in the final phase, a remark signalling the Centre's commitment to prevent possible post-poll violence.

Shah made the remarks while addressing a gathering on the last day of the election campaign after leading a massive roadshow in Behala, where voting will take place on Wednesday during the second and final phase of the West Bengal assembly polls.

Voting was held in 152 constituencies on April 23 during the first phase of elections for the 294-member assembly. A record 93 per cent voter turnout was registered in the first phase. Votes will be counted on May 4.

"Brothers and sisters, go and vote on the 29th, do not worry about Didi's (Mamata Banerjee's) goons. The Election Commission has deployed CAPF at every nook and corner, and I am telling you that even though the BJP will come to power after the elections, central forces will remain here for 60 more days," he said.

The road show, organised in support of BJP candidates for Behala Purba and Behala Paschim, turned the south Kolkata neighbourhood into a sea of saffron on the final day of campaigning.

Standing atop an open-hood vehicle, Shah waved at supporters and showered flower petals on crowds lining both sides of the road.

Asserting that there was a strong wave in favour of the BJP, Shah said that once voted to power, the party would take strict action against infiltrators and those involved in political violence.

"I want to warn Didi's goons in Chandannagar - do not step out to intimidate voters on April 29. After May 4, the BJP will punish the culprits and hang them upside down," he asserted.

Earlier this month, Election Commission officials said that as many as 500 CAPF companies will remain deployed across West Bengal for post-poll law and order duties even after the declaration of results. They will stay "till further orders of the EC," they said.

Each CAPF company comprises around 100 personnel. A record 2,450 central paramilitary companies, comprising nearly 2.5 lakh personnel, have been deployed across the state for the assembly polls. Of these, 2,321 CAPF companies have been deployed for the second phase of polling.

Amit Shah's statement that CAPFs would remain in West Bengal for "60 more days" even after polling is widely viewed through the prism of the 2021 post-poll violence in the state. After the results of the 2021 Assembly elections were declared on May 2, widespread violence was reported across several districts, with allegations of murders, arson, looting, assaults, sexual violence and forced displacement of opposition workers, particularly involving clashes between BJP and TMC supporters.

Political observers say Shah's remark serves multiple strategic purposes. First, it is aimed at reassuring anti-TMC voters—particularly BJP supporters in politically sensitive and violence-prone constituencies—that they can vote without fear of post-poll reprisals. In Bengal politics, allegations of post-election violence and



intimidation remain a major psychological factor, and the BJP is seeking to neutralise that fear. Second, it helps reinforce the BJP's long-standing political narrative that the TMC regime survives through coercion, intimidation and electoral violence, while the saffron party positions itself as the guarantor of democratic rights and free voting.

Third, it seeks to influence undecided voters and fence-sitters, especially in rural and semi-urban Bengal, where administrative pressure and local muscle power often shape voting behaviour. The underlying message is that the Centre will ensure protection, making it "safe" for voters to back the opposition.

During the roadshow, thousands of BJP workers and supporters, carrying party flags and orange-green balloons, thronged the route, raising slogans of "Jai Shri Ram" and "Bharat Mata ki Jai".

Later in the day, Shah took part in another road show at Chandannagar in Hooghly district, which also drew huge crowds and enthusiastic participation from party supporters.

Shah, who addressed more than 50 rallies and roadshows across West Bengal during the two-phase assembly elections, remained stationed in Kolkata since the night of April 20. He closely monitored the party's electoral strategy and organisational mobilisation on the ground, underscoring the BJP's high-stakes campaign push in the state.

He also reiterated his allega-

tions against Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, saying she was opposing the removal of infiltrators from electoral rolls, and that the ruling Trinamool Congress was protecting illegal immigrants for vote-bank politics.

"Didi feels pain when we say infiltrators must be removed. She is opposing SIR. Right now, names have been removed from electoral rolls, and after May 4, all infiltrators will be identified and removed from Bengal," he said.

After concluding the road show, Shah said the BJP was poised to form the next government in the state, and reiterated the party's commitment to implementing the Uniform Civil Code (UCC).

"A BJP government is going to be formed. We will implement the UCC," the home minister said, adding that after May 4, no one will be allowed to practice polygamy.

"So far, there has been no major incident of violence. Not a single death has taken place. The elections are being conducted peacefully," he said.

In one of his sharpest attacks against the TMC during the ongoing campaign, Shah invoked the Ram temple-Babri Masjid dispute and referred to suspended TMC MLA and AIUP founder Humayun Kabir. He alleged that Banerjee, through Humayun Kabir, wanted to build a "Babri Masjid" in Bengal.

"Mamata Didi wants her associate Humayun Kabir to build a Babri Masjid in Bengal. Didi, listen carefully. Bengal is in India. We will never allow a Babri Masjid to be built in Bengal," Shah said.

He also alleged large-scale corruption in social welfare schemes under the TMC government, and asserted that those responsible would not be spared if the BJP came to power. Shah said bringing the BJP to power in West Bengal was essential to transform the state into a "Sonar Bangla" and restore law and order, development and good governance. (PTI)

Shameful no statement issued at BRICS+ meet as India sought language dilution against Israel: Cong

NEW DELHI, April 27: The Congress on Monday said it was shocking and shameful that a joint statement was not issued after a meeting of the BRICS+ countries in New Delhi last week, claiming that this was done since India insisted on diluting the language on Israel and Palestine, and it was unacceptable to the representatives of the other member countries.

In a post on X, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said India is the only major country to show steadfast solidarity with the Israeli regime that continues its genocide in Gaza and brutal displacement of Palestinians. "The Prime Minister of India and the Prime Minister of Israel are clearly soulmates, with Israel also now being an important part of the vast predatory Modani empire," Ramesh alleged.

Congress leaders often use the term "Modani" to claim close links between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and industrialist Gautam Adani.

Ramesh said the BRICS+ meeting of deputy foreign ministers and special envoys held here on April 23-24 ended without a joint statement. "Iran and UAE are both part of the 11-member BRICS+ and their divergent positions on the war in West Asia are only to be expected. But what is shocking and shameful is that the other reason for not having a joint statement was India's insistence on diluting the language on Israel and Palestine which was unacceptable to the representatives from Russia, China, Brazil, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, UAE, and Iran," the Congress leader claimed. "India is the only major country in the world to continue to show such steadfast solidarity with the Israeli regime that continues its genocide in Gaza, its heavy bombardment of southern Lebanon, and its brutal dispossession and displacement of lakhs of Palestinians in the occupied West Bank," he added.

Sources said there was no consensus on West Asia at the BRICS+ meet due to differences between member states as India's position on Palestine remained unchanged. Sharp differences among the BRICS+ member states over the US-Israel war on Iran stalled India's efforts to build a consensus position on the conflict during the meeting of the grouping last week, they added. There was no change in India's position on the Palestine issue at all, the sources said, days after the meeting of the BRICS+ deputy foreign ministers and special envoys on Middle East and North America held in New Delhi. (PTI)

LG Saxena approves creation of 5 new districts in Ladakh, UT to have 7 districts now

LEH/JAMMU, April 27: Ladakh Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Monday approved the creation of five new districts in the Union Territory, fulfilling the aspirations and long-pending demand of the people of the region. He termed the decision a "historic day" for Ladakh.

"I have approved the notification for the creation of five new districts in Ladakh, fulfilling the aspirations and long-pending demand of the people of Ladakh," the LG said in a post on X.

Saxena said that with the creation of five new districts -- Nubra, Sham, Changthang, Zaskar and Drass -- Ladakh will now have seven districts, taking the total number of districts in the Union Territory to seven.

Earlier, Leh and Kargil were the only two districts in Ladakh, the largest Union



Territory in terms of area but the second least populous. It has an expanse of 86,904 square kilometres bordering China and Pakistan, with a population of 2.74 lakh, according to the 2011 census.

"The development is aligned with Honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a developed and prosperous Ladakh," Saxena said in the post. The LG added that this "transformative

decision, already approved by the Ministry of Home Affairs in August 2024, under the leadership of Minister of Home Affairs Amit Shah, would strengthen grassroots governance, decentralise administration & ensure faster delivery of public services to the people of Ladakh, especially those in remote and far-flung areas". "Creation of new districts, apart from bringing governance closer to citizens, will create new avenues for growth, employment and entrepreneurship," the Ladakh LG added.

Asserting that aspirations of the people of these areas have been fulfilled, he said, "I reaffirm my commitment to ensuring that every citizen of Ladakh benefits from this historic decision, as we move together towards a brighter, stronger and more prosperous future." (PTI)

Managed by Ministry of Tribal Affairs (Government of India) NESTS & Assam State Tribal Educational Society, Tribal Development Department (ASTES)

EKLAVYA MODEL RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL, HOWRAGHAT

Block-Howraghat District-Karbi Anglong State - Assam

Email: emrs.howraghat@gmail.com

ENGLISH MEDIUM

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School UDISE + No: 18190410306

No. EMRS/Howraghat/2026-27/05

CBSE Affiliation No-

School No:-

Dated: 22/04/2026

OFFICE OF THE EMRS HOWRAGHAT:: KARBI ANGLONG, HOWRAGHAT

Short Quotation Notice

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Name of items: Dinning Utensils.

Sl. No.	Name	Frequency	Quantity (per student)	Maximum rate per student
1	Stainless plate 5 component	Yearly	1	Rs. 380.00
2	Steel glass	Yearly	1	
3	Steel bowl	Yearly	1	
4	Steel spoon	Yearly	1	
5	Plastic Bucket & Mug (for Bathroom use)	Yearly	1	

Name of items: Toilet Items

Sl. No.	Name	Frequency	Quantity (per student)	Maximum rate per student
1	Bathing soap (75 gm) Branded	Monthly (10 month)	2	Rs. 223.00/-per month for per boys student
2	Washing Soap (100gm) branded	Monthly (10 month)	3	
3	Tooth paste 50gm branded	Monthly (10 month)	1	
4	Tongue cleaner-steel	yearly	01	
5	Tooth brush branded	Monthly (10 month)	1	
6	Shoe Polish branded	Bi Monthly (10 month)	1	Rs. 283.00/- per month for per girls student
7	Shoe brush	yearly	01	
8	Hair cutting	Monthly (10 month)	1	
9	Sanitary napkin for girls branded	Monthly (10 month)	30	
10	Hair oil (50ml) branded	Monthly (10 month)	1 (girls)	
11	Shampoo 30ml branded	Monthly (10 month)	1 (boys)	
12	Shampoo 1 bottle 50 ml branded	Monthly (10 month)	1 (girls)	

Name of items: Bedding Items.

Sl. No.	Name	Frequency	Quantity (per student)	Maximum rate per student
1	Coir mattress (6x3 feet) 3 inch coir and 1 inch foam	On joining (in class VI/through Lateral entry)	1	Rs. 4620.00/-
2	Bed Sheet (Chadar)	Yearly	1	
3	Bed Sheet	Yearly	1	
4	Pillow	Yearly	1	
5	Pillow cover	Yearly	2	
6	Mosquito Net	Yearly	1	
7	School Bag	Yearly	1	
8	Towel (Good Quality)	Yearly	2	
9	Quilt 3kg cotton with cover/blanket with cover (standard-8'x4")	On joining (in class VI/through Lateral entry)	1	

Name of items: Contingency items.

Sl. No.	Name of items	quantity
1	All Housekeeping Items (Broom, mop, soft broom, wiper, floor duster, Harpic, colin, phenyl etc.	As per Requirement by supply order

Name of items: Office & academic stationary items.

Sl. No.	Name of items	quantity
1	All items related to office stationary (Pen, pencil, whitener, fevicol, stapler, pin etc & refill of cartridge of printer and any other items as per requirement in office use	As per Requirement by supply order

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Sd/-

Principal (I/c)
EMRS Howraghat, Karbi Anglong
Cum
Member Secretary.
EMRS, Howraghat, Karbi Anglong

Sanjay Dutt announces 'Khalnayak' sequel, says he got idea for part two in jail



Actor Sanjay Dutt has announced his new film, "Khalnayak Returns", which will be a fresh interpretation of the 1993 cult classic.

Dutt's Three Dimension Motion Pictures and Producer Aksha Kamboj's Aspect Entertainment have jointly secured the rights from filmmaker Subhash Ghai and his company Mukta Arts for the second part of the iconic action-crime movie, which also featured Jackie Shroff and Madhuri Dixit.

The makers unveiled a brief teaser of "Khalnayak Returns" at a special event on Friday

evening, with Dutt reprising his iconic role of Ballu in a rugged new avatar.

The 66-year-old actor thanked Ghai for allowing him to make "Khalnayak" again.

"The journey of 'Khalnayak' has been long and without Subhash ji it wouldn't have been possible. He is a legend and the man of entertainment. He will be part of this 'Khalnayak'," Dutt told reporters here.

The actor revealed that while he was serving his jail term in connection with the 1993 Mumbai blast case, he began developing the idea to take forward the story of "Khalnayak".

"In jail, I asked everyone around me -- who will be interested to watch it. And the 4,000 inmates said they all would. I asked all of them to write one page about it (new 'Khalnayak' story) and it took me a while to read all the 4,000 pages.

"When I came out on parole, I asked Subhash sir to go through it. After that, he said it should be made," Dutt said.

Dutt, also known for movies such as "Vaastav", "Agneepath", "Sadak", "Mission Kashmir", and the blockbuster "Munna Bhai" franchise, said he is not someone who works under pressure, replying to a question about playing the fan-favourite character and meeting the expectations of fans.

"For me, what's important is the script, whether it takes six or eight months or more, I'll keep troubling Subhash ji for the story, for music, and till the time we don't get it right, we will not go ahead. The hero of the film is the script and till the time the script is of that level, we will not go on floors," he added.

Ghai said he is elated that the actor is making "Khalnayak Returns".

"It was his inner wish and passion of Sanju and Maanyata to make this ('Khalnayak Returns'). I'm sure it's going to be better (than the original). I'm always there to be of any help," the filmmaker said.

The original film, directed and produced by Ghai, is remembered as one of the biggest hits of the 1990s, and has attained cult status over the years. It featured Dutt as the anti-hero Ballu, Jackie Shroff as police officer Ram and Madhuri as undercover police officer Ganga.

The newly acquired rights pave the way for a fresh interpretation of the cult classic. While the format, whether a remake, sequel, prequel, or a new script altogether remains under wraps, the collaboration promises to bring the essence of the original to contemporary audiences while retaining its nostalgic appeal, the makers said.

Dutt and Kamboj have roped in Jyoti Deshpande of Jio Studios to creatively helm it.

Fresh from the blockbuster success of the two "Dhurandhar" films, which also featured Dutt in a pivotal role, Deshpande said she is grateful for all the love pouring in for the movie.

"Dhurandhar" became part of pop culture, not referring to the box office success of the film, people have not stopped talking about it, and that's what you call becoming part of pop culture, you can't escape it.

"That's what 'Khalnayak' did in 1993, it was a path breaking and genre defining film, people were shocked with the film, the story, characters, music, the peak detailing, each aspect of the film was enjoyed by generations," Deshpande said, adding, she is looking forward to give a new 'tadka' and a 'new life' to "Khalnayak". (PTI)

SAI PALLAVI BEST ACTRESS WE HAVE IN COUNTRY, JUNNAID HAS ALSO DONE WELL: AAMIR KHAN ON 'EK DIN'



Sai Pallavi is the best actor we have today and Junaid has done a good job too, says Aamir Khan about his latest production "Ek Din", adding dis-armingly that he cannot say much more about his son. At a musical event to promote the upcoming romantic drama, Aamir sang the title track of the movie, which is originally in the voice of Arijit Singh with music by Ram Sampath.

Aamir was also seen getting emotional as the trailer played on at the event. "As a producer, I feel so grateful for the intensity and the honesty with which each person has worked (in 'Ek Din'). I know we are missing Arijit here, he sings so well. But Ram has given such great music.

"Sai has done such an amazing job. You will get absolutely blown and I feel, if I were to speak from my heart, that Sai is the best actress we have in our country today. Junaid has also done well but I cannot say much as he is my son," Aamir said at the event, held at SNTD College here.

The filmmaker thanked the cast and crew of the movie, adding that they have made the film with sincerity and now it is for the audience to judge it.

"Ek Din" is directed by Sunil Pandey. He is Aamir's former manager as well as assistant director on movies such as "Taare Zameen Par", "Delhi Belly" and "Rang De Basanti". Aamir praised Pandey for making his debut film with lot of love and hard work.

"He has been so hardworking. He has tolerated me. Actually me and Sunil, we go a long way together... He was an AD on 'Taare Zameen Par'. Besides he was also in 'Delhi Belly', 'Rang De Basanti', and he also worked with me as a manager... Advait (Chandan, director of 'Laal Singh Chaddha' and 'Secret Superstar') was also my manager and then Sunil... Somehow my managers become filmmakers. Sunil has really done a wonderful job.

Sunil, thank you so much for making the film," the actor said.

Pallavi, who is making her Bollywood debut with the movie, said she is happy that her journey brought her to this room full of talented people.

"Thank you Aamir sir for putting me in the space like this, for making me a part of this film where I am able to enjoy... This is going to be my first Hindi film and I am actually a quite nervous but it's an absolutely beautiful journey. Thank you so much the whole team, Junaid was absolutely a beautiful co-star and an obedient child actually," she said.

It is Junaid's third film after "Maharaj" and "Loveyaapa". The actor said he had a great time shooting the romantic drama.

"Lovely time working with Pallavi, thank you so much. I think I do kind of agree with father, she is probably one of the best actresses we have in our country," he said.

Pandey thanked the team for putting the film together.

"Filmmaking is such a collective art and yes, directors are put in front, but there's just so many people who work on the film and I strongly believe that if you change the cast and crew, the film will look different. So whatever we have today is a collective effort of some of the key people here, there are a lot more people who worked on the film," he said.

Junaid portrays an introvert officer worker Rohan, who struggles to express his feelings for his office colleague, Meera (Pallavi). During a work trip to Japan, Meera meets with an accident and suffers from transient global amnesia, remembering only Rohan's character.

The film is backed by Aamir Khan and Mansoor Khan, who directed Aamir in his debut "Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak". The film is slated to release in theatres on May 1. (PTI)



Big Bang Theory spin-off stuart fails to save the universe to release in July 2026

After Young Sheldon and Georgie & Mandy's First Marriage, the hit drama The Big Bang Theory is getting another spin-off titled Stuart Fails to Save the Universe, which will begin streaming on HBO Max in July.

The new show stars Kevin Sussman, Lauren Lapkus, Brian Posehn, and John Ross Bowie. They made the announcement on Sunday during the CCXP Mexico City panel for the show, according to Variety.

About The Series
In the series, comic book shop owner Stuart Bloom is tasked with restoring reality after he breaks a device built by

Sheldon and Leonard, accidentally triggering a multiverse Armageddon.

Stuart is helped by his girlfriend Denise, his geologist friend Bert, and quantum physicist Barry Kripke. Along the way, they encounter alternate-universe versions of characters from The Big Bang Theory.

The show was first announced as being in development in April 2023 and is co-created by Chuck Lorre, Zak Penn, and Bill Prady. It is produced by Chuck Lorre Productions in association with Warner Bros. Television. Lorre, Penn, and Prady also serve as executive producers.

Stuart Fails to Save the Universe will be the fourth series in The Big Bang Theory universe.

About Big Bang Theory
The original show followed five main characters living and working in California. Leonard Hofstadter (played by Johnny Galecki) and Sheldon Cooper (played by Jim Parsons) are physicists at the California Institute of Technology and share a flat. Their neighbour Penny (played by Kaley Cuoco) is a waitress and aspiring actress. (PTI)

Salman Khan, Nayanthara's untitled action film to release on Eid 2027

Superstar Salman Khan on Friday announced that his upcoming action film with filmmaker Vamshi Paidipally will be released on Eid 2027.

The untitled film, produced by Dil Raju under his banner Sri Venkateswara Creations and featuring Tamil star Nayanthara as the female lead, went on floors in Mumbai earlier this week.

Salman shared the news while posting a behind the scenes video from the sets on his Instagram.

"Thoda durr ki sochna chahiye, That's why announced Eid... Don't worry iss wali ka bhi bataenge, when the time is right... Patience, thoda sa sabar... Mere Jiina he intezar karna padega, Baberhaal jo apka haal hai wo hi mera bhi haal hai... haha (You need to think a bit ahead—that's why Eid was announced. Don't worry, we'll reveal the other one too when the time is right. Have some patience, just a little. You'll have to wait as much as I am. Honestly, whatever you're feeling right now, I'm feeling the same... haha)," he wrote in the caption.

The announcement continues Salman's long-standing tradition of Eid releases, a run that has included blockbusters such as "Wanted" (2009), "Dabangg" (2010), "Bodyguard" (2011), "Bajranghi Bhaijaan" (2015), "Sultan" (2016), "Kick" (2014) and "Bharat" (2019).

The movie will be produced Shirish and Kuldeep Rathore are producers on the project, with Rafi Kazi as co-producer.

The project brings together two of Indian cinema's biggest names in what the makers are billing as a large-scale theatrical entertainer.

Paidipally is known for blockbuster hits such as "Yevadu", "Oopiri", "Maharshi" and "Varisu".

Nayanthara, one of the most recog-



nised names in south cinema, made her Bollywood debut with the 2023 blockbuster "Jawan" alongside Shah Rukh Khan. The film, directed by Atlee, earned over Rs 1,000 crore at the global box office.

Her south credits include "Chandramukhi", "Ghajini", "Billa", "Raja Rani" and "Viswasam", among others.

Salman will also be seen in "Maatrul-humi", directed by Apoorva Lakhia, based on the 2020 Galwan Valley conflict between India and China. (PTI)

Asha Bhosle's grandson says singer was curious about everything from AI to Instagram

Asha Bhosle was a true conversationalist and always curious about everything happening around her, be it AI or Instagram, according to the singer's grandson, who believes his grandmother touched every Indian's life in some way or the other.

Bhosle died on April 12 at the age of 92. She was one of the greatest playback singers in the Hindi film industry with over 12,000 songs to her credit in different languages. Her grandson Chin2 Bhosle said the family is still grappling with the loss as they focus on celebrating her extraordinary life full of achievements.

"She was interested in everything. About AI, music, Instagram, Facebook... she was so fascinated (by social media) that she can talk to the people directly. She always had a zest about what is happening in the world... She always was a little positive about it..."

"She was never closed to an idea, so as a conversationalist, there was so much to talk about and there was so much that she wanted to understand. If she was in the mood, she would talk about her life, her songs, she would sing songs from the 1940s," Chin2 told PTI in an interview.

Bhosle was a recipient of Padma Vibhushan

and winner of many National and international honours. Asked whether she should have received Bharat Ratna like her elder sister, Lata Mangeshkar, Chin2 said his grandmother's contribution to music is beyond such titles and don't define her impact.

"These are just titles, beautiful titles, fantastic, very honourable titles, but I would not look at her any differently. I don't think anybody in this country would look at her any differently whether she was or wasn't given these titles or honours because I know it's impossible that she didn't touch your life, in some form or the other. An award or a title doesn't take away from that, so, I think it's cool," he said.

Her death has been hard on the family and in this time of grief, they have just banded together, Chin2 said.

"You walk into the house and you want to go in and say 'hi', you want to go and give her a hug and she's not there anymore... We're meeting, chatting and we're laughing. We are trying to celebrate her life more than mourn her loss. Her loss will always be very deep and personal but we are trying to celebrate her life and I think we're succeeding because she has left such a

legacy to celebrate." Chin2 is the son of Hemant Bhosle, who died in 2015. Bhosle has two other grandchildren -- Zanaai and Ranjai from younger son Anand Bhosle.

Recalling the personal bond that he shared with Bhosle, Chin2 said she treated him like a friend and was known for her affectionate and generous nature.

"We could talk about things you would talk to a friend about, anything under the sun. She always spoiled everyone, not just me. If you liked something, she will endeavor to make it happen. If you saw something, she would pick it up and surprise you with it. If somebody was passionate about something and if she could further ignite that passion into happiness, she was at it," he said.

Known for her love of food and hospitality, the singer also had a deep passion for cooking, he said, sharing a personal anecdote.

"Her food was amazing. She loved cooking, she had restaurants also. It's a natural extension of her and she would go to this Lalbagh market at Parel, I have been with her once to buy spices. She would go there and personally argue. I loved being spoiled. When she asked,

"What do you want to eat?", I said, 'Mutton. Mutton biryani was my most favourite'," he disclosed.

Chin2, who is also a member of the band "Band Of Boys", said he initially avoided speaking about his relationship with the iconic singer, a decision that once drew her disapproval.

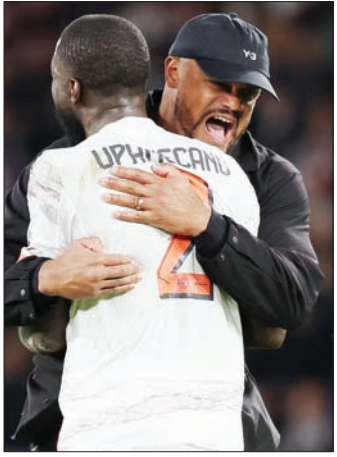
"After a couple of years into Band of boys, she actually heard an interview of mine once, unfortunately and somebody asked me, 'so Bhosle, are you related to Asha ji', I said, 'if my name was Clinton, could I be Bill Clinton's relative'... She scolded me and said, 'Do you feel shy to say you're my grandson?' She told me she saw this interview," he recalled.

Chin2 said he did not want things to be easy just because he was Asha Bhosle's grandson. Chin2 has now ventured into the SRGMS (Sargam) initiative, which introduces music to children through performance, characters and storytelling.

As tributes pour in from across the world, Chin2 said he has dedicated two songs, "Chalte Chalte" and "Main Chala" as personal homage for his grandmother. (PTI)



Bayern must adapt with coach Kompany suspended for Champions League semifinal at PSG



PARIS, April 27: Vincent Kompany's influence as coach is a key reason Bayern Munich is in the Champions League semifinals. Now Bayern will have to manage without him.

Bayern is preparing for arguably its toughest game of the season so far with its head coach suspended and assistant Aaron Danks reportedly due to take over.

Kompany was still involved in training Monday before Bayern's departure for Paris, but he'll be barred from the team's locker room and bench at the Parc des Princes on Tuesday.

"We'll miss him on the touchline. He's our boss, a coach who'd love to be out there with us," Harry Kane has said.

A costly yellow card

It's all because Kompany was booked in Bayern's thrilling quarterfinal win over Real Madrid for disputing the referee's decision to allow Madrid to play on and score after a hard tackle on Bayern defender Josip Stanisic.

That was Kompany's third yellow card in what was Bayern's 12th Champions League game of the season. He argued UEFA should relax the rules now there are more games than ever.

"It's an extended format and it's the strictest-ever ruling with a lot of interpretation from referees, where sometimes you can get a yellow card wrong as well. So what happens then?" Kompany said after the game.

"I'm not happy because of this, but it's not important. The team can do it and I'm there for the return game. I have total faith in the team, the staff, to not just continue but also gain strength and motivation out of it."

Danks on the biggest stage

Danks is one of Kompany's three main assistants and has head coaching experience. Just not

much of it.

The 42-year-old English coach is a set-piece specialist who oversaw two games for Aston Villa as caretaker coach in 2022, beating Brentford 4-0 then losing to Newcastle by the same score.

Preparations haven't exactly been easy, either.

With the Bundesliga title wrapped up, Bayern had hoped to rest key players against Mainz on Saturday, but Kompany had to bring on Kane, Michael Olise and Jamal Musiala after slipping 3-0 down before coming back to win 4-3.

Musiala meets PSG again

Musiala's facing PSG for the first time since his badly broken leg against the French team at last season's Club World Cup.

The attacking midfielder didn't return until January but has recently looked back on form with two goals and four assists in his last five games, including setting up Luis Diaz's crucial third goal in the second game against Madrid.

Lennart Karl got his break in the Bayern team during Musiala's injury absence but the 18-year-old is likely to miss Tuesday's game with a muscle issue which has sidelined him for the last three

weeks. Forward Serge Gnabry is out with a muscle tear that's ruled him out of the World Cup too.

A shot at the double-triple

The Champions League isn't just part of Bayern's quest for a triple. An even rarer achievement is possible.

Bayern is in the hunt for a triple-double of league, cup and Champions League for both its men's and women's teams. The Bayern women's squad has already won the German league, is in the final of the German Cup and is level at 1-1 with Barcelona in the Women's Champions League semifinals. (AP)

Netherlands star Xavi Simons out of World Cup and Tottenham's relegation fight because of ACL injury

LONDON, April 27: Netherlands midfielder Xavi Simons will miss the World Cup as well as relegation-threatened Tottenham's final Premier League games of the season after rupturing the ACL in his right knee.

In an emotional post on Instagram, the 23-year-old Simons — one of the best Dutch players at the European Championship in 2024 — said he is "heartbroken" and that "none of it makes sense."

Simons screamed in pain and grabbed his knee following a challenge by Wolverhampton defender Hugo Bueno in the second half of Tottenham's 1-0 win on Saturday that renewed the team's hopes of staying in the top flight. He was carried off on a stretcher.

On Monday, Tottenham confirmed Simons ruptured his anterior cruciate ligament and will undergo surgery "in the coming weeks."

"Everyone at Tottenham Hotspur sends Xavi our love and support — we will be with him every step of the way," the club said.

In his Instagram post, Simons wrote "my season has come to an abrupt end and I'm just trying to process it."

"All I've wanted to do is fight for my team and now the ability to do that has been snatched away from me ... along with the World Cup," he wrote. "Representing



my country this summer ... just gone.

"It'll take time to find peace with this, but I'll continue to be the best teammate I can be. I have no doubt that together we'll win this fight."

Tottenham remained in the relegation zone, in third-to-last place and two points from safety, despite its first league win in 2026, and is in big danger of losing its top-flight status for the first time since the late

group with Sweden, Tunisia and Japan.

Their first match is against Japan on June 14.

"I'll walk this path now, guided by faith, with strength, with resilience, with belief, as I count down the days to getting back out there," Simons wrote. "Be patient with me."

Ekitike, Yamal, Salah ... injuries mounting ahead of World Cup Simons joins France striker Hugo Ekitike (Achilles) in being ruled out of the World Cup after sustaining a late-season injury.

There are also concerns over the fitness of Spain winger Lamine Yamal, Egypt star Mohamed Salah and Brazil forward Estevao ahead of the tournament.

Yamal was ruled out for the rest of the club season last week after sustaining a muscle injury in his left leg while converting a penalty for Barcelona in a La Liga match. Barca said its medical staff "foresee that (Yamal) will be available for the World Cup."

Salah picked up a suspected hamstring injury playing for Liverpool in the Premier League on Saturday. Liverpool manager Arne Slot said he did not know if Salah would play again this season.

Estevao will miss the rest of Chelsea's season with a hamstring injury and is a doubt for the World Cup. (AP)

1970s. Tottenham has four games left this season.

Simons, who joined from Leipzig for 60 million euros (\$70 million) in the offseason, hasn't been a regular starter for Spurs but has been in the lineup in recent matches under newly hired manager Roberto De Zerbi.

He helped the Dutch reach the semifinals at Euro 2024 and was expected to be key for the team at the World Cup, where they're in a

Mirabai Chanu set to miss Asian Championships due to injury



NEW DELHI, April 27: Star Indian weightlifter Mirabai Chanu is set to miss the rescheduled Asian Championships in Gandhinagar next month due to a shoulder injury.

The Tokyo Olympics silver medalist and former world champion had sustained the injury during the National Championships in February.

"Mirabai picked up a shoulder niggle during the Nationals. It is an important year with the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games scheduled back-to-back, and she cannot afford to take any risks," a source close to the developments told PTI.

Komal Kohar is likely to take Chanu's place in the Indian team.

At the National Championships in Modinagar, Chanu had won the 48kg gold with a total effort of 205kg (89kg+116kg). She also attempted a 91kg snatch lift but was unsuccessful.

The 31-year-old will compete in the 48kg category at the Commonwealth Games 2026, scheduled from July 23 to August 2, before bulking up to the 53kg category for the Asian Games 2026 in October.

The Asian Games remains the only major tournament where the Manipuri lifter is yet to secure a podium finish and will also serve as the first qualifying event for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

The Asian Championships, originally slated for April 1 to 10, had been pushed back by over a month due to the ongoing conflict in West Asia that began with US and Israeli strikes on Iran.

It will mark the first time that India is hosting the senior continental meet. (PTI)

Galatasaray posts about 'evil inside' refereeing

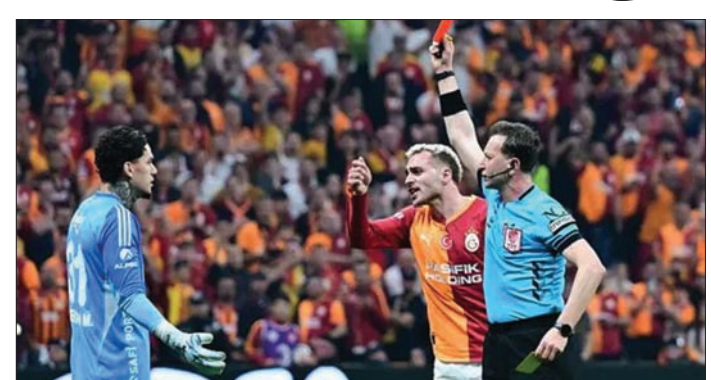
ISTANBUL, April 27: Turkish league leader Galatasaray posted on social media about referees and "the evil inside" at halftime of a win against fierce rival Fenerbahce that all-but sealed another title.

"Despite these referees, we're still leading 1-0," Galatasaray posted in Turkish on its official X account during what would be a 3-0 win in the Istanbul derby Sunday.

"We see what you're doing, your plans, the evil inside you," the club wrote, adding on its English language account: "Don't let the score distract you from the fact that TWO clear penalties for Galatasaray have been ignored by the referee and the VAR room in the first half."

The in-game criticism came days after Galatasaray said it was suspending relations with the Turkish Football Federation in a dispute about picking referees for games.

The Gala-Fener rivalry is one of the most intense in world soccer



though it has been one-sided on the field in recent years.

Sunday's victory left Galatasaray seven points clear with three rounds left as it seeks a fourth straight league title. Fenerbahce has not been champion since 2014.

Galatasaray took the lead on Nigeria striker Victor Osimen's goal in the 40th minute — after Fenerbahce missed a penalty — and then got its own spot kick in the second half. Baris Alper Yilmaz scored that in the 67th and Lucas Torreira added a third in the 83rd.

Fenerbahce goalkeeper Ederson was sent off when the score was 1-0.

Complaints about referees and their integrity are common in the Turkish Super League.

Jose Mourinho, as Fenerbahce coach last season, was banned for four games by the federation for criticizing match officials. (AP)

Indian rider Johann wins Qatar Superstock 600 C'ship

DOHA, April 27: Johann Emmanuel has become the first Indian to win the Qatar Superstock 600 Championship (QSTK) by topping both the races in the postponed final round here.

The 19-year-old Chennai-based Johann, trailing championship leader Marton Bellei from Hungary by nine points going into the weekend's double-header, needed to win both races to seal the title and he delivered in a stunning fashion.

Qualifying second, Johann won both races, withstanding immense pressure to clinch the championship with a 21-point advantage. He finished the season with six wins out of 10 races, having endured a 200 kmph crash and three retirements due to mechanical issues.

Speaking after the races, Johann said: "It's an incredible feeling to secure my first international title in my debut season on a 600cc machine. I was thrilled after the race. Every bit of hard work and sacrifice was worth it. But this is just the beginning, and there's still a long way ahead." (PTI)

Thomas Cup Finals India storm into quarterfinals with 5-0 sweep of Australia

HORSENS (DENMARK), April 27: India sealed a place in the Thomas Cup Finals quarterfinals with a commanding 5-0 sweep of Australia in a Group A tie here on Monday.

India and China occupy the top spots in the group. The 2022 champions had opened with a 4-1 win over Canada, while China blanked Australia 5-0 and beat Canada 4-1 earlier in the day.

The two sides will clash in their final group tie on Wednesday to decide the group topper.

Paris Olympian and Commonwealth Games champion Lakshya Sen set the tone with a 21-14, 21-16 win over Ephraim Stephen Sam to hand India an early lead.

US Open champion Ayush Shetty, who recently finished runner-up at the Badminton Asia Championships, doubled the advantage with a dominant 21-8, 21-6 victory over Shrey Dhand.

India's top doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, the Asian Games champions, made it 3-0, defeating Rizky Hidayat and Jack Yu 21-14, 21-16 to clinch the tie.

HS Prannoy, a bronze medalist at the 2023 World Championships and Asian Games, extended the lead with a 21-11, 21-17 win over Rishi Honda Boopathy in under 30 minutes.

In the second doubles, Hariharan Amsakarunan and M.R. Arjun outplayed Andika Ramadiansyah and Ephraim Stephen Sam 21-12, 21-10 as India completed a flawless outing without dropping a match. (PTI)

Shot nearly 50,000 targets every single year in quest for Worlds medal: Trap shooter Zoravar

NEW DELHI, April 27: Trap marksman Zoravar Singh has built his career on grit, grind and discipline with his breakthrough coming last year through a rare World Championship bronze, a landmark he insists was no accident but the result of nearly 50,000 clay targets a year and relentless training in all conditions.

"I have done all that and more," said the champion trap marksman, noting that his journey has demanded an "extraordinary workload of nearly 45,000 to 50,000 cartridges a year, backed by constant tactical analysis of when to attack, when to hold back".

Zoravar, 48, became only the third Indian trap shooter to win a World Championships medal after legends Karni Singh and Manavjit Singh Sandhu, with the last such medal — a gold — coming in 2006 in Zagreb, Croatia through Manavjit.

For Zoravar, the elusive medal in Athens last year was the culmination of "all the effort he had put in his professional shooting career spanning more than three decades."

"I have been at it since 2022," said Zoravar on the sidelines of an event, marking



75 years of the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI), here on Monday.

"The plan was clear after the National Games — to break into the final. I set precise targets for myself, knowing I would have to survive shoot-offs in cut-throat competition just to secure a place in the finals.

"Because only then would a medal become possible. The first goal was simply to reach the final, and after that it was about trusting the process and forgetting the re-

sult... and here we are," added Zoravar.

With one goal achieved, his next aim is to qualify for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics, whose qualification cycle will begin with the World Championships later this year.

"We have the World Championships, then next year is a grueling year and there have been several rule changes also in shooting so we have to comprehend that as well.

"Obviously one who adapts the best is such a short time will be successful," the Delhi marksman said.

In between, there is also the Asian Games in Japan this September-October, but it is unlikely the champion marksman will feature in the Indian contingent due to "peaking" considerations after the World Championships and last year's World Cup Finals, which left him slightly short on momentum.

"Well, that (Asian Games selection) is up to the national federation to decide — what their selection policy is and what they ultimately choose. As sports persons, we have to adhere to it," said Zoravar, who has finally been included in the ISSF World Cup

Almaty in Kazakhstan in May and the ISSF World Cup Lonato in July as a "zero" shooter, meaning he will compete without being eligible for medals.

Asked about the demands of trap shooting and his preparation, Zoravar said that every single moment in training and competition has to carry meaning and purpose, with nothing left to chance.

"Every day, every single moment is measured in terms of what I have to do and the goals of the day had to be met at any cost...lots of drills are involved, lots of shooting is involved, analysis of when to be aggressive, when to be passive, when to protect the scores, all these things come into play."

He said he cannot simply follow the path of former trap champion Manavjit Singh Sandhu to shape his own journey, noting that every athlete's experience is different.

"Yes, I do speak to Manavjit and try to learn from his experience, but at the end of the day it is your own journey. Situations and conditions differ for each individual, and it is a work in progress," he added. (PTI)

SLC board calls for special Ex-Co meeting

COLOMBO, April 27: Sri Lanka Cricket board has called for a special Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday to formally seal the ouster of current chief Shammi Silva on directive from country's president Anura Kumara Dissanayake.

Dissanayake has already made it clear that he wants Silva to make way for a new administration to run cricket.

Sources said that the Executive Committee members could decide to resign en masse which would allow to calling of a fresh election for office bearers.

Silva has his current term until May of 2027 but faces calls to relinquish office.

The government seems keen to engineer Silva's exit due to player dissatisfaction and national team's poor show over past few years.

Silva who first won the SLC presidency in 2019 by majority votes of member clubs was re-elected uncontested in 2021 2023 and 2025. (PTI)

Rajasthan Royals need something special against unbeaten Punjab Kings

MULLANPUR, April 27: Rryan Parag, a captain short of runs, will need to lead from the front to challenge a peerless Punjab Kings in their Indian Premier League match here on Tuesday.

In the Shreyas Iyer-Ricky Ponting era that began last year, Punjab Kings have scripted a sensational turnaround, making them the most consistent and assuring unit in the competition, attributes they longed for ages.

Virat Kohli owned the tag of chase-master with his remarkable consistency over the years and now Iyer too is on that path. As a leader and batter, he has displayed commendable calm in high-pressure situations to help Punjab Kings stay unbeaten in the tournament thus far. Iyer has led brilliantly but the team as a whole too has functioned like a well oiled unit. Last season, they managed to defend the lowest total in IPL history and on a scorching Saturday in New Delhi, Iyer and Co. gunned down a record 265-run target with ridiculous ease.

The six wins in seven games (one washout) has also been made possible by the destructive opening duo of Priyansh Arya and Prabhshimran Singh, who put their team on course for a historic chase at Kotla by hammering 116 runs in the powerplay.



Punjab Kings bowlers took a beating in that match but considering the batting friendly conditions and small ground dimensions, they could not be blamed much.

Playing their last game of the season here before hosting their final three league games of the season in Dharamsala, Punjab Kings will be expected to steamroll Rajasthan Royals.

The Royals have lost momentum in the middle phase of the tournament having won their first four games. While teen sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has produced jaw dropping performances, the team has not been able to maintain consistency.

Eight games into the season, captain Parag has failed to deliver in the middle order, collecting just 88 runs in eight innings at an underwhelming strike rate of 112.82. The pressure on him is mounting with every game. Sunrisers Hyderabad were able to chase down 229 against the Royals comfortably in the night game on Saturday. Their fielding too left a lot to be desired.

"I think different venues everyday, different games, different ways to approach it. I feel we don't know how Chandigarh is going to be as of now. I mean, they chased down a big score, yes, in Delhi, but Chandigarh is a new ground and a new wicket, a new soil.

So hopefully, it doesn't go to that extent," said Parag.

Batting first, Punjab Kings had pummelled 254 in their previous game at their home ground. The Royals would be hoping to bowl first considering the phenomenal chasing abilities of Iyer and his team.

Teams:

Punjab Kings: Shreyas Iyer (captain), Priyansh Arya, Harnoor Singh, Prabhshimran Singh, Mitchell Owen, Nehal Wadhwa, Azmatullah Omarzai, Marco Jansen, Musheer Khan, Shashank Singh, Marcus Stoinis, Suryansh Shedge, Arshdeep Singh, Xavier Bartlett, Yuzvendra Chahal, Lockie Ferguson, Harpreet Brar, Vijaykumar Vyshak, Yash Thakur, Cooper Connolly, Ben Dwarshuis, Praveen Dube, Vishal Nishad, Pyla Avinash, Vishnu Vinod.

Rajasthan Royals: Shubham Dubey, Shimron Hetmyer, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Dhruv Jurel, Lhuan-dre Pretorius, Rryan Parag (c), Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Donovan Ferreira, Ravindra Jadeja, Jofra Archer, Nandre Burger, Tushar Deshpande, Kwen Maphaka, Sandeep Sharma, Yuvraj Singh Charak, Ravi Bishnoi, Aman Rao Perala, Adam Milne, Kuldeep Sen, Dasun Shanaka, Sushant Mishra, Vignesh Puthur, Ravi Singh, Brijesh Sharma.

Match Starts 7.30 PM IST. (PTI)

Indians target group dominance as new era begins

LONDON, April 27: India's men's and women's teams head into the 2026 World Team Table Tennis Championships, beginning here on Tuesday, with a familiar mix of promise and pressure.

Placed in Group 7, the Indian men's team -- featuring Manav Thakkar (WR No.38), G. Sathiyani (42), Manush Shah (51), Harmeet Desai (80) and Payas Jain (127) -- will start as clear favourites against Slovakia, Tunisia and Guatemala.

On paper, the rankings tilt heavily in India's favour, particularly against a Slovak line-up led by Lubomir Pistej (149) and Yang Wang (184).

Yet, the absence of now retired Sharath Kamal's experience in crunch ties could test India's composure, especially in tight five-match encounters.

The women's team finds itself in Group 6 alongside Ukraine, Uganda, and Rwanda.

Led by Manika Batra (WR No. 49), India also have Yashaswini Ghoshal (88), Diya Chitale (92), Sutirtha Mukherjee (120) and Syndrel Das (175), who at 16 is the youngest from the country to play at the worlds.

Ukraine, spearheaded by Margaryta Pesotska (51), present a more tangible threat here, making the group a closer contest than the men's draw.



India's recent history at this event offers both encouragement and caution. At the 2024 edition in Busan, both teams advanced to the knockout stage but exited in the Round of 32.

The women's team impressed with a second-place group finish that included narrow wins over Hungary and Spain, while pushing China in a close 2-3 loss.

The men, meanwhile, showed resilience with wins over Chile and Kazakhstan but faltered against stronger opposition, going down 0-3 to South Korea in the knockouts.

The format in London raises the stakes further. Only group winners are guaranteed direct entry into the main draw, while second-placed teams face a complicated qualification route based on match ratios.

For the men, depth remains a strong suit.

Sathiyani and Thakkar bring consistency, while Shah's upward trajectory adds firepower.

The women's side, on the other hand, appears more balanced than before, with Manika's big-match temperament complemented by a young core gaining international exposure.

If India can convert its numerical advantage into clinical performances and avoid slipping into the uncertainties of second place, a deeper run than 2024 is well within reach.

A century after the inaugural ITTF World Table Tennis Championships took place in England in 1926, the sport returns to where it all began for a truly historic centenary celebration. (PTI)

Coco Gauff overcomes vomiting on court to beat Sorana Cirstea in Madrid

MADRID, April 27: Coco Gauff has advanced to the fourth round of the Madrid Open despite falling ill and vomiting on court.

Gauff, a finalist in Madrid last year, rallied to beat Sorana Cirstea 4-6, 7-5, 6-1 on Sunday.

The American threw up on court in the middle of the second set.

"When I actually threw up on the court, that was like a little bit embarrassing," Gauff said.

"Then after that first game and the second, I was like that took everything out of me."

On Saturday, fourth-ranked Iga Swiatek withdrew due to an unspecified illness while playing her round-of-32 match against American Ann Li.

Gauff said she was determined to carry on her match.

"I'm someone who doesn't like to pull out. I don't like to do that unless I really feel like I have no other options," Gauff said.

"So the plan was to always just try to finish, even if it ended up with me just playing just to get through it."

She recovered from a break down three times before winning the set 7-5.

The third-ranked Gauff said she doesn't know how she "got through that," and said she almost threw up in the middle of a point.

"I felt fine all this morning. I felt a little weird last night, but I was OK. Woke up this morning, felt fine. And mid-first set, I was feeling like I was going to throw up. And then I did," she said. (AP)

Langer defends sending out-of-form Pooran to face Narine in Super Over

LUCKNOW, April 27: Lucknow Super Giants head coach Justin Langer defended sending out-of-form Nicholas Pooran to face Kolkata Knight Riders' star spinner Sunil Narine in the Super Over of their IPL match, saying the team management thought the explosive West Indian batter was the best option despite his lean run.

Pooran, who has laboured for runs this IPL season with 22 being his highest, got out first ball bowled by Narine and LSG ended up at 1 for 2 in the Super Over. KKR needed just one ball to win the match.

"Good question. We knew that Sunil Narine had bowled it, and if you look at Nicky's (Nicholas Pooran) record, he's seen Sunil Narine more than anyone in world cricket. So we felt that he was still the best option," Langer said at the post-match press conference.

"I know he hasn't hit his form yet, and Nicky will be the first to admit that, but we thought if anyone can handle a Super Over, it's Nicky Pooran. You back your best players. He has struggled, but if you look at all the numbers, no one plays Narine, the world-class off-spinner, better than Nicky. It didn't come off, unfortunately," he added.

There was also a bit of history. The lone maiden Super Over in the history of T20 cricket was bowled by Narine in the Caribbean Premier League (CPL) in 2014, and Pooran was one of the batters who got out without scoring in that instance also.

"There's probably no greater T20 player (than Pooran) currently in



the world over the last few years. It just goes to show he's human, and you can't fake confidence. We all try to. You can look confident, but confidence comes from getting your processes right," Langer said.

LSG captain Rishabh Pant had also defended the choice of Pooran to bat in the Super Over.

"We had a discussion as a group and the name (that) came up was (of) Nicholas Pooran's (for Super Over). He might not go through the best form of his life, but at the same time, you will trust your player in a hard situation like this," Pant said at the post-match presentation.

Langer admitted that his team could not adjust to the black-soil wicket on offer on Sunday.

"It's frustrating. I said after the last game I thought the wicket was very good on the red soil and it was fast and bouncy. It's really exciting for cricket and we didn't adapt today to the black soil which was slower and lower and spun a little bit.

"So, it's frustrating. We're not adapting to the conditions as well as we should be."

The former Australia batter was all praise for Mohsin Khan, who picked up 5/23 for a lost cause.

"I said earlier I thought he (Mohsin) and Prince will soon play cricket for India. And the thing about Mohsin Khan is, he is an incredible athlete.

"He's done some great work with Bharat Arun. He spent - what a lot of people don't know - a few months at Bharat's academy in Chennai leading up to this ... he worked hard and he's getting fit.

"That's why he was so disappointed when he hurt his quad after the first game because we can see how valuable he is.

"We haven't had him much for the last two seasons and it's a great thrill for us to have him in the team and it wouldn't surprise me if it's a great thrill for India to have him in their team in the not-too-distant future," he said. (PTI)

Raghuvanshi cops fine for outburst

LUCKNOW, April 27: Kolkata Knight Riders batter Angkrish Raghuvanshi was on Monday fined 20 per cent of his match fee for his emotional outburst after being given out for obstructing the field during his side's IPL match against Lucknow Super Giants here.

KKR won the game via Super Over on Sunday night.

"Angkrish Raghuvanshi, batter & wicket-keeper, Kolkata Knight Riders, has been fined 20% of his match fee and has also accumulated one Demerit Point for breaching Level 1 of the IPL's Code of Conduct for Players and Team Officials during Match No. 38 against Lucknow Super Giants," read an IPL statement.

"Raghuvanshi was found to have breached Article 2.2 of the IPL's Code of Conduct, which relates to 'abuse of cricket equipment or clothing, ground equipment or fixtures and fittings during a Match.'"

The incident occurred in the fifth over, when, after being given out for 'obstructing the field', Raghuvanshi struck the boundary cushion with his bat in an aggressive manner and subsequently threw his helmet into the dugout.

Raghuvanshi admitted to the offence and accepted the Match Referee's sanction. (PTI)

Sindhu begins her journey in global badminton governance as BWF Council member

HORSENS (DENMARK), April 27: Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu has promised to represent the voices of the shuttlers from across the globe in her tenure as Badminton World Federation (BWF) Council member, a rare role for an active player.

One of the most accomplished players in the sport's history, Sindhu has assumed a full voting position on the BWF Council following her election as Chair of the BWF Athletes' Commission in December.

After completing the formal vetting process, Sindhu officially entered the BWF Council at the end of 2025. She made her first appearance before the global badminton membership during the Annual General Meeting here on April 25, marking the beginning of her tenure.

"It is a true honour and privilege to take on this responsibility within the Badminton World Federation and to represent the voices of athletes from around the world.

"Badminton has given me so much, and I feel deeply grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the sport in this capacity," she said in a release.

Her presence within the BWF Council is particularly significant as it remains rare for an active athlete competing at the highest level to simultaneously hold a voting position within badminton's global governance structure.

In this role, Sindhu will help ensure that the voices, experiences and priorities of players are represented at the highest levels of decision-making. The BWF Council plays a central role in guiding the strategic direction and governance of badminton worldwide.

As a voting member of the BWF Council, Sindhu will participate in discussions and decisions on matters that shape the future of the sport, bringing the perspectives and experiences of elite athletes directly into the heart of global badminton leadership.

Her elevation to the BWF Council reflects the trust placed in her leadership, experience and understanding of the sport at the highest level.

Welcoming Sindhu to the Council, BWF President Khunying Patama Leeswadtrakul said, "Over many years, P. V. Sindhu has demonstrated exceptional skill, grace and spirit on the court, and it is wonderful to now have such an outstanding role model representing the voice of our athletes." (PTI)



Delhi HC lets AITA's 2024 poll results stand but appoints Gita Mittal as Administrator

NEW DELHI, April 27: The Delhi High Court on Monday allowed the results of the All India Tennis Association (AITA) elections held on September 28, 2024, to stand, but directed that the elected body will function only as an interim arrangement under the supervision of a court-appointed Administrator, former Chief Justice Gita Mittal.

In its order, Justice Mini Pushkama made it clear that while the outcome of the 2024 elections will not be disturbed at this stage, the executive committee will operate in a limited capacity and remain subject to the oversight of Justice (Retd.) Mittal.

It means that Chintan Parikh, who is from the Gujarat State Association, is the new AITA President while Maharashtra's Sunder Iyer is General Secretary. Dinesh Arora from Punjab Association is treasurer while KSLTA's Sunil Yajman is one of the joint secretaries.

"It's a great moment for tennis in India. All we want is to promote the game in the country and take it to the pinnacle. We want to do a lot for junior tennis as well. While we will work as an interim body for the time being, it still is a huge step forward to create a system through which the Indian tennis ecosystem will benefit," Iyer told PTI.



The court tasked Justice Mittal with managing the affairs of AITA and ensuring that its functioning is aligned with the National Sports Code and the amended constitution and by-laws by June 30.

As of now AITA has a 25-member Executive Committee but as per the NSG Act, it needs to be a 15-member panel.

She has also been directed to conduct fresh elections within a period of three months after the constitution is aligned with the Sports Act, 2025 and Sports Governance Rules 2026.

Until then, the present office-bearers will continue only to handle routine affairs.

"I totally welcome the judgement of the Hon'ble court. Happy that the long standing impasse has ended and this is a big step forward for AITA and Indian tennis," Yajman

told PTI, reacting to the development.

"It's crucial for us to follow the Hon'ble court's order and work on implementing it without any delay. We all need to come together and work towards settling this matter forever and focus on development of the sport in our country. It's imperative to move forward positively," he added.

The court placed restrictions on the interim body, directing that it shall not make any new financial commitments without prior approval of the Administrator. It also mandated that the executive committee must function strictly in consonance with the amended by-laws.

Further, the court directed AITA to provide necessary infrastructure and logistical support to the Administrator, including office space, staff and other facilities required for the discharge of duties.

The Administrator has also been given the liberty to engage additional personnel, with all expenses, including a monthly remuneration of ₹ 10 lakh, to be borne by AITA.

The court disposed of the writ petition along with pending applications in terms of the directions issued, noting that certain prayers had become infructuous in view of its findings in a connected matter. (PTI)

Pranavi finishes T-24 at Women's SA Open

CAPE TOWN, April 27: Pranavi Urs carded 1-under 72 to finish as the top-Indian at tied-24th in the Investec SA Women's Open golf tournament, even as compatriot Diksha Dagar (76) slipped on the final day here.

Pranavi and Diksha finished T-24th and T-37th respectively, while Avani Prashanth (77) was T-57th.

Three other Indians in the fray, Vani Kapoor, Tvesa Malik and Hitaashee Bakshi had missed the halfway cut.

Meanwhile, England's Esme Hamilton earned her maiden LET title with two-shot victory. Hamilton fired a final round 71 (-2) to beat Cara Gainer and Pia Babnik for the title following an epic battle with compatriot Cara Gainer.

A former SA Open winner, Diksha opened with five pars before she bogeyed the sixth and the ninth. On the back nine, she birdied the 11th but double bogeyed the 15th for a disappointing finish.

Pranavi, who has come close to a title a few times including at the Indian Open, teed off from the back nine and had two bogeys and one birdie on the stretch.

On the second nine, she birdied three times between the first and the fifth, but gave away a shot on eighth and dropped out of Top-20.

Avani had two birdies, two bogeys and two double bogeys.

It was a wet windy final day at Royal Cape Golf Club as Hamilton grabbed a two-shot victory with a 15-under par total. The win is Hamilton's first on the LET in just her 23rd start after joining the circuit as a rookie last year.

Tied with Slovenia's Pia Babnik heading into the final round, and one clear of Gainer,



Hamilton bogeyed the third before racing into a two-shot lead with birdies at the fifth and sixth as Babnik dropped a shot at the first.

However, at the challenging ninth, Gainer produced a clutch birdie and Hamilton carded a double-bogey. This produced a three-shot swing and the two were tied at 12-under par at the turn.

But on the back nine Hamilton showed nerves of steel as the rain began to pour in Cape Town. She birdied the 11th, 14th and 16th, reclaiming her two-shot advantage with two holes to play.

Then with steady play on the 18th, Hamilton tapped in for par for victory as fellow players rushed in to congratulate her.

Gainer finished second on 13-under par after she carded a final round 72 (-1). Babnik was one shot further back on 12-under par as the 22-year-old returned to her best this week.

American duo of Anna Morgan and Brianna Navarrosa finished in a tie for fourth on nine-under par alongside Austria's Emma Spitz. Morocco's Maha Haddioui, Italy's Alessandra Fanali and Canada's Anna Huang were seventh on seven-under par. (PTI)