

IN BRIEF

ACB officials nab acting headmaster of Kolhapur school for accepting bribe

Kolhapur, April 17 (UNI) : Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) officials today arrested the acting headmaster of Kolhapur Municipal Corporation's (KMC) school no-24, for accepting a bribe of Rs 3,000 for giving a school leaving certificate.

The arrested person, identified as Sanjay Jaysing Narvekar (52), is the acting headmaster of Shelaji Vannaji Vidhyalay, KMC school no 24, Ravivar Peth, in the city.

The ACB in a press release, said the complainant had applied for school leaving certificates of his father and his (father's) five brothers (complainant's uncles).

The acting headmaster Narvekar demanded Rs 3,000 as bribe in exchange.

The complainant informed the ACB officials about this, and they laid a trap at the school this morning and arrested Narvekar red-handed while accepting a bribe amount of Rs 3,000 from the complainant, the release said.

Woman's body found in a suitcase near railway stn

Mumbai, April 17 (UND) : The decomposed body of a woman was found inside a suitcase near the Monkey Hill area on the Mumbai-Pune railway route lying close to railway tracks, official said on Thursday.

The suitcase was first spotted by a passenger on a train travelling from Mumbai to Pune. As the train passed the Monkey Hill point, the commuter noticed the oddly placed suitcase near the tracks and alerted the railway police.

Upon reaching police took possession of the bag and discovered the woman's body in a severely decomposed state, raising suspicions of foul play.

A panchnama was conducted at the site and the body was sent for a post-mortem. Further investigations are going on.

Waqf matter: SC orders interim status quo till May 5



New Delhi, April 17 (UNI) : In a significant development, the Supreme Court on Thursday issued an interim order, directing status quo in relation to the functionality of the Waqf Boards till the next hearing on May 5.

A three-judge Bench of the top court, led by Chief Justice of India Justice Sanjiv Khanna recorded the Centre's assurance that no fresh appointments will be made to the Waqf Boards or the Central and State Waqf Councils under Sections 9 and 14 of the Act while the matter is sub-judice.

The Bench, also comprising Justice Sanjay Kumar and Justice K.V. Viswanathan, was hearing a bunch of petitions filed by various groups and individuals against the Waqf (Amendment) Act,

2025 passed by Parliament earlier this month.

The court made it clear that the "status quo must be maintained" in light of the wide-reaching implications of the new law.

"We do not want the position to change," observed CJI Khanna, adding "The situation prevailing today should continue, so as to not upset the rights of parties."

The Court directed the Union of India and Waqf Boards to file their responses within seven days, and rejoinders by petitioners within five days thereafter.

In the interim, the following directions have been passed:

- No appointments to Waqf Boards or Councils under Sections 9 and 14.

(Contd on page 2)

People should also learn Hindi: CM, Fadnavis

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 17 : Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has supported the New Education Policy, stressing that "everyone in Maharashtra should know Marathi."

"Similarly, Hindi is an option to create a link in the country. Therefore, people should also learn Hindi as the link language," said Fadnavis.

The Chief Minister said the ruling Maha Yuti has already implemented the New Education Policy. "The state government has not taken any new decision in that direction. Everyone in Maharashtra should know Marathi. That's our insistence. Hindi is a language that can be the link language in the country," Fadnavis said.

The Chief Minister further said if anyone wanted to learn English, or any other language, there is no prohibition. "However, everyone should know Marathi. The languages of our country should also be known," he said.

The Central government is of the opinion that there should be one language of communication in our country, therefore, an effort has been made to learn Hindi, he added.

The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) has prepared two state curriculum plans -- one at the foundation level and another for the school level. A steering committee headed by the Minister of School Education has approved both these plans, Fadnavis said.

Govt sacks 442 medical officers absent for over a year

Mumbai, April 17 (UNI) : The Maharashtra government has issued a directive terminating the services of 442 medical officers who were found absent from duty for a year, officials said on Thursday.

An order issued by the public health department late Wednesday said, "At a time when there is a paucity of doctors at state-run medical centres, primary health centres, rural hospitals, and district hospitals, these 442 doctors were missing at the places of their appointments. Therefore the order for terminating their services has been issued."

It also said the medical officers' absence has been deemed illegal.

Sources said these doctors might have preferred private practice, but their action led to blocking the positions for over a

year, which is unethical. A final proposal for terminating the officers' services was put up before the department on April 4. The order came on April 16, sources said.

Of the 442 sacked medical officers, 84 were attached to the Nagpur regional office, 75 to the Akola office, 26 to the Kolhapur office, 48 to the Thane office, 85 to the Latur office, 28 to the Pune office, 23 to the Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar office and 66 to the Nashik regional office. The highest number of such doctors was from the Nagpur office, which comprises comparatively backward districts of Gondia, Gadchiroli, and Chandrapur. As many as 74 doctors did not report for work in the Akola region, which includes districts with a sizeable tribal population in Yavatmal, Amravati, and Washim.

Bringing Waqf Amendment Act is to end sufferings of women, especially widows: PM

New Delhi, April 17 (UNI) : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday defended the Waqf Amendment Act, saying that one of the key drivers behind bringing the Act was that most of the sufferers of the prevalent system were women, especially widows.

Interacting with a delegation of Dawoodi Bohra community members at his residence here, Modi mentioned that extensive efforts over many years went into bringing the Act to fruition, an official statement said.

He also spoke about difficulties faced by people due to Waqf.

Modi said when work towards bringing about the Waqf Amendment Act started, one of the first people he discussed this



with was Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin, who was instrumental in giving detailed comments about various nitty-gritties of the Act. The Prime Minister recalled his strong bond with members of the Dawoodi Bohra community. He praised the tradition of the community of working

towards social welfare, which he has seen over the years.

He also brought out the special contribution of the community towards bringing about the Act.

The delegation of the Dawoodi Bohra community meanwhile narrated their struggles and shared stories

of how properties belonging to members of their community were wrongfully claimed by Waqf.

They thanked the Prime Minister for bringing about the Waqf Amendment Act and said it was a long pending demand.

They spoke about the Prime Minister's long-

standing special connection with the Dawoodi Bohra community, and the positive work done by him.

Speaking about the benefit of the Act for their community, they said that the Prime Minister has brought this Act not only for minorities but for minority within minorities.

While saying that India has always allowed their identity to flourish, they added that under PM's leadership, they feel the spirit of inclusion.

Discussing the Prime Minister's vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047, they expressed commitment and all possible assistance in the journey towards making India developed. They also lauded his leadership which brings focus on the aspect that true development should be people centric.

Congress to hold camp in Mahabaleshwar: Chennithala

Mumbai, April 17 (UNI) : Maharashtra Congress in-charge Ramesh Chennithala informed on Thursday that the state- and the district-level executive will be restructured soon at a party camp to be organised in Mahabaleshwar.

Talking to newsmen here, he accused the coalition government in the state of having betrayed the people.

"It has forgotten the promise of giving Rs 2,100

to the beneficiaries of the Ladki Bahin scheme and now only Rs 500 is being given," he said and claimed that the Mahayuti had brought this scheme only for votes.

The Congress had already warned that the Mahayuti was cheating the dear sisters, he said.

A meeting of Congress party MPs was held in his presence and chaired by state

Harshvardhan Sapkal, followed by a meeting of senior party leaders, in which strategy and detailed discussions were held on raising voices inside and outside the Assembly on anti-people policies of the BJP-led central and state governments.

Senior Congress party leader and former minister late Dr Shrikant Jichkar's son, Yajnavalkya Jichkar, rejoined the Congress party.

State strive to be on top in country in providing maximum services online by Oct: CM

Mumbai, April 17 (UNI) : Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said on Thursday that Maharashtra should strive to be on top in the country in providing maximum services online by October.

Presiding over a meeting of various social sectors held in the Cabinet Hall of Mantralaya here, he said that the state government has notified 1,027 services under the Right to Services Act, out of which 527 services have been made available on the 'Aaple Sarkar' portal.

Stating that it is necessary to provide transparent and reliable services to the citizens of the state, Fadnavis said that 138 integrated services of various departments should be made available on the Aaple Sarkar portal by May 31.



Won't allow Hindi as mandatory language in State : Raj

Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray said on Thursday that he would not allow Hindi as a mandatory language in the state. As per the state school curriculum plan, Hindi has been made mandatory in the state from the first grade. "I say in clear words that the MNS will not tolerate this compulsion. We will not allow the Central government's efforts to spread Hindi everywhere," said Raj. "Hindi is not a national language. It is a state language like other languages in the country. Why should it be taught in Maharashtra from the first grade", questioned the MNS chief.

(See on page 3)

Iranian FM says to discuss US-Iranian talks with Russian side



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Thursday that he plans to discuss the US-Iranian talks on Tehran's nuclear program with the Russian side during his visit to Moscow. "This visit has several purposes ... First, the trip was planned to deliver a written message from the Supreme Leader of Iran [Ali Khamenei] to Russian President [Vladimir Putin]."

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MI survive late wobble to seal ...



Mumbai Indians overcame late drama to notch their third win of IPL 2025, defeating Sunrisers Hyderabad by four wickets in a pulsating Match 33 at the Wankhede Stadium here on Thursday. Chasing a target of 163, the hosts reached 166/6 in 18.1 overs, thanks to blistering cameos and a reverse-swept boundary from Tilak Varma to finish the job.

(See on page 7)

Pakistan's only relationship with Kashmir is to vacate the



India today dismissed the Pakistan army chief's comments on Kashmir and said that Pakistan's "only relationship" with Kashmir is to vacate the illegally occupied territories. Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, answering questions on the issue, said at a briefing:

(See on page 8)

Not reform but retaliation dressed as regulation, alleges Singhvi

New Delhi, April 17 (UNI) : The Congress on Thursday welcomed interim relief given by the Supreme Court on the recently passed Waqf Act, saying the Act was not aimed at improving but "infiltrating" and "controlling" the institutions.

Addressing a press conference at the AICC office here, senior Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi and Imran

Pratapgarhi said, "We are extremely grateful to the Supreme Court for having spent considerable time and passed an interim order which will of course be subject to further hearing".

Singhvi slammed the government's claims of reform, saying, "It is retaliation in the guise of the reform. It is retaliation meticulously scripted, strategically timed and

constitutionally questionable". The Waqf Amendment Act, the senior Supreme Court lawyer said, is not an exercise in efficiency as it pretends to be. "It is an exercise in eraser behind the bland language of governance lies, the bold ambition of control where religious autonomy is being reduced to state administered protocol and community rights are being redrawn with bureaucratic pens," he noted, while remarking, "let us be clear this is not about improving institutions, this is about infiltrating them, controlling them and closing them." Observing that it should not be treated as a particular community specific issue, Singhvi said that the party was not defending just one community.

Rahul Gandhi to visit US, will engage with students and faculty of Brown University

New Delhi, Apr 17
(UNI) : Congress
leader Rahul Gandhi
will be on a visit to the
United States early
next week during
which he will visit
Brown University
and give a talk and
interact with the
faculty members and
students there.

Sharing this information on his social media handle X, party spokesperson Pawan Khara said that Gandhi will be visiting Brown University, in Rhode Island, on April 21 and 22.

The former Congress president is also scheduled to engage with members of the Non Resident Indian (NRI) community and office bearers of the Indian Overseas Congress (IOC). Former Congress President Mr. Rahul Gandhi will be visiting Brown University, in Rhode Island, United States, on the 21st and 22nd of April.

New Delhi, April 17 (UNI) : As part of the ongoing supply of relief material and humanitarian aid to quake-hit Myanmar under 'Operation Brahma', India has sent the components of 20 pre-fabricated offices. The pre-fabricated offices, weighing approximately 50 tonnes, were despatched by an IAF C-17 aircraft on April 15 to Myanmar.

The structures will be used as temporary offices for various Ministries in Naypyidaw, a statement said. Two IAF C-17 were deployed to bring back the

Indian Army doctors and personnel of the 60-para field hospital from Myanmar. The 200-bedded field hospital has successfully provided treatment to 2,519 patients over the past two weeks.

Under Op Brahma, India was the First Responder to the earthquake in Myanmar on March 28, and has provided relief supplies of approximately 750 MT including essential medicines, foodgrain, ready to eat meals, tents, blankets, gensets, rapidly deployable surgical and medical shelters, water

sanitation and hygiene services, drinking water, essential clothing, 20 prefabricated office/residential structures etc. Further, humanitarian assistance consisting of an 80-member NDRF Heavy Urban Search and Rescue Specialists Team and a 127-member Indian Army field Hospital Team were also deployed. The supply of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief material to Myanmar demonstrates India's willingness to stand with the people of Myanmar and to continue to support them through this difficult time, the release said.

Waqf matter: SC orders interim

(Contd from page 1)

- No denotification of Waqf properties, including Waqf by user

- The situation regarding registered Waqf properties under the 1995 Act shall remain undisturbed. The matter will now be heard after the responses are received.

The Court reiterated that only five lead petitions will be heard, while all other connected matters have been disposed of.

The next date of hearing
is May 5 at 2 pm.

Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Union government, urged the court not to pass a “harsh step” and requested a week’s time to file a preliminary reply.

Underlining that the government was answerable to the people, he said, “Villages and villages are taken as Waqf (land). It is a considered piece of legislation... Lakhs of representations were received.”

When asked about controversial provisions overriding judicial decrees, Mehta admitted, "I don't know why those words have come. Ignore that part."

Giving an assurance to the top court, he said, “We

Khargone (MP), April 17 (UNI) : Two brothers have been arrested for allegedly running an IPL online cricket betting racket in Khargone district of Madhya Pradesh, police said on Thursday.

Riyaz, an inhabitant of Indira Jyoti Nagar area of Rajasthan's Jaipur, and his brother Qutubuddin, a resident of Mandleshwar, have been arrested.

He said following a tip-

Both the accused were found running betting racket related to the match between Delhi Capitals and

A laptop, eight mobiles, a register containing accounts worth around Rs 30 lakhs, pen chargers were seized from the spot.

CENTRAL RAILWAY									
PUBLIC NOTICE No. __DY.CE/GC/FOREST(T) DATED 11.04.2025.									
Permission for tree felling and commencement of work (Working Permission) for Provision of 3 rd line between Kalyan- Kasara Railway Project.									
This Public notice is issued subsequent to the Chief Conservator of Forests (T), Thane's Working Permission Letter bearing Ref. No.: Desk-10/FC/Proposal No.67/16-17/Outward No. 282/24-25 dated 04/12/2024 for the construction of 3 rd line between Kalyan- Kasara Railway Project in regard to commencement of works and tree felling on 16.5480 Ha forest land within Project alignment granted under following terms and conditions:									
1. This permission is limited to carrying out works within the proposed diversion area under the project. It is valid for one year, i.e., until 04.12.2025, and will automatically stand cancelled effective 05.12.2025.									
2. The said permission is limited to felling of 1046 trees in an area of 16.5480 Ha. proposed under the project. The project authority should ensure that the minimum number of trees are felled under the proposal.									
3. As per Central Government "In principle" Approval, Condition No. 2 , the demarcation of the proposed area is to be carried out under the supervision of the Forest Department at the expense of the Project Authority. In this regard, the project authority has paid an amount of Rs. 84,83,150/- to the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Shahapur and an amount of Rs. 4,57,000/- to the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Thane with a total amount of Rs. 89,40,150/-.									
4. The Deputy Conservator of Forests, Shahapur has certified to fell 921 trees in Shahapur forest division and 125 tree in Thane forest division, with a total of 1046 trees to be felled. As per Central Government "In principle" Approval, Condition No.9, the project authority will take care that minimum trees are felled in the proposed area. In this regard, the project authority has paid an amount of Rs. 21,83,387/- to the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Shahapur and an amount of Rs. 11,93,963/- to the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Thane, for a total amount of Rs. 33,76,350/-.									
5. As per Central Government "In principle" Approval Condition No. 11, the Forest Rights Act, 2006 certificate from the District Collector, Thane has been submitted by the project authority. The project authority will be responsible for providing rehabilitation/compensation as per the rules for any lease holders/eligible plot holders etc. in the forest area under the proposal. The project agency has submitted an undertaking in this regard.									
6. As per Central Government "In principle" Approval Condition No. 14, the project authority is required to obtain necessary environmental clearance, if applicable for the project. The project authority has submitted an undertaking in this regard.									
7. Till the Project receives Final approval from the Central Government and Final transfer order from the State Government, the concerned Deputy Conservator of Forests, Shahapur will ensure that the project authority strictly complies with all the conditions within 6 months from the date of receipt of in-principle/due approval and will submit a report in this regard from time to time.									
8. Before commencing work in the proposed area, the project authority must inform the concerned Deputy Conservator of Forests, Shahapur. The concerned Deputy Conservator of Forests, Shahapur should check for any violation of FC act, if any while the work is in progress. Also, in case of violation, action should be taken as per the prevailing law.									
9. While carrying out works in the forest area under the project, care should be taken to ensure that the natural water courses, rivers, and streams are not blocked, nor are the passageways of wild animals blocked.									
10. The project has not received Final approval from the Central Government and Final transfer order from the State Government. Till the time, the terms and conditions while granting the said order/approval will remain binding on the project authority.									
11. The Deputy Conservator of Forests, Shahapur will be responsible for the fulfilment of the Undertaking given by the project authority within the prescribed time period in respect of Conditions No. 1, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22 of the Central Government In-Principle Approval Letter.									
12. The project authority is to abide by any terms and conditions for the development and conservation of forests and wildlife, as may be imposed by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, from time to time.									
13. In case of non-compliance with any of the above conditions, specific action should be taken as per paragraph 1.21 of the Handbook issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, New Delhi, under the Van (Sanrakshan & Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.									
Annexure									
Sr. No.	Division	District	Taluka	Village Name	Details of Forest Land Required				
					Gut/Survey No.	Old Gut No/Survey No.	Area (HA)	Legal Status	
1	Thane	Thane	Shahapur	Pali	230	90/10	0.0852	Private Forest	
2				Pundhe	122	-	2.6077	Private Forest	
3					Open land	-	0.0801	Restored Private Forest	
4					CFC land	-	0.1022	Restored Private Forest	
5					60/87/88/103/ plot 52/B	-	0.0439	Restored Private Forest	
6					60/87/88/103/ plot 52/A	-	0.0292	Restored Private Forest	
7					60/87/88/103/ plot 51	-	0.0161	Restored Private Forest	
8					60/87/88/103/ plot 50	-	0.0100	Restored Private Forest	
9					60/87/88/103/ plot 49	-	0.0115	Restored Private Forest	
10					60/87/88/103/ plot 38	-	0.0147	Restored Private Forest	
11					60/87/88/103/ plot 37	-	0.0151	Restored Private Forest	
12					85/3	-	0.0129	Restored Private Forest	
13					85/4	-	0.0444	Restored Private Forest	
14					83/A/2	-	0.0004	Restored Private Forest	
15				83/A/2	-	0.0070	Restored Private Forest		
16				83/A/1	-	0.0758	Restored Private Forest		
17				19/2	-	0.0276	Restored Private Forest		
18				Kanvinde	106	132/3	0.4172	Private Forest	
19					100	137/A	1.1214	Private Forest	
20				Kalamgaon	253	112/1/B	0.0109	Restored Private Forest	
21					193	123	0.1071	Private Forest	
22				Shirol	1039	619	0.5744	Private Forest	
23					145	-	0.0487	Private Forest	
24				Kasara Bu.	125	351/A, 351/B, 351/C, 351/D	0.1270	Private Forest	
25					125	351/A, 351/B, 351/C, 351/D	1.1430	Private Forest	
26					125	351/A, 351/B, 351/C, 351/D	0.1030	Private Forest	
27					Mokhavane	47	133	0.4713	Private Forest
28						33	374	0.0795	Private Forest
29						32	377	0.0543	Private Forest
30				30		373	0.2463	Private Forest	
31				203		97	1.5745	Private Forest	
32				Vehloli	245	-	0.4734	Private Forest	
33				Savroli	118	31/1, 41/5C	0.0006	Pending on enquiry private Forest	
34					8	37	0.0459	Restored Private Forest	
35					4	35/1, 35/2, 35/3, 36/2 41/1A, 34/2	0.0598	Pending on enquiry private Forest	
36					288	64/11	0.2617	Restored Private Forest	
37				263	64/11	0.2916	Finally Acquired Forest		
38				262	64/11/1	0.1603	Restored Private Forest		
39				261	118/1/2	0.2457	Finally Acquired Forest		
40				260	40, 11/1/1	0.0764	Finally Acquired Forest		
41				244	117/9	0.1516	Private Forest		
42				242	117/5	0.0416	Private Forest		
43				241	117/2	0.0287	Private Forest		
44				239	117/1	0.1687	Private Forest		
45				240	147	0.0140	Private Forest		
46				246	117/4	0.0143	Private Forest		
47				236	50/3, 123/1	0.2452	Restored Private Forest		
48				234	42/1, 100/2C	0.0487	Restored Private Forest		
49	226	100/2C/2	0.0699	Restored Private Forest					
50	Golbhan	243	17/7	0.0487	Private Forest				
51		72	124/A	0.6481	Private Forest				
52		72	124/A	0.0049	Private Forest				
53		71	124/3	0.0838	Private Forest				
54		70	124/C, 124/D	0.0390	Private Forest				
55		56	123	0.0139	Private Forest				
56	Sakharoli	158	163	0.9520	Private Forest				
57	Asangaon	70/1	-	0.8809	Restored Private Forest				
58		71	-	0.1202	Private Forest				
59		65/2	-	0.4304	Restored Private Forest				
60	Cherpoli	361	119	0.2003	Private Forest				
61		386	115	0.0400	Private Forest				
62	Shahapur	49	-	0.4508	Private Forest				
63	Lahe	351	64/2	0.0820	Pending on enquiry private Forest				
64		402	267	0.0390	Private Forest				
65	Walshet	90	-	0.0429	Private Forest				
66		66/2/1	-	0.0214	Restored Private Forest				
67		66/1	-	0.0367	Restored Private Forest				
68		96/1	-	0.0182	Restored Private Forest				
69		96/3	-	0.0679	Restored Private Forest				
70		67/1	-	0.0663	Restored Private Forest				
71		68/1	-	0.0179	Restored Private Forest				
72	Thane	Thane	Kalyan	Guravali	-	103	0.2100	Private Forest	
73					-	9	0.3630	Private Forest	
Total (Ha.)							16.5480	-	
AK-36					Deputy Chief Engineer (Construction), Ghatkopar, Central Railway				
Traveling with dangerous and explosive goods is a punishable offense									

Leopard kills girl in Maha's Jalgaon

Jalgaon, April 17 (UNI) : A leopard attacked a two-year-old girl and killed her at Dambhurni Shivara in Yaval taluka of Jalgaon district on Thursday.

According to the forest department, the girl, identified as Ratnabai Satish Rupnar, was from a shepherd family.

Three shepherd families are living in an agricultural field belonging to one Prabhakar Choudhary in Dambhurni Shivara in Yaval taluka for five days.

The leopard attacked Ratnabai while she was sleeping with her mother, Jijabai who heard the crying sound of her daughter when the animal attacked her.

People gathered around the mother and chased the leopard. However, the carnivore ran into the banana field. The child's body was found some distance away.

After receiving the information, forest officer Vipul Patil and other employees rushed to the spot. Yaval police inspector Pradeep Thakur made a panchnama and sent the girl's body to a rural hospital.

Farmers are angry because the leopard has emerged as a major threat in the area. They are demanding the Forest Department to catch the man-eating leopard.

Woman held at Mumbai airport with drug

Mumbai April 17 (UNI): The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) arrested a woman at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport in Mumbai after seizing over 2 kg of cocaine.

She was later produced in a court which remanded him in judicial custody, officials said on Thursday.

According to DRI officials, based on specific inputs, their team

intercepted the woman passenger who arrived from Nairobi in Kenya early Tuesday. The officials said they examined her checked-in luggage and found three packets of white powder. Believing the powder was a narcotic substance, it was tested using a field test kit, and the result was positive for cocaine. The drug sized from the woman is worth over Rs 21 crore in international market officials said.

HC cancels transfer of NIA Judge A K Lahoti

Mumbai, Apr 17 (UNI) The Bombay High Court on Thursday cancelled the transfer of special NIA Judge A K Lahoti, who had been conducting daily hearings in the 2008 Malegaon bomb blast trial for past few years and was nearing conclusion of the case.

With most arguments already completed, he was transferred to Nashik in midst of trial. The registrar of the Bombay high court in its order not only cancelled the transfer order but also extended his tenure till August 31.

Following this, Judge Lahoti today directed all the parties in the case to file their written submission before April 19. Earlier, oral arguments were made both by the prosecution and the defence. It is expected the court may deliver its final verdict before August 31.

The transfer order was cancelled after the victim of the said bomb blast had made a representation before the high court, requesting to extend the tenure of the present Presiding Judge, A K Lahoti, till completion of the trial in the interest of justice. Six people were killed and over 100 injured on September 29, 2008, after an explosive device strapped on a motorcycle exploded in sensitive Malegaon town of Nashik district.

CENTRAL RAILWAY
SOLAPUR DIVISION
E-TENDER NOTICE

CPM, Gati Shakti, Central Railway, Solapur on behalf of the president of India Invites E-tender from the reputed firms/Contractor for the following work.
E-Tender Notice No:01-2025-GSU-Civil, Date: 15.04.2025. Name of work: (A) Provision of Ramp to FOB for Divyangjan at Akkalkot Road station under Amrit Station Scheme over Solapur division. **(B)** Provision of lift at Akkalkot Road station under Amrit Station Scheme over Solapur division. **(C)** Provision of parcel and goods shed related facilities at (I) **Solapur:** Provision of CGS Office & parcel office (II) **Kalburgi:** Provision of parcel office. (III) **Kurduwadi:** Provision of Hamal room and CGS office. (iv) **Wadi:** Provision of Parcel office & store room. (v) **Pandharpur:** Provision of Hamal Room. **(D)** Wadi- Resurfacing of PF 1/2 and 3/4 of Wadi station and other improvement works . **Approximate cost of work:** Rs. 21,31,91,771.00. **Earnest Money:** Rs. 12,16,000.00. **Completion period of the work:** 12 (Twelve) Months. **Maintenance Period:** 6 months or one monsoon whichever is later. **Last Date and time for submission for tender on 09.05.2025** up to 15.00 hrs. **Date and time of opening of tender on 09.05.2025** after 15.30 hrs. **Website particulars: www.ireps.gov.in** **Note:** The Prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website frequently before the date of closing of tender to note any change/corrigendum issued for this tender website: **www.ireps.gov.in**

Chief Project Manager (GSU),
Central Railway, Solapur.

Akar/Sur- 40
Travelling with dangerous and explosive goods is a punishable offense



People visit the Buddhist complex of Kanheri Caves, on the International Day for Monuments and Sites, also known as World Heritage Day, in Mumbai on Thursday.

Muslims hail Supreme Court stay on implementation of new Waqf Act

Mumbai, April 17 (UNI) : Prominent Muslim intellectuals and religious scholars here on Thursday lauded the Supreme Court's stay on implementation of the new Waqf (Amendment) Act.

Among them are State Congress leader M Arif Naseem Khan, Markazul Ma'arif Education Research Centre (MMERC) director Maulana Burhanuddin Qasmi, All India Ulema Council (AIUC) general secretary Maulana Mahmood Daryabadi and petitioner Mohamed Jameel Merchant.

Khan accused the

Centre of pushing through the 'unconstitutional' Waqf Bill on the strength of its majority, but the SC has taken cognizance of the serious issues raised by the Congress and other organisations, and "now the law should be scrapped, and a new one should be framed".

"The BJP has no concern for the interest of Muslims though it passed the law in the name of welfare for the poor in the community. It is indulging in falsehoods and misinformation to justify it. When the BJP's Muslim leaders are now sidelined

and their careers destroyed, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah have no right to speak on such things," said Khan sternly.

Qasmi said he had predicted a fortnight ago that the SC would grant an interim stay on merits as the new Waqf (Amendment) Act has flouted the fundamental rights of citizens.

"We are happy that by this order, the SC has taken the step to uphold the Constitutional spirit of our forefathers when they had drafted the Constitution and expect the apex court

to take further decisions on the merits of the case," he added.

Daryabadi cautioned that this is just the beginning of the long haul and it would be appropriate to comment when a final verdict is given, "but our struggle will continue till the logical conclusion".

The first petitioner in the Waqf cases from Mumbai, Jameel Merchant, described it as a very positive

development but called upon Muslims to refrain from any premature celebrations, as the route to full justice is still very long.

Govt striving for effective use of AI tech in agriculture sector

Mumbai, April 17 (UNI) : Principal secretary of Agriculture Department, Vikas Chandra Rastogi, said on Thursday that the Maharashtra government is keen on how artificial intelligence (AI) technology can effectively be used in agriculture sector in the state.

He was speaking at a workshop of Agriculture Department organised at Mantralaya to consult on the draft of the AI Policy for the Agriculture Sector.

'Breakthrough' in Mumbai Metro Route 7A tunnel in CM's presence

Mumbai, April 17 (UNI) The 'breakthrough' in the 1.65 km long underground tunnel of Metro Route 7A from Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (T2) to Andheri East, proposed by the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority, was successfully completed in the presence of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Thursday.

Minister of Skill, Employment, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Mangal Prabhat Lodha, MLA Parag Alwani, Metropolitan Commissioner of Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority Sanjay Mukherjee and Additional Metropolitan Commissioner Ashwin Mudgal were present.

Chief Minister Fadnavis initially learned about the project from the officials.

The underground tunnel is on the downline of Metro 7A. This tunnel will be between Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport station and Airport Colony station. This metro connection will be an

important milestone for the entire metro network in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region. With this metro line, Mira-Bhayander and further Vasai-Virar parts of Mumbai Metropolitan Region will be connected with Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport by metro. Thane and Navi Mumbai International Airport will also be connected by metro. Over 59 per cent of the work of this metro line has been completed. The length of this metro line is 3.4 km, of which 0.94 km is elevated and 2.50 km is underground. There will be two stations on this line -- one at Airport Colony on the elevated line and the other at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport underground. The elevated metro line will be 0.57 km long, the length of the double tunnel is 2.035 km.

The first drive of the downline tunnel began on September 1, 2023. The length of this tunnel is 1.65 km and 1180 rings have been installed for lining. The diameter of the tunnel is 6.35 meters and specially designed precast rings have been used in six areas.

Renowned artistes Suvarna Mategaonkar, Nilesch Parab honoured with Babulal Data Kala Gaurav Award

Pune, April 17 (UNI) : Renowned singer Suvarna Mategaonkar and percussionist Nilesch Parab were honoured with the Babulal Data Kala Gaurav Award 2025.

The award, initiated by Prashant Data, director of Babuj Lakshminarayan Chiwada, aims to recognise and appreciate artistes' contributions.

The award ceremony was part of the 'Melodious Mangeshkars' programme held at the MES auditorium here. Shrinivas Joshi, veteran classical vocalist and president of Arya Sangeet Prasarak Mandal, presented the awards to Suvarna Mategaonkar and Nilesch Parab. Prashant Data and Parag Mategaonkar were also present on the occasion. The programme 'Melodious Mangeshkars', which celebrated the legacy of the Mangeshkar family, drew a large audience of music enthusiasts.

IN THE COURT OF THE CIVIL JUDGE (SENIOR DIVISION), MALKANGIRI
C.S. (MAT) No. 78/2024
Swagatika Mishra aged about 30 years
D/o-late Subash Chandra Mishra & W/o-Rashmikanta Mishra
Residing at Vill/Post-Mendukuli PS-Mathili, Dist-Malkangiri
.....Petitioner

Versus-
Rashmikanta MishraOpp. Party

NOTICE (U/O.-5 Rule-20 of C.P.C)
Rashmikanta Mishra aged about 42 years, S/o-Laxmikanta Mishra of Vill-Lenka Sahi, Water works road (backside of Odisha bakery), Puri P.O/P.S.-Samudra-ghat, Puri, Dist-Puri, Working as Manager, Corporate Office No. 27A, Developed Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai-600032
Residing at-Plot No. C-21, Power-C, 1st & 3rd floor, G-Block, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai-400051
WHEREAS the above named Petitioner has filed a suit U/S-13(1)(i-a) of HINDU MARRIAGE ACT, 1955 seeking a decree of divorce against you. You have not yet appeared in the suit inspite of receipt of notice of this court; however you are hereby summoned to appear in this Court in person or through Pleader on the 01st day of May, 2025 at 7.30 A.M. to answer all material questions relating to the suit.
Take notice that, in default of your appearance on the day before mentioned, the suit will be heard and determined in your absence.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Court, this 05th day of April, 2025.
Sd/- Civil Judge (Senior Division) Malkangiri
Rep/M627

Case registered of selling fake passes for darshan at Trimbakeshwar temple

Nashik, Apr 17 (UNI) : A case of selling fake passes for darshan at the Trimbakeshwar temple for an excessive amount of money has been revealed.

Amit Machve, CEO of the temple trust, has registered a case at the Trimbak police station in connection with the incident that took place on March 22.

According to police sources, on March 22, when devotees from Surat, Gujarat came for darshan, a person met them at the entrance of

the temple sold three tickets, that were worth Rs 200 each for VIP darshan, for Rs 2,000.

However, the Aadhaar number of the concerned person is matched for the darshan pass. Since all the three passes were issued with other people's Aadhaar numbers, the Aadhaar numbers of the devotees from Surat did not match it.

Therefore, the computerised scanning machine at the entrance of the temple did not accept them.


Naturally, the security guards did not allow these devotees to enter and asked them to leave.

Realising that he had been cheated, devotee Chirag Dalia rushed to the trust office. He filed a complaint with the chairman. The application mentions that the name of the said person is Narayan.

WESTERN RAILWAY
TRD WORK

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (Sub), Western Railway, Mumbai Central invites **E-tender No.: WR-MMCTOESUB(ESOT)/09/2025. Dt.: 15.04.2025. Name of the work:** Lower Parel - TRD work in connection with double entry/exit to EMU workshop. **Estimated cost of work:** ₹ 53,90,730/- **Bid Security:** ₹ 1,07,800/- **Date & time of Submission:** Till 13.05.2025, 15:00 Hrs. **Date & Time of Opening:** On 13.05.2025 at 15:30 Hrs. For further details please visit our website **www.ireps.gov.in**

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**BRIHANMUMBAI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**

A.E.(SWM) /395 / R/N Dt.17.04.2025
EOI
Lacquer sealed tenders are invited for providing housekeeping & Other services to Old R/North Ward office building & Chowkies Dahisar for the period from 01.05.2025 to 30.04.2026 from Interested Sansthas / Registered Enterprises & NGO Agency.

Sr. No.	Quotation Deposit (E.M.D.) in Rs.	Due Date	Work Completion Period
01	24,100/-	25-04-2025	01-05-2025 to 30-04-2026

Application form along with terms and conditions may be purchased by any interested eligible Sansthas/NGO Agency / Registered Enterprises (with experience) and upon each payment of a nonrefundable fees of Rs. 3300/- + 18 % rate of tax (CGST- 9%, SGST- 9%) Rs. 3894/- of Asstt. Commissioner, R/North office, CTS No.921/7, Rustomjee Colony, Rangnath Kesar Marg, Dahisar (W). Mumbai- 400 068.
The application forms with terms and conditions will be available in <http://mahatenders.gov.in> from dt. 18-04-2025 to 25-04-2025. The Quotation deposit (E.M.D.) of Rs.24,100/- E.M.D. in online in <http://mahatenders.gov.in> must be paid before submission date at the above mentioned address.
The application forms will be opened and scrutinized on 26-04-2025, one eligible Agency will be appointed to carry out the work.
The Assistant Commissioner R/North Ward will reserve the right to change or cancel any or all work without giving any reason.

PRO/161/ADV/2025-26
Sd/- Assistant Commissioner "R/N Ward"

Fever? Act now, see you doctor for correct & complete treatment.

STANDARD POST

India saved Rs 3.48 lakh crore as DBT cut leakages in last 10 years

India's Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system has resulted in cumulative savings of Rs 3.48 lakh crore through a reduction in leakages that were taking place earlier, and a 16-fold expansion in beneficiary coverage from 11 crore to 176 crore since its launch by Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government, according to a report released.

Since the money goes directly into the bank accounts of beneficiaries the leakage as been curbed which has resulted in a halving of subsidy allocations from 16 per cent to 9 per cent of total expenditure.

"The DBT has redefined welfare delivery by enhancing transparency, curbing leakages, and ensuring precise fund distribution," the study states.

This policy document evaluates a decade of data (2009–2024) to assess DBT’s impact on budgetary efficiency, subsidy rationalization, and social outcomes.

The newly developed Welfare Efficiency Index (WEI), which quantifies fiscal and social gains, surged from 0.32 in 2014 to 0.91 in 2023, underscoring systemic improvements, the policy document states. According to the document, despite a rise in welfare budgets from Rs 2.1 lakh crore in 2009–10 to Rs 8.5 lakh crore in 2023–24, subsidy allocations declined proportionally, reflecting DBT-driven efficiency.

It points out that food subsidies accounted for 53 per cent of total savings (Rs 1.85 lakh crore), while programs like MGNREGS and PM-KISAN achieved 98 per cent timely wage transfers and Rs 22,106 crore in savings, respectively. Aadhaar-linked authentication eliminated ghost beneficiaries, enabling coverage expansion without proportional fiscal expenditure. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, synthesizing Union Budget data, DBT portal records, and secondary sources. Analytical tools include correlation analysis, Granger causality tests, and the WEI—a composite metric weighting DBT savings of 50 per cent, subsidy reduction of 30 per cent), and beneficiary growth of 20 per cent.

The policy recommendations emanating from the study include expansion of DBT coverage through the transition of remaining subsidy-based schemes to direct benefit transfer. It also recommends the strengthening of digital infrastructure and the prioritisation of rural and semi-urban banking access to bridge inclusion gaps.

Besides, the study has come out in favour of leveraging advanced analytics with the integration of AI-driven fraud detection to further minimize leakages.

It also recommends the need to improve grievance redressal through the establishment of robust mechanisms to address exclusion. "Contrary to critiques of reduced welfare spending, DBT has optimized resource utilization, enabling broader beneficiary reach with lower fiscal outlays. By replacing inefficient subsidies with targeted transfers, India has achieved measurable gains in welfare efficiency," the report states. Future efforts must focus on scaling up DBT’s reach, harnessing technology, and sustaining inclusive growth to ensure equitable welfare governance, the report concludes.

National Civil Service Day : Reforms and Indian Railway



S S Ahmad

(By S S Ahmad)
DIG-cum-Chief Security Commissioner/RPF South Western Railway, Hubballi

“Every effort made with impartial and selfless spirit is the strong foundation of New India. To fulfil the dream of a New India, 21st century thinking and dreams are indispensable in our bureaucracy – a bureaucracy that is creative and constructive, imaginative and innovative, proactive and polite, professional and progressive, energetic and enabling, efficient and effective, transparent and tech-enabled”

P.M Sri Narendra Modi April 21st is celebrated as National Civil Services Day annually in India to honour the dedication and contributions of civil servants who play a very important role in nation building, development, social justice and ensuring delivery of quality services. This is the day to acknowledge the efforts of Civil Servants and their commitment to public service

On April 21 in 1947 Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the first Home Minister of independent India, addressed the probationers of Administrative Services Officers at Metcalf House in Delhi, referring to them as the “steel frame of India.” The day serves as a reminder of the importance of public service.

The Civil Services in

India attracts nation's youth to contribute in nation building, development and fulfilling the collective aspirations of our citizens. Civil Servants hold a constitutional responsibility to ensure effective and efficient governance and act as important agents of change in pursuance of the vision of New India. It is imperative that our civil service draws inspiration from our cultural values and ancient Indic principle which emphasize leaders as servant of the people prioritizing equality, fairness, justice and public welfare. This aligns with modern demands for transparent and accountable governance.

Independent India's bureaucratic tradition has a strong colonial legacy in which the colonial administration was shaped for execution of policy through coercion, state was distanced from the people and policies were not citizen-centric. A comprehensive reform had been long overdue in the Indian Civil Services which was essential for transformation of civil services.

In recent past despite having colonial legacy, The Indian civil service has undergone a major transformation for nation building, development and social justice. In recent past, a series of governance reform initiated to recast the steel frame of India to transform bureaucracy into a creative, constructive, imaginative, innovative, proactive, polite, professional, progressive, energetic, enabling, efficient and effective bureaucracy in pursuance of vision of New India which firmly believes in “maximum governance with minimum government” and

concept of “Antyodaya”. The National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB)-Mission Karmyog aims to create a competent civil service working in harmonization for effective and efficient public service delivery, enhancing government-citizen interaction, empowering civil servants to deliver in challenging environment.

There is a paradigm shift in orientation which can also be seen in bureaucracy of Indian Railways going through transition. Indian Railways is undergoing a transformation that is reshaping the future of rail transportation in the country.

Being a pillar of India's infrastructure and economy, the modernization of Indian Railways is very important. Indigenous technology is getting expansion reducing dependency on foreign technology. The government is developing dedicated freight corridors to segregate freight and passenger traffic. Stations with world-class passenger amenities are being developed under Amrit Bharat station scheme and many more initiatives are being taken.

During COVID-19 pandemic, civil servants of Indian Railways from top management at Rly board level to Division level shown proactiveness and flexibility in their approach in contrary to image Railways has been bearing for decades. Railways made drastic changes in their freight movement, introducing parcel services, carrying essentials like milk, medicines, ventilators etc. Railways operated „Oxygen Express“, „Kissan Rail services and Shramik trains were operated to ferry migrant workers. Railways

ferryed approximately 63 lakhs migrant workers in over 4000 shramik special trains in a coordinated way which required coordination with states and other stakeholders

In the COVID-19 pandemic and the nationwide lockdown, Railway Protection Force (RPF) played a very vital role in smooth running of Shramik special trains, parcel trains which were escorted by RPF in coordination with sister departments of Indian Railways and state government and has come out with a more humane approach, besides performing the routine duty of securing railway installations and assets. This was against common perception that civil servants live behind the door.

During the 2025 Mahakumbh in Prayagraj, Indian Railways successfully handled huge crowd of devotees at Railway stations and successfully controlled and diverted influx of passengers in coordination with state government, adjoining zones, and developing satellite railway stations nearby Prayagraj railway stations. A empowered CCTV installed to monitor crowd density at real time basis. The Railway Protection Force (RPF) played a crucial role in ensuring the safety and security of pilgrims travelling by train, managing crowds, and maintaining law and order at railway stations and onboard trains in coordination with GRP and civil police with objective of “Seva Hi Sankalp”. By uniting rescued children and devotees with their family members has shown humanitarian approach of RPF. It is beginning of

change in bureaucracy unlocking the potential of civil services eliminating department and service-based silos and strengthening government institutions and processes.

Railway protection force under Ministry of Railways tasked with protecting railway property and assets, ensuring passenger safety & security, providing secure environment on Railways is also undergoing a transformation by embracing technology driven security system, raising separate unit of CORAS commandos for high security risk zone and going far beyond duties with objective of “Seva Hi Sankalp” and facilitating passengers with compassion. RPF has emerged as a symbol of trust for millions of travellers. RPF civil servants put unwavering commitment to the safety of all passengers and introduced many initiatives, each designed to shield the fragile journeys of the public, ensuring their travels by train are secure, dignified, and unmarred by fear.

Operation Nanhe Farishte: During the year 2024, 15674 children including 4460 girl children were rescued by RPF under Operation Nanhe Farishte all over India which is a dedicated mission by the RPF to rescue children in need across the railway network.

Meri Saheli Initiative: During the year 2024, total 46,649,06 lonely travelling lady passengers including girl children were attended by RPF Meri Saheli team to ensure their safe journey. The ‘Meri Saheli’ initiative by RPF focuses on the safety of female passengers, including girls, during their entire train

journey

Mission Jeevan Raksha: Between 2022 and 2024, RPF saved an incredible 8,455 lives with spirit of courage and kindness going beyond their call of duty, risking their own lives to save others especially in cases where passengers fallen down from running train while boarding and de

Operation Saathi: Community Engagement RPF extends its role to communities near railway tracks under operation Saathi. By providing training and employment opportunities, the force engaged over 96,000 individuals in 2024, promoting social and economic upliftment.

Operation Amanat: Securing and returning lost property Every year, countless passengers forget their belongings on trains and platforms. Through operation Amanat, RPF works tirelessly to recover and return these items to their rightful owners.

Over the past three years, belongings worth Rs. 172 crore were returned.

National Civil Service Day reminds us of the vital role civil servants play in shaping the nation. It is essential not only to honour them on this day but also to appreciate their continuous efforts throughout the year.

Moreover, Railway Protection Force is an essential pillar of India's railway network. Their contributions to safety and security on National Civil Service Day and throughout the year deserve recognition. Let's celebrate the unsung heroes of the railway system and show our appreciation for their invaluable service.

IDFC FIRST Bank Board Approves Rs 7,500-Crore Fundraising

(Standard Post Bureau)

The Board of Directors of IDFC FIRST Bank, at its meeting held today, approved a preferential issue of equity capital (CCPS) amounting to approximately Rs 4,876 crore to Currant Sea Investments B.V., an affiliate company of global growth investor Warburg Pincus LLC and approximately Rs 2,624 crore to Platinum Invictus B 2025 RSC Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) managed by its Private Equities Department. The proposed issues are subject to shareholder and regulatory approvals.

Over the last six years, IDFC FIRST Bank has undergone a successful transformation from its legacy as an infrastructure-focused DFI to becoming a modern, technology-driven, pan-India, universal bank. In the process, it has made significant investments in distribution, technology, and talent to

become a leading private sector bank in India.

During this time, deposits grew 6x, loans and advances doubled, and CASA ratio has significantly improved from 8.7% to 47.7%. PAT rose from a loss of ₹1,944 crore in FY19 to a profit of ₹2,957 crore in FY24. However, profitability dipped in 9M FY25 due to industry-wide challenges in microfinance, which the bank has navigated well. With this fund raise, the overall capital adequacy will increase from 16.1% to 18.9%, (CET-1 ratio at ~16.5%, calculated on the capital position of the Bank as of December 31, 2024), strengthening the Bank's balance sheet and positioning it for strong and self-sustaining profitable growth.

Mr. V Vaidyanathan, Managing Director & CEO, IDFC FIRST Bank: “From day one, we have always built our foundation of the Bank with a long-term vision of building a world-class bank in India. We are

building a culture of empathy for customers and strive to offer highest levels of customer service. We are technologically advanced and continue to stay cutting-edge.

The Bank has firmly moved into profits and is now at a pivotal stage, where our income growth is expected to consistently exceed OPEX growth, leading to improved operating leverage. We expect many businesses which are in the investment stage to turn profitable with scale.

It is great to have Warburg Pincus back and to welcome a wholly owned subsidiary of ADIA as our shareholder. We thank them both for believing in us and our future growth plans and for investing in us even under volatile global situations. We believe only by building a strong, respected franchise loved by customers and supported by strong unit economics, we will deliver sustainable long-term returns to our stakeholders.”

UP BJP to launch awareness campaign on Waqf reform

Lucknow, April 17 (UNI) : In a bid to create awareness regarding the newly passed Waqf (Amendment) Act among the public, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will launch Waqf Reform Public Awareness Campaign in the entire state from April 20.

State president Bhupendra Singh Chaudhary and general secretary (Organisation) Dharampal Singh held a meeting through virtual medium on Thursday and discussed with the party officials regarding the campaign.

During the meeting state president Chaudhary said the Waqf Amendment Act 2024 neither abolishes any law nor takes away anyone's rights, it is just an amendment which will make the process of Waqf Board more transparent and equitable.

He said the central government under the

leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken the step to ensure the rights of poor Muslims, women and people of other religions. "But the opposition parties are continuously creating an atmosphere of lies and confusion due to vote bank politics. We have to go among the public and expose the lies being spread by the opposition regarding the Waqf (Amendment) Act," he said.

General secretary Dharampal Singh discussed in detail the action plan prepared by the party in the context of the Waqf Reform Public Awareness Campaign from April 20. He said a state level workshop has been organised in the capital Lucknow on April 19.

He said workshops will be organised on Jan Jagran Abhiyan at all the 6 organisational areas of the state between April 20 to 21

and at the district/metropolitan level on April 23 and 24.

Singh said that the opposition parties are facing problems due to the Waqf Amendment Act 2025.

"Because with this amendment the whole system will become transparent. The common poor Muslim will start getting the benefit of the Waqf money," he said.

He said the opposition leaders are now continuously working to mislead the Muslims and we should not let the opposition's conspiracy succeed.

The state general secretary said, "Under the Waqf Reform Public Awareness Campaign, we have to go to town halls, citizen dialogues, dialogues with Muslim scholars, among women, youth and various sections of the society and explain in detail about this Act."

Taiwan detects 34 aircraft, 6 vessels of Chinese army in 24 hours : Defense Ministry

Beijing, April 17 (UNI) : The Taiwanese Defense Ministry said on Thursday that they had detected 34 aircraft and 6 vessels of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) over the past 24 hours.

"34 PLA aircraft, 6 PLAN vessels and 2 official ships operating around Taiwan were detected up until 6 a.m. today [22:00 GMT on Wednesday]," the ministry said. The ministry noted that 14 out of 34 Chinese aircraft crossed the median line and entered Taiwan's Air Defense Identification Zone.Taiwan has been governed independently of mainland China since 1949. Beijing views the island as its province, while Taiwan, a territory with its own elected government, maintains that it is an autonomous country, although it has stopped short of declaring independence. Beijing opposes any official contacts by foreign states with Taipei and considers Chinese sovereignty over the island indisputable.

EU expects Trump-Meloni meeting to clear US tariffs demands : Reports

Moscow, April 17 (UNI) : European Union (EU) trade negotiators hope that Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's trip to Washington and her meeting with US President Donald Trump can shed light on the US tariffs demands, The Financial Times reported on Thursday. The bloc's negotiators reportedly complained that they had not been provided with US demands and are now hoping that Meloni's trip will bring some clarity, the paper said.

At the same time, Italy's former ambassador to NATO, Stefano Stefanini, believes that Meloni "has an advantage on the EU mediators" as she is talking to "the decider," and is on good terms with Trump.

Unnamed diplomats from four EU states told the paper that Italy's soft stance on reciprocal tariffs is criticized by some member states, but pointed out that Meloni's good relationship with Trump can be valuable.The Italian prime minister publicly supported Brussels' offer to drop all tariffs on industrial goods if Washington does the same, however the diplomats briefed on the talks reportedly said that the US was not interested in reducing the tariffs and that the declared 10% tariff rate is likely to stay.

Meloni and Trump are going to meet in Washington on Thursday. Earlier this week, Politico reported that the Italian prime minister would seek to achieve some concessions from Trump. However, if she fails it might undermine her authority in the EU.

On April 2, Trump signed an executive order that implemented reciprocal tariffs on imports from various countries. The base tariff rate was established at 10%, with higher rates applied to 57 countries based on the US trade deficit with each specific nation. On April 9, Trump declared that a baseline tariff of 10% would be imposed for 90 days on over 75 countries that had not retaliated and had requested negotiations, except for China. As the trade war progressed, US tariffs on Chinese goods hit 145%, while China's tariffs on American imports reached 125%.

Türkiye conducts anti-drug operation, detaining 525 suspects: minister

Ankara, April 17 (UNI) : Turkish authorities on Thursday detained 525 individuals in an anti-narcotics operation in the capital Ankara, marking "the largest drug crackdown" in the nation's history, according to Turkish Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya.

The operation, which began early Thursday, targeted over 625 locations across the capital. It involved 4,768 police officers, 1,461 teams, 40 specially trained detector dogs, four unmanned aerial vehicles, and air support elements, Yerlikaya said on social media platform X.

The operation was the culmination of six months of technical and physical surveillance, he said, adding, "Our target in the operation was street dealers, who sell drugs in neighborhoods and streets through internet-based communication platforms."The operation came one day after a Europe-wide crackdown, coordinated by Türkiye, on international drug and money laundering networks, which resulted in over 230 arrests and the seizure of 400 million U.S. dollars in assets across several countries, including the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Belgium, and Türkiye.

Russia removes Afghan Taliban from list of terrorist organisations

Moscow/Kabul, April 17 (UNI) : Russia today officially lifted its two-decade old ban on the Afghan Taliban, removing the group from its list of designated terrorist organisations.

The move, confirmed by Russian state media on Thursday, marks a significant shift in Moscow's diplomatic posture toward the de facto rulers of Afghanistan.Russia's Supreme Court on Thursday removed the Taliban's designation as a "terrorist organisation", a symbolic gesture aimed at building friendly ties with Afghanistan's rulers.

The Islamist group seized power in Afghanistan in August 2021, after American forces pulled out.

The Russian Supreme Court's decision to lift the ban, imposed in 2003, takes effect immediately and paves the way for broader engagement between the Kremlin and the Taliban.

Although no country has formally recognised the Taliban-led government since it seized power in

704 climbers permitted to climb Nepal peaks this spring



Kathmandu, April 17 (UNI) : Nepal has issued permits to 704 climbers, including 156 females, for ascending 21 mountains in the country during the spring climbing season which runs through May, an official said on Thursday.

Among them, 253 males and 58 females were

allowed to scale Mount Qomolangma, the world's tallest peak at 8,848.86 meters, which straddles Nepal and China.

"We have been receiving applications daily, mainly for Mount Qomolangma," Liladhar Awasthi, director at the Department of Tourism, told Xinhua.Nepal has earned

3.84 million U.S. dollars in revenues by issuing the permits, with 3.38 million dollars from Mount Qomolangma alone.The Nepali government is to raise foreign nationals' climbing fee for Mount Qomolangma from 5,500 dollars to 7,500 dollars from September 1,when the autumn climbing season starts.

Trump says ‘big progress’ made in trade talks with Japan

Washington, April 17 (UNI) : US President Donald Trump said that "big progress" had been made in trade talks with the Japanese delegation at the White House.

"A Great Honor to have just met with the Japanese Delegation on Trade. Big Progress!" Trump said on Truth Social.

Japan was among the 15 countries with which the US could quickly sign new contracts.

Meanwhile, Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba has called the talks "constructive and honest," but expressed doubt that further discussions will be easy.

"I have just received a report from Economic Revitalization Minister

Ryosei Akazawa who is currently in Washington ... For 50 minutes with President Trump, and then for 75 minutes, in other words for quite a long time there was a constructive and honest discussion with US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, US trade representative Jamieson Greer, [US] Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick. There are still differences in the positions of Japan and the US," Ishiba told reporters.

During talks, Trump spoke about the position of the US in the global economy, while Akazawa expressed regret over US tariffs and explained what impact they would have on the Japanese industry, investment and jobs, asking

to revise the tariffs, Ishiba added.At the same time, the Japanese prime minister expressed doubt that further negotiations would be easy and said that he intended to travel to the US for a personal meeting with Trump.

Meanwhile, Akazawa said that he expects the second round of talks to take place later in April. The minister also said that both parties agreed to strive for reaching an agreement as soon as possible.On April 2, Trump announced reciprocal tariffs on imports from other countries. The baseline rate was set at 10%. A number of countries were hit with increased rates, which were later lowered to 10% for 90 days to facilitate trade negotiations.

Trade war with US may cost Germany \$330bln by 2028 : Reports

Washington, April 17 (UNI) : The trade war initiated by US President Donald Trump could cost Germany 290 billion euros (\$330 billion) by 2028, equivalent to an annual loss of 1.6% of the country's GDP, the Handelsblatt newspaper reported, citing a study by the German Economic Institute (IW).

At the same time, the US tariffs could cost the entire European Union 1.1 trillion

euros between 2025 and 2028, the report said on Wednesday. The tariffs will hit developing countries and countries with transition economies even harder, for which the IW predicts a "dramatic decline in growth rates," the report read.On April 2, Trump signed an executive order that implemented reciprocal tariffs on imports from various countries. The base tariff rate was established at 10%, with higher rates

applied to 57 countries based on the US trade deficit with each specific nation.On April 9, Trump declared that a baseline tariff of 10% would be imposed for 90 days on over 75 countries that had not retaliated and had requested negotiations, except for China.

As the trade war progressed, US tariffs on Chinese goods hit 145%, while China's tariffs on American imports reached 125%.

California leads US states in challenging Trump administration's social security cuts

Sacramento, US, April 17 (UNI) : California, along with a coalition of 21 other US states, is challenging the federal government's sweeping changes to the Social Security Administration (SSA), arguing that the cuts harm millions of Americans who rely on the programme for basic income and essential services.

California Attorney General Rob Bonta, along with 21 other state attorneys general, filed a legal brief in the case 'American Association of People with Disabilities v. Duke', arguing that the Trump administration's

abrupt policy changes and staffing cuts at the SSA are causing serious disruptions and delays for people trying to access their benefits.

The coalition highlighted that these changes are especially harmful to older adults and people with disabilities, who depend on Social Security to pay rent, buy food, and afford medicine.

The administration of President Donald Trump has mandated a reduction of SSA staff from approximately 57,000 to 50,000 employees, a cut of more than 12 percent. Many of these reductions are

expected through buyouts and early retirements, though layoffs are also anticipated.Additionally, the administration plans to close six of 10 regional offices and consolidate dozens of field offices, shifting more services online or to automated phone systems. Critics argue these moves will make it more difficult for people to get the assistance they need.

"These actions threaten the roughly 6.3 million Californians who receive critical Social Security benefits, more than any other state in the nation," said Senator Alex Padilla

Iran, US to hold second round of indirect talks in Rome: Official

Tehran, April 17 (UNI) : Rome will be the venue for the second round of indirect negotiations between Tehran and Washington, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi has said.

"Up to this point that we are speaking, we have received no new request from the other side for changing the location of the negotiations and Rome will be the venue for the second round," Gharibabadi said in a live televised interview on Wednesday.

The location of the talks was not a sensitive issue for the Iranian side. "We should concentrate on the main content and job," he said.

Regardless of the negotiations' venue, Oman will continue to facilitate and mediate them, the official added.

Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi met with US special presidential envoy Steve Witkoff in Oman's capital Muscat on Saturday over Tehran's

nuclear program, with both sides describing the meeting as "constructive".

The talks in Muscat followed US President Donald Trump's statement in early March that he had sent a letter to Iranian leaders, delivered through the United Arab Emirates, proposing negotiations on Iran's nuclear programme. Iran later agreed on indirect talks.

Iran signed a nuclear deal in July 2015 with six major countries -- Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States. Under the deal, Tehran agreed to limit its nuclear activities in exchange for sanctions relief.However, Trump unilaterally pulled his country out of the deal in May 2018 during his first term and reimposed sanctions on Iran, prompting Tehran to scale back its commitments under the deal. Since then, efforts to revive the nuclear agreement have made little progress.

NKorean defense ministry threatens to raise 'level of danger' for US over provocations

Pyongyang, April 17 (UNI) : North Korea will respond to Washington's provocative deployment of strategic bombers over the Korean Peninsula by raising the "level of danger" to the United States, the state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported on Thursday, citing the North Korean Defense Ministry.

On Tuesday, the Yonhap news agency reported, citing the South Korean Defense Ministry, that Washington and Seoul conducted a joint air force exercise over the Korean Peninsula, involving a US B-1B strategic bomber and F-35A and F-16 fighter jets from both countries.

A statement of the defense ministry's spokesperson, titled "The US reckless bluffing military demonstration is a futile act of increasing the security threat to its mainland only," criticized the participation of a US B-1B strategic bomber in the recent drill, calling it a blatant threat to Pyongyang's security and "a grave provocation that raises the military tension in the region to an extreme dangerous level." "The DPRK [North Korea] will exercise the overwhelming deterrence and continue to make the US recognize that its unannounced deployment of strategic means is a reckless and unnecessary abuse of strength, and get the US realize by itself that the higher the level of provocation against the DPRK is, the greater the level of danger returning to the US will be," the statement was quoted by the KCNA.

Similar exercises are conducted on a regular basis, which indicates that the US is practicing "tactics and procedures for attacking" North Korea, as well as "completing preparations for going into real action at any time," the spokesperson said, warning that such actions would have serious negative consequences for the US security as well.

Over 5,500 Afghan refugees return from Pak, Iran in single day

Kabul, April 17 (UNI) : A total of 1,072 Afghan families comprising 5,671 people returned to their homeland from neighbouring Iran and Pakistan on Wednesday, Afghanistan's High Commission for Addressing Returnees Problems said in a statement Thursday.

According to the statement, the refugees returned home via the Torkham border crossing in eastern Nangarhar province, the Spin Boldak border crossing in southern Kandahar province, and the Islam Qala border point in western Herat province.

Reportedly, about seven million Afghan refugees, most of whom are undocumented migrants, are currently living abroad, with most living in Afghanistan's neighbouring Pakistan and Iran.

The Afghan interim government has been repeatedly calling upon Afghan refugees to end living abroad as refugees and return home to contribute to the rebuilding of their war-torn homeland.

Afghan police destroy 3 drug labs, discover over 1,100 kg illicit drugs

Kabul, April 17 (UNI) : Afghan security forces have smashed three clandestine drug processing labs and discovered over 1,100 kg of illicit drugs in western Afghanistan's Ghor province, the office of the Deputy Minister of Interior for Counter-Narcotics said in a statement on Thursday.

Units of counter-narcotic police launched separate operations on the outskirts of the Ahmadkhail district of Ghor province, destroying the three drug processing labs and discovering 1,119 kg of illicit drugs, the statement asserted.The statement added that the drugs were used in manufacturing heroin.Security personnel have arrested three people on charges of smuggling 20 kg of illegal drugs of the opium type in northern Badakhshan province, the ministry said in a separate statement.The Afghan interim government has stepped up its crackdown on illicit drugs and those involved in the business, vowing to fight the menace until the country is free from poppy cultivation and substances used in the manufacturing of heroin.

Iranian FM says to discuss US-Iranian talks with Russian side

Tehran, April 17 (UNI) : Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Thursday that he plans to discuss the US-Iranian talks on Tehran's nuclear program with the Russian side during his visit to Moscow."This visit has several purposes ... First, the trip was planned to deliver a written message from the Supreme Leader of Iran [Ali Khamenei] to Russian President [Vladimir Putin]. At the same time ... we will discuss the indirect talks that have taken place between Iran and the United States," Araghchi's office quoted him as saying.

Khamenei's message to Putin concerns developments in the world and the Middle East, the minister said earlier.

Career



5 skills you need to improve your Work life

The rules of professional world are changing fast. These are five fundamental skills that you need to be a good professional

People skills:

Most of our professional life is centered on interacting with people. It is essential to have great people's skill which means one should be

at ease with both his/her seniors or subordinates. Having effective people's skills means one creates a pleasant environment around him/her and exudes positive energy.

Higher Emotional

Quotient:

The new-age working environment needs more of EQ (Emotional Quotient). People having higher level of EQ will deal with work related crisis better and they are also good team leaders and team builders. When they walk, they take people along with them in the journey. They have compassion, empathy and most importantly they know how to stay calm in the face of crisis.

The art of innovation:

In today's competitive world, innovation is the buzzword. One needs to push one's creative boundaries. You need to think different and think of innovative way to bring in more productivity. Innovation also involves celebrating the power of imagination.

Be decisive:

When at work, you just can't be the headless chicken. You need to have a firm grip over the situation. And to top it all, you need to be a quick decision maker. This skill matters most in the midst of crisis where the only option is the right option. Decisiveness saves you more time than anything and it also helps with fast thinking skills.

Learn to delegate:

Most people in position of authority don't delegate out of sheer insecurity and fear and of course with a superiority complex that makes them think nobody can do a better job than them. It's necessary to trust people and let them take responsibility for the work they do. Delegation makes the work process easier and gives others the opportunity to show their strengths as well. It instills confidence and a sense of well-being in people.

give work top priority? Make sure all these efforts are noticed. Being a silent hard-worker, even though admirable doesn't do much good in today's fast paced, competitive world. Manage your time: Setting a goal is just the start. Dedicated work, clockwise meticulousness and sincerity towards your goals work hand in hand. Set a schedule for yourself and appreciate your efforts once you hit the desired benchmark.



China to allow full foreign ownership of e-commerce businesses

China will allow full foreign ownership of some e-commerce businesses, aiming to encourage foreign investment and the development and competitiveness of the industry, the ministry of Industry and Information Technology said.

The move, effective immediately, will apply to "online data handling and trade handling services", the ministry said in a statement on its website. It was not immediately clear how this would affect e-commerce



companies already operating in China.

China's e-commerce industry has been booming, with companies like Alibaba Group Holding Ltd and JD.com Inc benefitting from a rising middle class with more disposable income.

Other players include US online retailer Amazon.com Inc, Vipshop Holdings Ltd and US supermarket chain Wal Mart Stores Inc, through its stake in shopping site Yihaodian.

Allowing full foreign ownership "supports our country's e-commerce development, encourages and brings in the active participation of foreign investment, and further excites market competition," the ministry said.

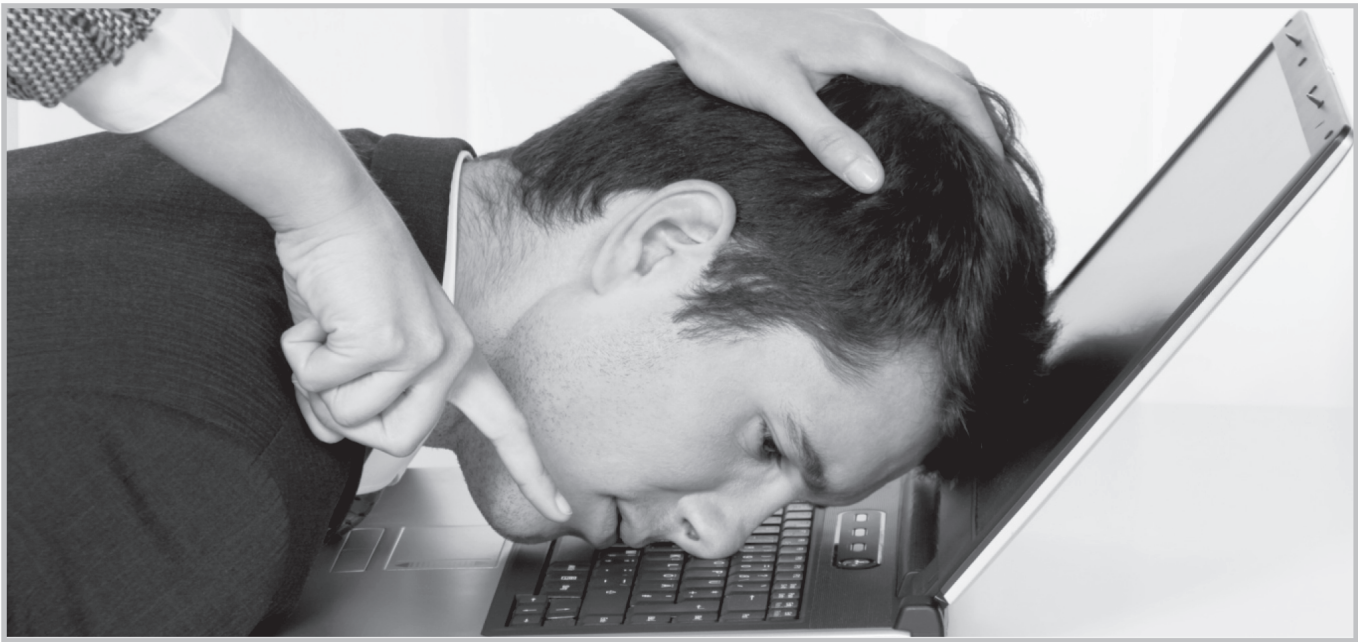
In recent years, the government has lent its support to the industry by keeping taxes low and loosening restrictions on cross-border trade, among other concessions.

E-commerce and the internet sector more broadly have been shining stars for Chinese industry.

Companies including Alibaba, social networking and online entertainment firm Tencent Holdings Ltd and search leader Baidu Inc account for hundreds of billions of dollars in stock market capitalization.

Their success comes as the world's second-largest economy grows at its slowest pace in three decades and Beijing looks to catalyze a shift away from a dependence on manufacturing and towards higher-value services.

10 signs that you're being bullied at work



While bullying is usually perpetrated by someone in a position of power and authority, peers and even subordinates are also known to engage in bullying. A bully (read: weak soul) is actually an insecure, paranoid, control freak. Their aim is to belittle and ultimately diminish their prey through persistent hostile and unnecessarily rude behaviour. Can you spot such a type at work? Here are 10 signs that you're being bullied at the office:

See obvious biasness

Others in your work group are receiving preferential treatment top projects, travel perks and free time. Meanwhile, you find that most of your requests along the same lines are denied without reasonable explanation.

Your progress goes unseen

Say you've been given a directive with certain objectives, an ultimate goal and a deadline. You work hard and with focus only to find out, that suddenly there's a change in direction on the project. Your progress is not celebrated or applied to the new project, but not even taken into account.

All your decisions are questioned

So you are constantly bombarded by excessive micro-managing? You don't feel like your intuition or decisions are being trusted, and you can't explain

why. Your boss and others hover over you much more than telling you what to do (and what not to do). You get the sense that you are wrongly perceived as incompetent and your decision-making capability is greatly reduced as a result.

You are socially alienated

All of a sudden, you're excluded from meetings you once attended. Your colleagues tend to discuss work prior to your arrival and you are left with absolutely no clue what to do. Besides, you are not marked on important mails. Co-workers tend to avoid you and keep interaction to a minimum. You may also find that you're no longer invited to post work drinks with your teammates.

You often feel targeted

Often, when you make a comment, suggestion or disagree with someone's opinion, you're responded to with a plethora of responses by others. It doesn't matter whether you're right -the gang mentality is determined to prove you wrong.

Your health is failing

Mentally, you're drained and your energy is zapped. You're sleeping more and getting out of bed is a real task for you. Exercising and socialising with your folks is a chore. Bullying can lead to depression, anxiety, panic attacks and mood swings. There are physical symptoms such as increased blood pressure, rapid heart beat, and loss of appetite (or excessive eating).

Have experienced verbal

spat

You're subjected to negative, abusive language -reprimanded often in front of the entire office. Verbal abuse can also be more subtle than loud insults. You may find that you are being joked around with in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable and small, and that too can be verbal bullying.

Your work is publicly diminished

Your dedication to your job is not acknowledged by your boss or they give credit to others (for your hard work) in a public setting such as a meeting.

Face unnecessary criticism

It seems that in the eyes of your boss, you are ineffective and unprofessional. Feedback is always provided in the form of criticism and delivered in a way to make you feel awful about yourself. There's no effort to provide guidance.

Presented unreasonable obstacles

So does the boss man purposely throw roadblocks in front of you to prevent you from successfully completing a project? Now, this is a major act of bullying.

How to deal?

Once you've come to the realisation that you're a victim of bullying -at work, or life -it's important to know what kind of re course you have. Here are possible actions that you could take.

- Speak to a trusted authority in the organisation: A good start may be human resources. They should be able to help you under stand, if you're actually being bullied. If it's determined that a bullying situation exists, they can also provide guidance on how to deal with it. Alternatively, you may feel more comfortable speaking with a higher authority senior colleague.

- Know your rights: If you feel that you're not being heard within your company, you might seek external counsel.

- Find another job: This should be a last resort. But sometimes it's not worth the fight -emotion ally and financially. Respect your self. Look for new employment with a company possessing a strong culture of integrity. Such companies have zero tolerance policies.

Microsoft, Tanstia partner to help SMBs adopt cloud computing

Tech giant Microsoft and state industry body Tamil Nadu Small and Tiny Industries Association (Tanstia) have partnered to help 10,000 small and medium sized businesses (SMBs) in the state leverage Information Technology (IT) to grow their businesses.

Announcing the tie-up, CK Mohan, vice president of Tanstia said, "To begin with, Microsoft and Tanstia have agreed to put our joint efforts in training 10,000 member SMBs in cloud technology for this year." The state industry body expects that

member organizations would be able to leverage new-age cloud technology to grow their businesses by mid-2016. Speaking at the event, Prashanth S, executive director of Quadrasystems.net, a Microsoft cloud accelerator partner in India, said that according to a Boston Consulting Group (BCG) survey, tech-savvy SMBs have been able to grow their revenue faster by almost 15 percentage points compared to those SMBs who lagged in

IT adoption.

For businesses today, 'cloud' has the potential to be a great leveller and bring a level playing field and hence help SMBs play the role of a growth engine for the economy, Microsoft said.

According to Microsoft, Office 365, Dynamics CRM (customer relationship management tool) and Azure (cloud computing platform) are some of the tools which are most relevant to SMBs to be able to scale up to levels of the larger scale competition.

Ghai produces day’s best 62 to build four-shot lead in round 3 of Calance Golf Open

New Delhi, April 17 (UNI) : Gurugram’s Tapendra Ghai produced the day’s best score of eight-under 62 to build an imposing four-shot lead in round 3 at the Calance Open 2025 being played at the Qutab Golf Course here on Thursday.

The 29-year-old Ghai (64-67-62), who won his only title on the PGTI in 2018, took his total to 17-under 193 after his penultimate round that helped him gain three spots from his overnight tied fourth place.

Delhi’s Honey Baisoya (67), Ludhiana’s Pukhraj Singh Gill (68), and Chandigarh’s Yuvraj Sandhu (69) were all in tied second place with matching

totals of 13-under 197.

Ghai, who was the first-round leader before he slipped three shots behind the lead in round two, was in terrific form with the putter on a day when everyone else struggled with the short putts. Ghai made single putts on his first eight holes, where he sank three birdies and came up with a few outstanding par-saves. Tapendra then continued the good work after the turn as he picked up three birdies between the 10th and the 13th. He drained his longest putt of the week, a 30-footer, on the 13th. Ghai’s bogey on the 14th came against the run of play, but he more than made up for it with birdies on his last three

holes, where again he displayed some quality putting and good bunker shots.

Honey Baisoya made six birdies and a bogey during his 65 to move up four places to tied second position.

Pukhraj Singh Gill’s 66 helped him jump two spots to tied second, while Yuvraj Sandhu’s 67 propelled him one place to tied second.

Mumbai’s Aryaman Aditya Mohan and Gurugram’s Manu Gandas were the other two players who made big moves on Thursday as they both shot scores of 63. Aryaman ended the day in tied sixth at 11-under 199 while Manu closed the day in ninth place at 10-under 200.

Stallion Show held at Imphal polo ground

Imphal, April 17 (UNI) : The third Manipuri Pony Stallion (Mapa Sha) Show organised by the Manipuri Pony Society (MPS) and sponsored by Mangal Foundation was held on Thursday at Imphal Polo Ground (Mapal Kangjeibung).

Altogether fourteen stallions took part in the show, which was examined by a panel of judges comprising Dr Sagolsem Upendro Singh, Dr Laishram Arjun Singh, Dr K Bidyaxalmi, and N Nehru Singh (VFA) from the Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Services, Government of Manipur.

The first prize of the Stallion Show was won by six-year-old Wonderful, Thangjam Gayatri of Chingkheihunba Polo Club, and the second prize went to Takeo, N Bamnkin of Luwanglakpa Polo Club, while the third was won by Bulbul, MC Chaoba of Thangmeiband Youth Polo Club. The show was graced by Prof W Chandbabu Singh, Vice-Chancellor DM University, and presided over by Prof Ch Priyoranjan Singh, President Manipuri Pony Society.

Prof W Chandbabu

Singh said that the age-old of traditional and cultural values associated with the Manipuri Ponies have its significance till today, and we are happy that the Manipuri Pony Society, Manipur Horse Riding and Polo Association and the Manipur Equestrian Association have initiated to save the stallions by organising the show. He expressed his views that the syllabus and curriculum of the educational institutions should include our heritage of pony for the younger generations.

MI survive late wobble to seal win over SRH

Mumbai, April 17 (UNI) : Mumbai Indians overcame late drama to notch their third win of IPL 2025, defeating Sunrisers Hyderabad by four wickets in a pulsating Match 33 at the Wankhede Stadium here on Thursday.

Chasing a target of 163, the hosts reached 166/6 in 18.1 overs, thanks to blistering cameos and a reverse-swept boundary from Tilak Varma to finish the job.

Having opted to bowl first, MI found themselves on the back foot early as SRH raced to 59 for no loss. Abhishek Sharma set the tone with a fluent 40 off 28 balls before Hardik Pandya broke the stand. From there, SRH’s momentum stuttered despite Travis Head’s gritty 28 and Nitish Reddy’s brief resistance. Will Jacks turned the screws in the middle overs with a double strike, dismissing Head and Ishan Kishan.

SRH were struggling at 113/4 until Heinrich Klaasen hammered 22 off one Deepak Chahar over, lifting them past 140. But it was the 26 runs off the final nine deliveries – including two sixes from Aniket Verma and one from skipper Pat Cummins – that gave SRH a competitive 162/5. Jasprit Bumrah (1/21) and Jacks (2/14) were the standouts with the ball.

In reply, Mumbai’s start was typically aggressive. Ryan Rickelton (31 off 23) set the early pace with four boundaries off Eshan Malinga in the sixth over, but fell soon after to Harshal Patel. Rohit Sharma looked in sublime touch, smoking three sixes – including a signature pull off Mohammad Shami – before falling to a mistimed drive straight to Head at cover.

Jacks (36 off 26) and Suryakumar Yadav (26 off 15) kept the innings on course with an exhibition of fearless strokeplay. SKY delighted the spectators with two sixes, including a slog sweep and a scoop, but perished attempting to finish the game early. Jacks too fell to Pat Cummins in a bid to accelerate.

The late chase took a dramatic turn when Hardik Pandya (21 off 9), after clubbing two fours and a six, holed out at deep midwicket off Malinga in the 18th over.

Naman Dhir followed two balls later in bizarre fashion – adjudged LBW, he reviewed the decision but was already walking back before the third umpire confirmed three reds, leaving spectators confused and booing. Even Mitchell Santner, sent in next, was briefly stopped from taking guard as the umpire awaited review confirmation.

Despite the chaos, Tilak Varma held his nerve. With one needed, he reverse-swept Zeeshan Ansari past short third for four, sealing victory with 11 balls to spare. He remained unbeaten on 21 off 17.

Cummins (3/26) was Hyderabad’s best bowler and nearly turned the tide single-handedly. Malinga also picked two wickets late but couldn’t prevent MI from registering their second consecutive win.

Wang beats Harimoto in comeback thriller

Macao, April 17 (UNI) : China’s Wang Manyu staged an incredible comeback to defeat Japan’s Miwa Harimoto 4-3 at the ITTF Men’s and Women’s World Cup Macao 2025 on Thursday, adding excitement to the first-day knockout stage.

World No. 2 Wang rallied from a 1-3 deficit, winning three consecutive sets to end the Macao World Cup journey of 16-year-old Harimoto.

In the deciding game, Wang saw her first match point saved, and after a tense 10-10 tie, won two straight points to clinch the victory. "My form is better than in the group stage after today’s match. I’ll give it my all for the matches ahead and fight for every point," Wang said in the mixed zone afterward. On the men’s side, world No. 2 Wang Chuqin won against Kanak Jha of the United States 4-1, going to face Germany’s Benedikt Duda, who came through a seven-game match. In the morning matches, world No. 1 Lin Shidong faced a tough battle against Swedish player Anton Kallberg, ultimately winning 4-3 after seven games (13-11, 11-5, 12-14, 9-11, 9-11, 11-7, 11-8). "At 8-all in the deciding game, I was focused on taking the initiative on my serve. In particular, at the 9-8 point, I had a lot of determination," Lin said. Defending women’s champion Sun Yingsha of China cruised to a dominant straight-game victory over Austria’s Sofia Polcanova, posting scores of 11-3, 11-4, 15-13, and 11-9.

Khelo India Youth Games 2025 Torch Relay reaches Samastipur

Samastipur, April 17 (UNI) : The Torch Relay of Khelo India Youth Games 2025, passing through 38 districts of Bihar to raise awareness and enthusiasm for the Khelo India Youth Games across the state, reached Samastipur district on Thursday.

Official sources said here on Thursday that for the first time, the Khelo

India Youth Games 2025, being organized in Bihar, will be held from May 4 to May 15, across several districts including Nalanda, Patna, Gaya, Bhagalpur, and Begusarai. Thousands of young athletes from all over the country will participate in this event to showcase their sporting talents and gain national recognition, the sources

said. The Torch Relay aims to ignite enthusiasm for sports among the youth and promote a sports culture throughout the state.

The Torch Relay not only highlights the importance of the Khelo India Youth Games but also marks a significant step towards the development of sports and

encouragement of young talent in Bihar. According to the organization of Khelo India Youth Games 2025 will strengthen Bihar’s sports infrastructure and provide the state’s young athletes a golden opportunity to compete with the best players in the country.

This event will set a new milestone in the sports history of Bihar.

No cuts to Afghanistan Cricket Board funding planned by ICC



Kabul, April 17 (UNI) : The Afghanistan Cricket Board will not see any of its funding from the International Cricket Council cut or diverted to its exiled women’s cricketers. An initiative to support the displaced Afghan players was announced by the ICC following its board meeting in Zimbabwe last weekend. However, as reported by ESPN Cricinfo, cricket’s

global governing body will not reduce or siphon off money earmarked for the ACB, even though part of the criteria for full membership of the ICC is to support women’s cricket, the BBC reported. The ICC will support the Afghan women through a separate funding mechanism, while the ACB will continue to receive a payment believed to be in the region of £13m per year. All of that funding

will go towards men’s cricket in Afghanistan, with women’s sport outlawed in the country since the Taliban returned to power in 2021. The ACB is the only full ICC member not to field a women’s team.

Instead, Afghanistan’s women’s cricketers will be funded by the ICC in conjunction with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), Cricket Australia and the Board of

Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). An Afghanistan Women’s XI played an exhibition match in Melbourne in January and want to be recognised as a refugee team.

But the ICC is understood to have acknowledged that the prospect of Afghanistan’s women playing official international matches in the near future is a distant one as it would need to be sanctioned by the ACB.

Afghanistan’s women have been promised a robust high-performance programme offering "advanced coaching, world-class facilities and tailored mentorship" which the ICC hopes will "help them reach their full potential". Afghanistan’s men’s team have retained their Test status, reached the semi-finals of last year’s T20 World Cup and participated in the Champions Trophy earlier this year.

South Africa make change to squad

Cape Town, April 17 (UNI) : South Africa have made a late adjustment to their squad for the upcoming Women’s ODI tri-series in Sri Lanka, after batting all-rounder Anneke Bosch was ruled out due to illness. 31-year-old Bosch has been ruled out of the Proteas Women’s upcoming ODI tri-series against Sri Lanka and India, with top-order batter Lara Goodall set to take her spot in the squad. The change sees the batter brought in as cover ahead of the team’s departure to Colombo on April 22. Skipper Laura Wolvaardt will lead a blend of experience and uncapped talent, with the likes of Chloe Tryon, Ayabonga Khaka, Suné Luus, and Nonkululeko Mlaba forming the core of the squad.

Three players have also earned their first call-ups to the senior national team. Wicketkeeper Karabo Meso and spinner Seshnie Naidu, both of whom represented South Africa at the ICC U19 Women’s T20 World Cup earlier this year, have been named in the tri-series squad, an ICC report said. They are joined by all-rounder Miane Smit, who previously travelled as a reserve during last year’s ICC Women’s T20 World Cup. Proteas Women Squad:

Laura Wolvaardt (Captain), Tazmin Brits, Nadine de Klerk, Annerie Dercksen, Lara Goodall, Sinalo Jafta, Ayabonga Khaka, Masabata Klaas, Suné Luus, Karabo Meso, Nonkululeko Mlaba, Seshnie Naidu, Nondumiso Shangase, Miane Smit, Chloé Tryon. The Wolvaardt-led side will take on India in their opening clash on April 29 at the R. Premadasa International Cricket Stadium.

The tri-series will see each side play the others twice before the top two teams meet in the final

Fixture:
1st ODI – 27 April: Sri Lanka vs India
2nd ODI – 29 April: India vs South Africa
3rd ODI – 2 May: Sri Lanka vs South Africa
4th ODI – 4 May: Sri Lanka vs India
5th ODI – 7 May: South Africa vs India
6th ODI – 9 May: Sri Lanka vs South Africa
Final – 11 May

Bright young talents shaping future of Indian Football: ISL 2024–25 season wrap

Mumbai, April 17 (UNI) : The Indian Super League (ISL) has consistently served as a launch pad for India’s most promising football talent — from Sandesh Jhingan, Jeje Lalpekhlua to Sahal Abdul Samad, the platform has given rise to household names who’ve gone on to inspire millions.

The 2024–25 season was no different, with young stars lighting up the league and charting the future course of Indian football.

While Mohun Bagan Super Giant created history by completing the League Double this season — lifting both the ISL Shield and the ISL Cup — it was FC Goa’s Brison Fernandes who stood out individually, bagging the Emerging Player of the Season award.

At just 23, Brison Fernandes of FC Goa scored seven goals and made two assists, becoming the first Indian to score back-to-back braces in ISL

history. His exploits earned him a national team call-up, validating coach Manolo Marquez’s faith in him. He finished the season as the second-highest Indian scorer, only behind Sunil Chhetri.

An Reliance Foundation Young Champs (RFYC) graduate, Nathan Rodrigues stood tall in a challenging season for Mumbai City FC. He contributed with three goals and an assist and recorded impressive defensive stats: 29 interceptions, 22 tackles won, 78 duels, and 33 clearances. With an 84% pass accuracy, his composure was unmatched for his age.

Ramhlunchhunga, the Hyderabad FC No. 10, was an ever lively presence in their frontline, making five goal contributions (2G, 3A), in addition to his tenacious defensive outputs.

The 23-year-old was consistently involved in the final third, making 28

touches inside the opposition’s box, completed 25 successful dribbles, won 106 duels, 107 recoveries, and produced 26 goal-scoring chances. As Hyderabad FC look to get their performances back on track next season, Ramhlunchhunga could form an important part of their Indian core.

Kerala Blasters FC’s Korou Singh Thingujam entered ISL 2024-25 after playing just 13 minutes last season. This year though, the dynamic 18-year-old made his opportunistic count by recording two goals and four assists (joint second-most by an Indian after Jithin MS – 5) in 17 appearances.

Korou created 15 scoring opportunities, 19 successful dribbles, and made 24 passes per game at 77% accuracy. His incisive deliveries into the final third were a critical component of the Kerala Blasters FC gameplay and new head coach David

Governor to present Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Awards on April 18 in Pune

Mumbai, April 17 (UNI) : Maharashtra Sports and Youth Welfare Minister, Dattatray Bharne, on Thursday informed that Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Awards for the years 2022-23 and 2023-24 will be presented by Governor C P Radhakrishnan at Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex in Pune on April 18. In a media statement, Bharne

informed that senior sports personalities who have made outstanding achievements in the field of sports are awarded Shiv Chhatrapati State Sports Lifetime Achievement Award, Excellent Sports Guide, Jijamata Award (for women sports guides) and Shiv Chhatrapati State Awards-Sportsmen, Divyang

Sportsmen and Courageous Awards will be presented. The awards ceremony will be held in the presence of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Deputy Chief Ministers Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar, The Shiv Chhatrapati State Sports Awards distribution ceremony has been organised by the School Education and Sports

Department. The ceremony will be attended by Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Council, Dr Neelam Gorhe, Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Anna Bansode, Minister of Higher and Technical Education Chandrakant Patil, Minister of State Madhuri Misal among others, he added.

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Mega Block over Central Railway on Sunday

(Standard Post Bureau)
Mumbai, April 17 : Central Railway, Mumbai Division will operate Mega Block on its suburban sections carrying out various engineering and maintenance works on 20.04.2025 as under:

UP & DOWN slow lines between CSMT/Mumbaiand Vidyavihar from 10:55 hrs to 15.55 hrs (05.00 hrs)

DOWN slow services departing CSMT Mumbai from 10.48 hrs to 15.45 hrs will be diverted on DOWN fast line between CSMT Mumbai and Vidyavihar station and will halt at Byculla, Parel, Dadar,

Matunga, Sion and Kurla stations and further re-diverted on DOWN slow line at Vidyavihar station. . During block period the suburban train services will not be available at Masjid, Sandhurst Road, Chinchpokali and Currey Road stations.

UP slow services departing Ghatkopar from 10.19 hrs to 15.52 hrs will be diverted on UP fast line between Vidyavihar and CSMT Mumbai stations and will halt at Kurla, Sion, Matunga, Dadar, Parel and Byculla stations. During block period the suburban train services will not be

available at Currey Road, Chinchpokali, Sandhurst Road, and Masjid stations.

On DOWN slow line
Last Local before the block Ex CSMT local departing CSMT Mumbai at 10.07 hrs.“First Local after the block Ex CSMT local departing CSMT Mumbai at 15.57 hrs.

On UP slow line
Last Local before the block for CSMT Mumbai departing Kalyan at 09.13 hrs.“First Local after the block for CSMT Mumbai departing Kalyan at 15.10 hrs.

UPAND DOWN Trans Harbour line between Thane and Vashi/Nerul

from 11.10 hrs to 16.10 hrs (05.00 hrs)

DOWN Harbour line services from Thane to Vashi/Nerul/Panvel will remain cancelled from Thane departing at 10.35 hrs to 16.07 hrs.

UP Harbour line services from Panvel/Nerul/ Vashi to Thane will remain suspended from Vashi departing at 10.25 hrs to Nerul departing at 16.09 hrs

These maintenance mega blocks are essential for infrastructure upkeep and safety. Passengers are requested to bear with the Railway Administration for the inconvenience caused.

Western Railway to run weekly special trains between Udhna - Barauni

(Standard Post Bureau)
Mumbai, April 17 : For the convenience of passengers and with a view to meet the travel demand, Western Railway has decided to run Weekly Special train on Special Fare between Udhna and Barauni.

According to a press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Mr Vineet Abhishek the details of the

special train is as under:

Train No. 09037/09038 Udhna – Barauni Weekly Special Train [22 Trips]

Train No. 09037 Udhna - Barauni Special will leave Udhna every Sunday at 05.45 hrs & will reach Barauni Jn. at 15.00 hrs the next day.

This train will run from 20th April to 29th June, 2025. Similarly, Train No. 09038 Barauni - Udhna Special will depart from

Barauni every Monday at 18.30 hrs & will arrive Udhna at 04.00 hrs on Wednesday. This train will run from 21st April to 30th June, 2025.

Enroute, this train will halt at Chalthan, Bardoli, Nandurbar, Amalner, Bhusaval, Khandwa, Itarsi, Jabalpur, Katni, Satna, Manikpur, Prayagraj Chheoki, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patna,

Bakhtiyarpur and Mokama station in both directions.

This train comprises of Sleeper Class and General Second Class Coaches.

The booking of Train No. 09037 will open from 18th April, 2025 at PRS counters and IRCTC website.

For detailed information regarding timings of halts and composition, passengers may please visit www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in.

Intra - Zonal safety audit conducted in Kottavalasa - Padua section of KK Line : ECoR

(Standard Post Bureau)
Visakhapatnam, April 17 : A special safety audit was conducted in the Kottavalasa–Padua section of the KK Line by a team of Senior Officials from East Coast Railway, Bhubaneswar, led by Principal Chief Safety Officer Shri Arun J Rathod. The team thoroughly examined various safety aspects at major stations, track infrastructure, yards, and level crossings across the section.

Intra-zonal safety audits are regularly carried out by multidisciplinary teams of railway officers to ensure strict adherence to operational safety rules and guidelines.

During the inspection, the audit team visited key locations including the Shrungavarapu Kota, B o d d a v a r a , Shivalingapuram station yards, Borraguhalu, Araku and Padua stations, as well as critical infrastructure



No day block over Western Railway on Sunday

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 17 : To carry out maintenance work of tracks, signalling & overhead equipment, a jumbo block of three hours will be taken on UP and DOWN Fast lines between Vasai Road and Vaitarna stations on the intervening night of Friday/ Saturday i.e. on 18th/19th April, 2025.

According to a press release issued by Mr Vineet Abhishek, Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, the block on UP Fast line will be undertaken from 23.50 hrs to 02.50 hrs, while on DOWN Fast line it will be from 01.30 hrs to 04.30 hrs. Due to the block, Train No. 19101 Virar-Bharuch MEMU will be delayed by 10 minutes and hence will depart from Virar at 04:45 hrs instead of its scheduled departure at 04:35 hrs.

Detailed information to this effect is available in concerned Station Master’s office.

Therefore, there will be NO BLOCK IN DAY TIME over Western Railway suburban section on this Sunday, 20th April, 2025.

Revision in timings of a few Western Railway trains

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 17 : Timings of a few trains originating over Western Railway jurisdiction has been revised. Details of the same are as below:

1. Train No. 19255 Surat – Mahuva Express w.e.f. 20th April, 2025.

The timings of Train No. 19255 Surat – Mahuva Express has been revised to depart from Surat at 21:30 hrs instead of 22:00 hrs and will reach Mahuva at 09:40 hrs instead at 10:05 hrs.

2. Train No. 12903 Mumbai Central – Amritsar Golden Temple Mail w.e.f. 20th April, 2025.

The timings of Train No. 12903 Mumbai Central – Amritsar Golden Temple Mail has been revised to arrive/depart Vadodara station at 23:34/23:44 hrs instead of 23:39/23:49 hrs

3. Train No. 20949

Ahmedabad – Ektanagar Jan Shatabdi Express

The timings of Train No. 20949 Ahmedabad – Ektanagar Jan Shatabdi Express has been revised to arrive/depart Vadodara station at 16.43/16.46 hrs instead of 16.46/16.49 hrs. (This Train is Temporarily cancelled till further orders)

4. Train No. 19007 Surat – Bhusaval Passenger w.e.f. 20th April, 2025

The timings of Train No. 19007 Surat – Bhusaval Passenger has been revised to depart from Surat at 17.00 hrs instead of 17:10 hrs (This Train currently departs from Udhna instead of Surat till further orders)

5. Train No. 69169 Surat – Nandurbar MEMU w.e.f. 20th April, 2025

The timings of Train No. 69169 Surat – Nandurbar MEMU has been revised to depart from Surat at 18.10

hrs instead of 18.15 hrs. (This Train currently departs from Udhna instead of Surat till further order)

6. Train No. 22967 Ahmedabad - Prayagraj Express w.e.f. 24th April, 2025

The timings of Train No. 22967 Ahmedabad - Prayagraj Express has been revised to arrive/depart Nandurbar station at 22.50/ 22.55 hrs instead of 22.45/ 22.50 hrs.

7. Train No. 20929 Udhna–Banaras Express w.e.f. 25th April, 2025

The timings of Train No. 20929 Udhna – Banaras Express has been revised to arrive/depart Nandurbar station at 22.50/22.55 hrs instead of 22.45/22.50 hrs.

For detailed information and halt timings of intermediate stations, passengers may please visit www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in

Summer Special Train between Belagavi and SMVT Bengaluru : SWR

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 17 : To clear the extra rush of passengers during the summer holidays, South Western Railway has decided to run Summer Special Express trains between Belagavi and Sir M. Visvesvaraya Terminal, Bengaluru for one trip in each direction. The details of the services are as follows.

Train No. 07385 Belagavi – SMVT Bengaluru Special Express will depart from Belagavi at 17:30 hrs on April 20, 2025 and reach SMVT Bengaluru at 05:00 hrs the next day. In the return direction, Train No. 07386 SMVT Bengaluru –Belagavi Special Express will depart from SMVT Bengaluru at 19:00hrs on April 21, 2025 and reach Belagavi at 08:00 hrs the next day.

Enroute, the train will have stoppages at Khanapur, Londa, Alnavar, Dharwad, Hubballi, Haveri, Harihar, Davangere, Birur, Arsikere, Tumakuru and Chikbanavar stations in both directions.

The train will consist of 16 coaches: 01 AC Two-Tier, 01 AC Three-Tier, 08 Sleeper Class, 04 General Second Class and 02 SLR/D coaches.

For more details regarding arrival/departure timings, passengers may visit the official railway website or approach the nearest railway booking counters.

Free Entry at Hubballi Rail Museum on World Heritage Day – April 18

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 17 : South Western Railway is pleased to announce that, in observance of World Heritage Day on April 18, 2025, the Hubballi Rail Museum will host a special "Heritage Walk", with free entry for all visitors from 09:00 AM to 06:00 PM. This initiative aims to raise public awareness about the importance of heritage conservation and to encourage especially the younger generation to appreciate and preserve India’s rich cultural and historical legacy. The Hubballi Rail Museum, which showcases the glorious journey of Indian Railways, offers a unique opportunity to connect with the past through a range of exhibits and artifacts. South Western Railway cordially invites the general public to visit the museum and be a part of this celebration of heritage.

Pakistan's only relationship with Kashmir is to vacate the illegally occupied territories: India

New Delhi, April 17 (UNI) : India today dismissed the Pakistan army chief’s comments on Kashmir and said that Pakistan’s “only relationship” with Kashmir is to vacate the illegally occupied territories.

Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, answering questions on the issue, said at a briefing:

“How can anything foreign be in a jugular vein? This is a union territory of India. Its only relationship

with Pakistan is the vacation of illegally occupied territories by that country.” His statement comes after the Pakistan army chief General Asim Munir described Kashmir as Pakistan’s “jugular vein”. Addressing the Pakistani diaspora at an event, Munir told them that they were the country’s ambassadors and must not forget that they belong to a “superior ideology and culture”. “You should definitely tell Pakistan’s story to your children. Our

forefathers thought that we are different from the Hindus in every aspect of life. Our religions, our customs, traditions, thoughts and ambitions are different. That was the foundation of the two-nation theory that was laid,” Munir said.

Speaking about Kashmir, Munir said, "Our stance is absolutely clear, it was our jugular vein, it will be our jugular vein, we will not forget it. We will not leave our Kashmiri brothers in their heroic struggle."

Yogi slams opposition over 'silence' on Murshidabad

Lucknow, April 17 (UNI) : Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday severely criticised opposition parties over their “silence” on recent incidents in Murshidabad in West Bengal following violent protests against the Waqf Act and other communal incidents in Bangladesh.

While speaking at an event titled 'Uttar Pradesh: Towards a Glorious Century' at Indira Gandhi Pratishthan here, the CM said that the Opposition’s “lack of response” has completely exposed their double standards.

He hit out at opposition for issues such as corruption, casteism and mafia rule during previous regimes. “The people who were

involved in scams and built hotels in London using public money are the ones who looted the state and divided people along caste lines,” he said.

"Those who built their political empires on corruption, casteism, mafia power and dynastic politics are now silent on incidents like Murshidabad,” said the Chief Minister.

Highlighting the progress made under his leadership in UP, he said infrastructure development and the elimination of mafia rule were the thrust areas of the BJP rule. The state is much safer and more peaceful, he added.

The CM alluded to the years when he alleged mafias

controlled districts. “They took government contracts, caused riots and harassed women and businessmen. People were scared during festivals. Today, festivals in UP are celebrated peacefully and with grandeur,” Yogi said.

Speaking about healthcare, Yogi pointed out his government’s successful fight against encephalitis in eastern UP.

"Over the past 40 years, the disease claimed the lives of nearly 50,000 children, mostly from minority communities, but no leader ever showed concern," he said.

"The opposition never cared about encephalitis because

children are not vote banks."

The CM noted the shift from 'one district, one mafia' to 'one district, one medical college', highlighting the state's improved health services.

He mentioned the Purvanchal Expressway project as an example of efficient governance. He said that the project was launched in 2016 without proper planning and was full of irregularities, but his government cancelled and redesigned it, completing the project for Rs 11,800 crore instead of the earlier Rs 15,200 crore.

Highlighting UP's rapid development, he said the state now has some of the best