

IN BRIEF

Polo returns to Hyderabad with grand exhibition match at Bison Polo Ground

Hyderabad, April 18 (UNI) : In a vibrant celebration of equestrian tradition, polo made a majestic return to Hyderabad with an exhibition match between the Hyderabad Polo & Riding Club and the Indian Army's elite 61st Cavalry Regiment.

The event was held on Thursday at the historic Bison Polo Ground in Secunderabad.

Organised jointly by the Telangana & Andhra Sub Area (TASA) and the Secunderabad Cantonment Board (SCB), the match underscored the Indian Army's enduring commitment to promoting polo and equestrian sports in the country. Lieutenant General Karandeep Singh Brar, PVSM, AVSM, General Officer Commanding (GOC), Dakshin Bharat Area, formally inaugurated the event. His presence, along with a large gathering of dignitaries, armed forces personnel, and polo enthusiasts, lent grandeur to the occasion.

Thunderstorms with lightning and gusty winds likely in Telangana in next 48 hours

Hyderabad, April 18 (UNI) : The Meteorological Centre has forecast thunderstorms accompanied by lightning and gusty winds with speeds ranging between 30-40 kmph at isolated places across Telangana over the next 48 hours.

In its daily weather report issued on Friday, the Met Department also predicted light to moderate rain or thundershowers at isolated locations across the state. Maximum temperatures are expected to rise by 2-3 degrees Celsius across Telangana during the next three days.

According to media reports, a hailstorm was reported in Medak district in the past 24 hours. Additionally, light rainfall occurred at one or two places in the state during the same period.

The highest maximum temperature of 42°C was recorded at Nizamabad on Thursday, the report added.

Revanth Reddy hard sells Telangana at Tokyo roadshow



Hyderabad, April 18 (IANS) :Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Friday invited Japanese companies to come to his state and find a China +1 alternative.

At the India-Japan Economic Partnership roadshow in Tokyo, he exhorted investors to invest, promising that they will thrive, grow, succeed, and will feel like at home.

The official TelanganaRising delegation, led by the Chief Minister, hosted a high-level Investment Roadshow, spotlighting the state's thriving industrial ecosystem and inviting Japanese businesses to

partner in its growth.

At the event attended by over 150 participants from the Japanese business community, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy exhorted Japanese investors and businesses to come to Telangana and invest, according to a statement from the Chief Minister's Office here.

"Japan is called the Land of the Rising Sun. Our state's vision is TelanganaRising. Today, I am proud to say—Telangana is Rising in the Land of the Rising Sun," he said. "I am very happy to be in Tokyo. Your city is great, with excellent infrastructure, focus on environment and

sustainability, and innovation. People of Japan are very nice, kind, respectful and disciplined. I have learnt many things from Tokyo for developing my city of Hyderabad," the Chief Minister said.

The event began with remarks from the Ambassador of India to Japan, Sibi George, who emphasised the strong and growing Indo-Japanese economic ties. Toshihiro Mizutani, Director General, JETRO, Bengaluru, followed with comments encouraging deeper collaboration with Telangana.

Promotional videos on two flagship projects of the

government, namely Future City, India's first planned Net Zero industrial city, and the Musi Riverfront Rejuvenation Project, one of India's largest riverfront development projects, were released at the event.

Telangana's Special Chief Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Jayesh Ranjan, delivered a presentation outlining key investment opportunities for Japanese companies in sectors such as electronics, AI, EVs, textiles, and green energy.

The Chief Minister extended a warm invitation to Japanese businesses to invest in the state and be part of TelanganaRising. "We offer world-class infrastructure, skilled talent, and clear and consistent policies to support your investment in several priority sectors like life sciences, GCCs, electronics, EV and Energy storage, Textiles, Food processing, AI data centres, and logistics. Let us build something extraordinary - for India, Japan, and the world." The roadshow was followed by several one-on-one meetings with the Telangana delegation and the top business conglomerates of Japan.

Rain with gusty winds lash Hyderabad, disrupting daily life

Hyderabad, April 18 (UNI) : Sudden and intense rainfall accompanied by gusty winds, thunder, and lightning swept through various parts of Hyderabad on Friday, causing major disruptions across the city.

Areas including SR Nagar, Borabanda, Ameerpet, Panjagutta, Madhuranagar, Jubilee Hills, Banjara Hills, Kothi, Sultan Bazar, Begambazar, Abids, Nampally, Basheerbagh, and Himayathnagar witnessed heavy downpour. Similar conditions were reported in Mehdiapatnam, Masab Tank, Karwan, Boynapalli, Tinumalgiri, Alwal, Maredpally, and Qutubullapur. The rainfall extended to suburbs like Gundlupochampally, Dundigal, Dhulapally, Bahadurpally, Miyapur, and N a n a k r a m g u d a . Secunderabad Railway Station, Chaitanyapuri, Dilsukhnagar, Gachibowli, Vanasthalipuram, and other localities also experienced heavy rain. A huge tree was uprooted near Gandhi Bhavan due to the strong winds, further aggravating traffic issues. In areas such as Champapet, Saidabad, and Saroornagar, the rain was particularly intense, accompanied by powerful gusts.



Nitish Kumar initiates dialogue with Women

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, popular for his steps towards women empowerment, initiated dialogue with women to apprise them of the government schemes and the activities taken for the welfare of the women folk of the society. While flagging the women's dialogue programme through video conferencing here on Friday, Kumar said that in addition to apprise the women about various activities initiated for their empowerment, their problems and aspirations would be identified at grassroot level including villages and tolas.

(See on page 2)

Police, Army & CAPF determined to crush terrorism in Jammu ...



Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday said J&K Police, Army and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) are determined to crush terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. He said the terrorist incidents have increased in Jammu division, which is a matter of concern.

(See on page 3)

Mohd Yunus pledges to strengthen Dhaka-Islamabad ...



As Bangladesh and Pakistan held their first Foreign Office Consultations in more than 15 years, Chief Advisor Mohammed Yunus pledged to strengthen Dhaka's ties with Islamabad during his meeting with Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Amna Baloch.

(See on page 5)

Alcaraz beats Djere to reach Barcelona Open quarters



Top seed Carlos Alcaraz eased into the quarter-finals of the Barcelona Open with a straight-set win over Laslo Djere. Spanish world number two Alcaraz, who triumphed at the Monte Carlo Masters last week, won 6-2 6-4 against Serbia's unseeded Djere on Thursday. Alcaraz won the first five games and produced eight unanswered winners in a dominant first set.

(See on page 8)

KTR urges PM Modi to prove environmental commitment, seek probe into Rs10,000 cr Kancha Gachibowli scam

(Standard Post Bureau)

Hyderabad, April 18 : Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Working President KT Rama Rao (KTR) has issued a sharp public appeal to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, demanding immediate action and a full-fledged investigation into the alleged Rs 10,000 crore scam and environmental devastation in Telangana's Kancha Gachibowli.

In a statement shared on the social media platform X, KTR accused the Congress-led state government, under Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, of orchestrating a massive fraud involving the illegal mortgaging of over 400 acres of forest land. He challenged the Prime Minister to back his environmental rhetoric with decisive action, thereby disproving growing allegations of collusion between the BJP and Congress in the state.

"This isn't just an environmental catastrophe; it's a Rs 10,000 crore scam by the Congress government," KTR declared, referring to the alleged clearance of ecologically sensitive forest land adjacent to the University of Hyderabad. The forest, home to peacocks, deer, and other endangered species, is considered vital for the city's ecological balance and groundwater sustainability.

Despite protests from environmentalists, student groups, and an existing Supreme Court order halting land auctions, the land was allegedly cleared for commercial infrastructure projects, including an IT park. KTR claimed that the state government mortgaged the land—without legal title or environmental clearances—to secure a massive loan, calling the move both "reckless" and "illegal".

He cited the Central Empowered Committee's (CEC) findings, which confirmed financial irregularities and recommended probes by national agencies such as the CBI, RBI, SEBI, SFIO, and the CVC. The BRS has already submitted supporting documentation to these authorities.

KTR also referenced Modi's recent remarks in Haryana, where he condemned deforestation in Telangana, asking whether they were merely "lip service". He challenged the Prime Minister to act decisively, stating, "It's time to show Telangana that BJP and Congress aren't colluding and that you truly care about environmental protection."

Slamming Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for dismissing wildlife concerns, KTR pointed to a Telangana High Court Registrar's report confirming the presence of significant fauna in the area, including protected species.

BJP waging righteous battle against opportunistic alliance of Cong, BRS, Majlis: K Reddy

(Standard Post Bureau)

Hyderabad, April 18 : Union Minister and Telangana BJP President G Kishan Reddy strongly criticised the Congress, BRS, and Majlis parties, accusing them of forming an opportunistic alliance aimed at undermining democratic values in Telangana.

He was addressing party leaders and workers during a preparatory meeting for the upcoming Hyderabad Local Bodies MLC elections at Haritha Plaza, Begumpet on Friday.

Reddy alleged that both the Congress and BRS parties were compromising Telangana's future by aligning themselves with the Majlis party, which he said had a history of exploiting people, committing atrocities, and spreading communalism. "These parties say 'ji huzoor' to the

Majlis, which carries the legacy of the Razakars. They are conspiring together to ensure the Majlis party's victory in Hyderabad," he remarked.

He questioned the silence of Congress and BRS over their decision not to field candidates in the local body elections. "Why are they not contesting? Their silence is proof of their secret alliance with the Majlis party," he said, adding that their leaders, Rahul Gandhi and former Chief Minister and BRS chief K Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR), lacked the moral right to criticise the BJP while bowing to the Majlis.

Highlighting the BJP's stance, Reddy said the party was not fighting just for political gain but out of a sense of nationalism. "The BJP's goal is to awaken the people of Hyderabad and

save the city from communal fanaticism and political hooliganism. Winning is not our only objective—reviving democratic spirit and civic development is," he asserted. He accused the Congress government of painting a false image of development. "They promoted the high-tech city, but the reality is that only real estate-driven projects were prioritised. Civic bodies like GHMC are in shambles today, unable to even fund street lights," he said.

Reddy emphasised that only a "double engine government"—with the BJP in power both at the Centre and in the state—could bring real development to Telangana. He also underscored the Modi government's achievements in economic and tax reforms, curbing terrorism, and boosting foreign policy.

Shah appeals to Naxalites to lay down arms and join mainstream

New Delhi, April 8 (UNI) : Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday appealed to the Naxalites to lay down their arms as soon as possible and join the mainstream by adopting the surrender policy of the Modi government.

In his post on X, Shah said that Cobra Commandos and Chhattisgarh Police have arrested 22 notorious Naxalites with modern weapons and explosive materials in various operations in Bijapur district of

Chhattisgarh. He said 11 Naxalites have also surrendered in Badesetti Panchayat of Sukma, due to which this Panchayat has become completely Naxal-free.

The Home Minister appealed to the hiding Naxalites to lay down their arms as soon as possible and join the mainstream by adopting the surrender policy of the Modi government. "We are determined to free the country from the scourge of Naxalism before 31 March 2026," he said.

Disclose facts in judge in cash case: VP, Dhankhar

New Delhi, April 18 (UNI) : Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Thursday reopened the episode involving the alleged seizure of burnt cash from the residence of then Delhi High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma about a month back and demanded answers from the Supreme Court-appointed 3-judge panel investigating charges of corruption.

“The episode should be thoroughly exposed. Independence of judiciary is not an impregnable shield against investigation, or an inquiry by a judicial officer,” Dhankhar said.

Addressing the 6th batch of Rajya Sabha trainees at the Vice President's residence here, Dhankhar said that a month has passed since the Verma case, but nothing has been made public.

No FIR has been registered in this case, while citing the Constitution's immunity for the President and Governors, Dhankhar said. “A disclosure should be made now”, he said.

“Irefer to recent events. They are on our minds. An incident took place at the residence of a judge in New Delhi on the night of March 14 and 15.

“For seven days, no one knew about it. We have to ask ourselves questions. Information is needed regarding the reason for the delay in this regard. This delay is not excusable,” said the Vice President.

He said the entire nation is shocked by the episode. The people are worried and disturbed at the shocking revelation. It needs to be investigated, he said.

“Now the nation is

waiting with bated breath. The nation is restless because one of our institutions, which people have always looked up to with the highest respect and reverence, has been put in the dock,” said the VP.

Emphasising the importance of the rule of law, Dhankhar said that in a democratic nation, the purity of its criminal justice system defines its direction. At this point, no investigation is in progress (in the episode) under the law. Because a criminal investigation should start with an FIR.

He said it is the law of the country that every cognisable crime must be reported to the police, and failure to do so is a crime in itself. “An FIR can be filed against anyone in the country. Just activate the rule of law. No permission is required,” he said.

“However, if an FIR cannot be lodged directly in the category of judge, it should be approved by the judiciary. But this is not given in the Constitution. The Constitution of India has provided immunity from prosecution only to the President and Governors. Every person is thinking that if this incident had happened at his house, the speed of action would have been that of a rocket. Now here it is not even a bullock cart,” said Dhankhar.

The Vice President said that a committee of three judges is investigating the matter, but investigation is the area of the executive. “It is not the area of the judiciary. This committee is not under the Constitution of India. This committee of three judges is not under

BJP launches digital campaign to promote ‘One Nation, One Election’ initiative

Jaipur, April 8 (UNI) : The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has taken its awareness campaign on the ‘One Nation, One Election’ initiative online, launching the digital version to garner support from netizens for holding simultaneous polls across the country.

The digital campaign was inaugurated with the release of a QR code by the party’s state president, Madan Rathore, and the state convener of the campaign, Sunil Bhargava, at a brief ceremony held at the party’s state headquarters here on Friday.

Speaking on the occasion, Rathore said, “Greater people’s participation and support are key factors in the success of such a public-centric programme. The party launched a nation-wide mass awareness campaign in favour of ‘One Nation, One Election’. Today, we are dedicating its digital version to the people.”

Campaign convener Sunil Bhargava added that the digital version would significantly boost the popularity and success of the awareness drive for the “One Nation, One Election” agenda.

Internet users, particularly the youth, only need to scan the QR code to open the server (app) of the programme and join the campaign by extending their support. “It is a matter of satisfaction that youths are joining this campaign in large numbers,” Bhargava noted.

judges would make laws, perform the executive's functions, work as a “super parliament”, and there will be no accountability at all because laws of the land do not apply to them.

On the legislative system, he said that in any election to the Assembly or Parliament, every candidate has to declare assets. But it is not mandatory for the judges. “We cannot have a situation where the President of India is directed. He said the judiciary has only one authority under the Constitution, and that is to interpret the Constitution under Article 145(3),” he said. “When Article 145(3) was made, the number of judges in the Supreme Court was eight, and five of them had to decide, but now the number of judges in the court is 30.”

Dhankhar said, “The judges who have issued an order to the President and presented a scenario, it will be the law of the land. The judiciary has forgotten the power of the Constitution.” He said Article 145(3) needs to be amended. (Decisions by) five out of eight judges would mean that the interpretation would be by a majority. “Article 142 has become a nuclear missile against democratic forces, which is available to the judiciary 24x7.”



Indian Youth Congress (IYC) activists hold placards during ‘Rail Roko’ protest over the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) chargesheet against Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi in the National Herald case, in Patna on Friday.

Carry out relief work with promptness in districts hit by rain, hailstorm: Yogi

Lucknow, April 8 (UNI) : Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday directed the officials of the districts concerned to conduct relief work with full promptness in view of storm, rain and hailstorm, an official spokesman said here. In a message to the people of the state, the CM said, “Information of storm, rain, hailstorm has been received from many districts in the state. “But there is no need to worry. The safety of every resident of the state is the priority of your government,” he said.

He has said that the officials should visit the

area and conduct a survey and keep an eye on the relief work. “In case of loss of life and animal loss due to disasters like lightning, storms and rain, immediately distribute relief amounts to the affected. The injured should be given proper treatment,” he said. Yogi has directed that the officials should conduct a survey and assess the crop loss and send a report to the government so that further action can be taken in this regard. He directed that in case of waterlogging, arrangements for drainage should be made as a priority. He said that

directives have been given to the officials of the districts affected by storm, rain, hailstorm and lightning to conduct relief work with full promptness by surveying the area.

The CM said, “In case of loss of life and animal loss, the officials have been directed to immediately distribute relief amounts to the affected and provide proper treatment to the injured. Also, in view of the government purchase of wheat currently going on, the officials have been directed to take full care of safe storage of wheat at all purchase centres, including mandis, and

assess the damage to the crops and provide a report to the government so that further action can be taken in this regard.” He said that directives have also been given to the officials to make arrangements for drainage on priority. It may be noted that around a dozen individuals were killed and several others were injured after sudden rain and hailstorms accompanied with dust storms hit different districts of the state on Thursday. Police sources said that five persons were killed and four others were injured in separate incidents in Ayodhya district. “Similarly, a woman and her nephew were killed, and her son was injured when the tin shed of a school collapsed due to rain and storm in the Zaidpur area of Barabanki district,” they said.

Former Bengal BJP Chief Dilip Ghosh weds party colleague

Kolkata, April 8 (UNI) : BJP leader and former RSS Karyakarta Dilip Ghosh on Friday tied the nuptial knot with his party colleague Rinku Majumdar at a simple and brief ceremony in his New Town home here..

The ceremony saw traditional rituals of chanting of Vedic mantras after the official registration, where only close relatives of the bride and groom were invited.

BJP women’s wing leader Rinku Majumdar wore a red Benarasi saree, candidly acknowledging that it was she who had approached Ghosh with the marriage proposal and his mother consented to the same. No party leader or any follower was invited to the wedding ceremony.

Ghosh, now 60, wore

cream-coloured Punjabi and pyjamas, and said he took a day off from political work for the marriage.

The former MP said he would resume party activity from Saturday onwards. Ghosh said since his mother relocated from Medinipur last July and started living at his New Town home, “Someone needed to look after her as she is aged. And this was communicated to Rinku Majumdar before I consented to the marriage.”

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee congratulated the couple and wished them a happy married life.

Ghosh, as the state BJP President, had led the party to its strongest showing in Bengal in the 2019 Lok

Sabha polls when the saffron outfit bagged 18 seats out of a total 42.

Ghosh had been elected as a state legislator in 2016 when he defeated popular Congress leader Gyan Singh Sohanpal from the Kharagpur Town constituency. He became an MP in 2019 from the Medinipur Lok Sabha seat, but lost the general election from Bardhaman-Durgapur constituency last year.

On Friday morning, current state BJP President Sukanta Majumdar, on behalf of the party, congratulated him and sent his best wishes for his new life. Majumdar, a Union minister and MP from Balurghat, also called on Ghosh, along with a host of other party leaders and followers at his residence.

Toilets, AC now in loco cabs

New Delhi, April 8 (UNI) : In a landmark move to enhance the working environment of loco pilots, Indian Railways has equipped more than half of its locomotive cabs with ergonomic seats, air conditioning, and other modern facilities.

In a parallel development, the national transporter has also begun fitting toilets in all newly manufactured locomotives, while older engines are being retrofitted through design modifications.

These measures represent a major shift in the approach towards crew welfare, particularly for loco pilots who spend long hours in cabs across challenging routes and

weather conditions. The move is aimed at improving comfort, reducing fatigue, and ensuring better health for these key members of the Indian Railways family.

In addition to cab upgrades, all running rooms — the rest facilities for train crews — have been made air-conditioned and well-furnished over the last ten years. Notably, before 2014, no running room had air conditioning. The improved infrastructure has significantly contributed to better rest and recuperation for crew members between duties. Recognising the operational stress on pilots on heavily congested routes, Indian Railways is also constructing new

running rooms to reduce working hours and ensure sufficient rest periods.

On the safety front, the installation of advanced technologies such as fog safety devices, Kavach (Train Collision Avoidance System), driver alert systems, and improved braking mechanisms is helping enhance both crew and passenger safety. Indian Railways has also made practical arrangements for loco pilots’ in-route needs. Goods train crews utilise scheduled stoppages at stations and yards for toilet breaks and light refreshments. Suburban and passenger train pilots use terminal station facilities or onboard toilets during halts.

Nitish initiates dialogue with Women

Patna, April 8 (UNI) : Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, popular for his steps towards women empowerment, initiated dialogue with women to apprise them of the government schemes and the activities taken for the welfare of the women folk of the society.

While flagging the women's dialogue programme through video conferencing here on Friday, Kumar said that in addition to apprise the women about various activities initiated for their empowerment, their problems and aspirations would be identified at grassroot level including villages and tolas.

He said that the priorities of the women folk would be set after identifying their aspirations and problems.

He said that the problems of women would be solved at an accelerated pace and the information collected during women dialogue would be used at the time of framing of the policies for them.

The Chief Minister said that the women dialogue vehicles would sensitise the women folk living in villages towards the initiative taken up for their welfare.

As it is the Chief Minister during his Pragati Yatra had directed the authorities to visit spots for taking first hand information about the problems and the progress of the ongoing schemes and the women dialogue was a part of the programme taken up to discuss the problems of the women folk in the presence of the senior officers.

Four nabbed, arms recovered in Manipur

Imphal, April 18 (UNI) : Manipur Police and security forces arrested four persons in two separate incidents and seized a large numbers of arms and ammunition in operations launched in four districts in the last 24 hours.

Police said on Friday that two active cadres of Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL) were nabbed from Wangjing Khabakhong along NH-102 under Thoubal-PS, Thoubal District. Two hand grenades were recovered from him.

Manipur Police arrested two persons in connection with a viral video in which unknown miscreants brandished sophisticated firearms at an unidentified location under Churachandpur PS, Churachandpur district .

In an operation at the Wabagai Buffalo Farm area under Kakching-PS, Kakching district, by police and security personnel, one .303 rifle with a magazine, one bolt action single barrel gun with sling, a 9 mm pistol with a magazine, and large number of ammunitions were recovered. In another operation at Lairenkabi and Sanjenbam villages under Lamshang-PS, Imphal West district one, one AK rifle along with one magazine, one SLR along with one magazine, one 9mm carbine machine gun along with one magazine, one modified single barrel gun, one pistol with one magazine, two hand grenades without detonators were recovered.

Sukhu govt pushing poor patients to death: BJP leader

Dharamshala, April 18 (UNI) : Former minister and senior BJP leader Bikram Singh Thakur has termed the Congress government in Himachal Pradesh insensitive and alleged that the Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu government was playing with the lives of the common people. He said that the poor and needy patients of the state, who were to be treated in a prestigious institute like the PGI Chandigarh under the Himcare scheme, were being deprived of treatment due to the insensitivity of the state government because the government has not yet paid an outstanding amount of Rs 14 crore to PGI Chandigarh. Thakur said it was the same Congress government that promised priority to public welfare schemes. Thakur said the Himcare scheme was a historic initiative of the BJP government, which provided free treatment to lakhs of poor people of the state. “The Congress government has put this scheme on hold,” he alleged.

Youth arrested for rape of elderly woman

Banda (UP), April 17 (UNI) : A 35-year-old youth was arrested by the police on Thursday for sexually assaulting an elderly woman in Girwan area of Banda district here in Uttar Pradesh, a police officer said here.

Circle Officer (CO) Naraini Ambuja Trivedi said that the incident took place when the mentally deranged 60-year-old woman was lying on a cot outside her house and the accused picked her up in a deserted area and raped her.

He said that on receiving information about the incident, accused, identified as Kallu Dwivedi, a resident of Seodha village, was arrested on Thursday.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

E-AUCTION FOR CATERING STALLS

Auction Catalogue No.: CAT-CATG-25-02

Lot No.	Category	Catg-WAT-NW-GMU-52-25-1 (Catering - General Minor Unit (GMU))
Description : PROVISION OF CATERING SERVICES IN GENERAL MINOR UNIT (GMU) ON THE PF NO. 283 AT CATERING STALL (GMU-59) ON THE PF NO. 283 AT NWP RAILWAY STATION OVER WATER DIVISION FOR A PERIOD OF 5 YEARS EARMARKED FOR OPEN CATEGORY.		
Lot No.	Category	Catg-WAT-KRDL-GMU-25-1 (Catering - General Minor Unit (GMU))
Description : PROVISION OF GENERAL MINOR UNIT CATERING STALL SERVICES AT THE PF NO. 1 KRDL RAILWAY STATION OVER WATER DIVISION FOR A PERIOD OF 5 YEARS EARMARKED FOR OPEN CATEGORY.		
Lot No.	Category	Catg-WAT-PVP-GMU-49-24-1 (CATERING-GENERAL MINOR UNIT (GMU))
Description : PROVISION OF CATERING STALL (GMU) ON PF NO. 485, BESIDE ONE MOST NO. 483 UNDER PF NO. 485, INTER-PT AT PVP RAILWAY STATION OVER WATER DIVISION FOR A PERIOD OF 5 YEARS EARMARKED FOR OPEN CATEGORY.		
Lot No.	Category	Catg-WAT-PVT-GMU-22-2 (Catering - General Minor Unit (GMU))
Description : PROVISION OF GENERAL MINOR UNIT CATERING STALL SERVICES AT THE PF NO. 1 PVT RAILWAY STATION OVER WATER DIVISION FOR A PERIOD OF 5 YEARS EARMARKED FOR OPEN CATEGORY.		
Lot No.	Category	Catg-WAT-RGDA-SMU-51-25-1 (Catering - Special Minor Unit (SMU))
Description : PROVISION OF CATERING STALL SERVICES AT THE PF NO. 283 AT RGDA RAILWAY STATION ON PF 283, NEAR RMS OFFICE AT RGDA RAILWAY STATION OVER WATER DIVISION FOR A PERIOD OF 5 YEARS EARMARKED FOR OPEN CATEGORY. THE SIZE OF THE STALL SHOULD BE 10X6 SQ. FT.		
Lot No.	Category	Catg-WAT-CE-SMU-41-25-1 (Catering - Special Minor Unit (SMU))
Description : PROVISION OF SPECIAL MINOR UNIT CATERING STALL SERVICES AT THE PF NO. 314 CE RAILWAY STATION OVER WATER DIVISION FOR A PERIOD OF 5 YEARS EARMARKED FOR OPEN CATEGORY.		
Lot No.	Category	Catg-WAT-VZM-SMU-53-25-1 (Catering - Special Minor Unit (SMU))
Description : PROVISION OF CATERING SERVICES IN CATERING STALL, SPECIAL MINOR UNIT (SMU-7) ON THE PF NO. 283 AT VZM RAILWAY STATION OVER WATER DIVISION FOR A PERIOD OF 5 YEARS EARMARKED FOR OPEN CATEGORY.		

Start Date & Time : 28.04.2025 AT 11:00hrs. (For All Lots)

End Date & Time : 28.04.2025 AT 11:30hrs. (For Lot No. 1), AT 11:40 hrs. (For Lot No. 2), 11:50hrs. (For Lot No. 3), AT 12:00 hrs. (For Lot No. 4), AT 12:10 hrs. (For Lot No. 5), AT 12:20 hrs. (For Lot No. 6) & AT 12:30hrs. (For Lot No. 7)

Rate/Unit : Annual Licensing Fee, Trips/Days : 8286; Minimum Increment (%) : 0.2%, Lot Status : New in Draft Catalogue.

Complete information of the above e-Auction Notice is available in website : www.irps.gov.in

Senior Director Commercial Manager-IH	
PR-44/25-26	Waltair

STANDARD POST

India's IT hiring industry to generate up to 4.5 lakh new jobs in 2025

The IT hiring sector in India is projected to grow by 7-10 per cent in the first half of 2025, while generating around 4-4.5 lakh new jobs for the entire year, industry experts said .

India's IT sector ended the fourth quarter of FY25 on a stable note by reporting a revenue growth of 1-3 per cent year-on-year, which indicates a cycle of measured expansion and changing global priorities.

"While this reflects that companies are showcasing a more targeted approach to global technology investments, the demand for digital transformation still continues to thrive," said Sunil Nehra, CEO-IT Staffing, FirstMeridian Business Services.

Investments towards AI/ML, cloud computing, data engineering and automation, etc. have been steady, which signals a long-term confidence in emerging technologies. This steady demand for new age technologies has influenced hiring trends.

"Hiring in multiple regions of India will experience a gradual upward momentum," said Nehra, adding that the sentiment on fresher hiring in FY26 remains positive, which indicates strong demand for entry-level roles.

Despite ongoing global uncertainties, FY25 has marked a recovery phase for major Indian IT firms, following the historic headcount decline of FY24.

However, hiring remained measured in Q4 FY25, reflecting continued caution in client spending and persistent macroeconomic headwinds.

According to Sachin Alug, CEO of NLB Services, attrition rates have stabilised across the industry at an average of 13–15 per cent, indicating a more balanced yet evolving talent landscape.

"Several firms have also announced plans to onboard over 10,000 freshers in FY26 - signalling long-term confidence despite short-term challenges," he mentioned. Key investments are being directed towards AI and Generative AI, supported by large-scale upskilling across service lines. Cloud modernisation, cybersecurity, and data engineering continue to be core capabilities, with a strong push toward consulting-led, outcome-driven engagements. "Roles such as AI/ML Engineers, Data Scientists, Cloud Architects, DevOps Engineers, and ESG Analysts remain in high demand, often commanding 8-10 per cent premium in compensation," said Alug.

South Western Railway – A Journey Through Time and Heritage

(Standard Post Bureau)

Every year on April 18th, the world celebrates World Heritage Day, also known as the International Day for Monuments and Sites. This day is dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of cultural heritage and the efforts required to preserve it. Among India's many cultural treasures, Indian Railways stands out not just as a lifeline of the nation but as a living heritage that continues to echo the stories of India's industrial and colonial past.

Indian Railways, one of the largest and oldest railway networks in the world, is more than just a mode of transport. It is a vibrant cultural institution, representing over 170 years of history. From the first passenger train in 1853 to today's high-speed innovations, Indian Railways has played a pivotal role in shaping India's economic, social, and cultural landscape.

Its grand architecture, vintage locomotives, colonial-era stations, and age-old practices continue to attract historians, enthusiasts, and travellers from across the globe.

Among the many zones of Indian Railways, the South Western Railway (SWR), headquartered in Hubballi, Karnataka, has taken significant strides in preserving and showcasing the glorious heritage of Indian Railways.

As we celebrate World Heritage Day, let's not forget that heritage isn't only in grand monuments and ancient temples. It also lives in stations, engines, waiting rooms, whistles, and journeys—all carefully preserved and presented by institutions like these. The Rail Museums of Hubballi, Mysuru, and Malgudi offer a unique chance to ride through history, relive childhood, and rediscover India's heartbeat.

Rail Museum Mysuru – India's First Regional Rail Museum:

Established in 1979, the Rail Museum in Mysuru holds the distinction of being the first regional rail museum in India, and the second in the country after the National Rail Museum in New Delhi. It stands today not just as a repository of artifacts, but



as a tribute to local imagination and initiative, as praised by renowned transport museum advisor Mr. M.G. Satow.

From vintage steam locomotives, metre gauge inspection cars, and the rare Austin Rail Car, to the royal saloon once used by the rulers of the erstwhile princely state of Mysore — the museum showcases a deeply personal chapter of India's rail history. Among its gems is a 1932 steam-powered fire engine, and a coach cafeteria where visitors can relax and reflect.

In 2019–20, the museum underwent a thoughtful transformation that combined modern aesthetics, eco-conscious design, and interactive storytelling. Pathways now connect each section of the museum, guiding visitors through the evolution of Indian Railways in an immersive and scenic environment. The Signal and Track Gallery, vintage station setup, and the toy train ride through tunnels and greenery add a playful and educational dimension to the visit.

Visitors can sip coffee amid antique teak and rosewood furniture, explore the library, or take in the panoramic views of Mysuru city from the view tower. With its use of art, multimedia, and landscaping, the museum offers a holistic experience — not just of railways, but of India's legacy and cultural richness.

The souvenir shop near



the entrance is a perfect final stop, where guests can take home memorabilia that capture the charm and nostalgia of the Mysuru Rail Museum.

Rail Museum Hubballi – A Tribute to the Region's Railway Legacy:

Inaugurated in 2020, the Hubballi Rail Museum, located beside the South Western Railway headquarters, celebrates the rich heritage of the railways in Karnataka and the broader Deccan region.

capturing the essence of life behind the scenes of Indian Railways.

A miniature train ride inside the museum offers a fun, family-friendly experience, while interactive displays and galleries provide both historical context and technological insight. The outdoor display area with landscaped paths and preserved rolling stock is visually striking, bringing a

touch of grandeur to the preserved machinery of the past. What sets the Hubballi Rail Museum apart is its effort to make railway heritage accessible, educational, and engaging. It brings alive the stories of the railwaymen, the machines they operated, and the culture they helped shape in southern India. For students, rail enthusiasts, and the public at large, the museum offers a gateway into the past and a deeper appreciation for the evolving world of rail transport.



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Malgudi Museum, Arasalu – Where Fiction Meets Railway Heritage:

Perhaps the most unique museum in South Western Railway's heritage landscape is the Malgudi Museum, located at the quaint Arasalu Railway Station near Shivamogga. This station served as the filming location for the iconic Indian TV series *Malgudi Days*, based on R.K. Narayan's fictional town of *Malgudi*. In a remarkable initiative, the abandoned station was transformed into a charming literary and railway museum, blending nostalgia with heritage preservation.

The museum captures the spirit of *Malgudi Days* through photographs, props, and recreated scenes from the beloved television series. Old furniture, ticket counters, and wall murals evoke the small-town railway charm that was central to the show's storytelling. But beyond

the fiction lies history — the museum also features exhibits on rural railway operations, showcasing the essential role such stations played in connecting remote towns and villages. Through this dual lens of literature and heritage, the Malgudi Museum offers a unique cultural experience that is both emotionally resonant and historically significant.

While museums provide curated spaces to celebrate railway heritage, South Western Railway (SWR) has taken a remarkable step further by preserving history where it originally lived — the railway stations themselves.

South Western Railway is undertaking a focused effort to revamp several of its railway stations while preserving their original architectural charm and heritage value. These upgrades are not just about improving facilities — they are about respecting the history these stations carry.

Century-old railway stations along the KSR Bengaluru – Chikkaballapur – Kolar line like Doddajala, Devanahalli, Avatihalli, and Nandi Halt are being renovated to reflect their original architectural charm and cultural importance.

These stations, with their vintage architecture and colonial-era construction, are silent witnesses to a bygone era of rail travel. Their restoration is being carried out in collaboration with INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage) — ensuring that both the historical accuracy and aesthetic essence of each structure is preserved.

On this World Heritage Day, South Western Railway offers a powerful message: Preserving our heritage isn't just about conserving the past—it's about passing the legacy forward, enriching our cultural identity, and building bridges between generations. From beautifully curated museums in Mysuru, Hubballi, and Arasalu, to the thoughtful restoration of working stations like Devanahalli and Nandi Halt, SWR's initiatives are shining examples of how infrastructure and heritage can co-exist — not in conflict, but in harmony.

Police, Army & CAPF determined to crush terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir: LG

Srinagar, April 8 (UNI) : Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday said J&K Police, Army and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) are determined to crush terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. He said the terrorist incidents have increased in Jammu division, which is a matter of concern.

Speaking at the passing out parade (POP) at Police Training School, Manigam, in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district, Sinha said in the last few years, J&K Police Force, Army and CAPFs have succeeded in crushing terrorism in the Kashmir Valley. However, terrorist incidents have

increased in Jammu division, which is a matter of concern. "Our resolve is to make both Jammu and Kashmir divisions terrorism-free," the Lieutenant Governor said. He emphasised on emerging technologies reshaping policing and directed J&K Police to adapt to cutting-edge technology and advanced tools and deploy them to enhance their operational effectiveness.

"We need a future-ready police force to effectively combat evolving terror and organised crime threats. In view of the rapid changes

taking place due to technology, our approach should be on data-centric policing to effectively tackle challenges, analyse crime trends and predict the crime patterns and make necessary changes in the investigation," Sinha said.

Paying tributes to the valour of J&K Police, the Lieutenant Governor exhorted the young recruits to work with diligence and high professionalism to protect the motherland.

"The nation is grateful to J&K Police for the invaluable sacrifices they have made. Citizens can live peacefully and work freely because they know that our

police force is standing firm in protecting the lives and combating terrorism and crime. The exemplary courage of J&K Police and their supreme heroism reassures the people that UT is in safe hands. Today J&K Police force is admired across the country for its professionalism, sustained grit and determination," he said. Extending his best wishes to the passing out Trainees, Sinha said, the skills, knowledge, and values they have gained during their training will provide a solid foundation and enhance their capabilities to discharge their duty with utmost sensitivity.

Youth, girl die, 1 injured in road accident in Barabanki

Barabanki (UP), April 8 (UNI) : A youth and a girl were killed and another person sustained injuries after being crushed by a truck in Bahraich district here in Uttar Pradesh on Friday, police sources said here.

Police sources said that Alok Kumar (28), a resident of Bhogawa in Mainpuri, was to get married with Sandhya (25), a resident of Ambedkar Nagar. "On Friday Alok was going to Ambedkar Nagar via Purvanchal Expressway with his fiancée Sandhya and her younger sister Kajal from Kanpur on a motorcycle," they said.

Police sources said that as they reached near Nera Kabulpur village n the Loni Katra area, Alok attempted to overtake the truck but the motorcycle went out of control, overturned and all the three people came under the truck. "On receiving the information, the relief and rescue team of the expressway rushed the three injured to the community health centre Haidergarh where the doctor declared Alok and Sandhya dead," they said.

Police sources said that Kajal, who sustained serious injuries, was referred to the trauma centre in Lucknow. "The police informed the family members about the incident and sent the bodies for post-mortem," they said

Remains of more genocide victims continue to be accorded decent burial in Rwanda

Kigati, April 18 (UNI) : The remains of at least 117 victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi were given a decent burial on Friday in a village in western Rwanda as part of the ongoing commemoration of the 31st anniversary of the genocide.

The remains retrieved from mass graves in different parts of Karongi District were reburied during a commemorative event at Gatwaro stadium in the Bwishyura sector.

Benjamin Byiringiro, the only survivor in a family of eight children, recalled the cruelty with which the Tutsi populations were killed in the area until the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) soldiers arrived to stop the genocide. Byiringiro, also a university lecturer, said he managed to overcome despair.

Bosco Muhayimana, another survivor, decried the fact that 31 years later, some families are yet to discover where the remains of their loved ones were dumped, which hinders reconciliation efforts.Gerald Muzungu, mayor of the district, criticized those trivializing the genocide against the Tutsi and appealed to deniers to visit memorial sites to see evidence of how the genocide was well planned and implemented.

About 1 million people, mostly of the Tutsi community and moderate Hutus, were killed by Hutu extremists within 100 days during the genocide in 1994.

Moscow int'l film festival kicks off in Russian capital

Moscow, April 18 (UNI) : The 47th Moscow International Film Festival (MIFF) opened Thursday in the Russian capital, with a dedicated BRICS film program featured among its lineup.

Running through April 24, the festival will showcase 200 films from 50 countries and regions, according to the organizing committee.

A BRICS film festival, held within the framework of the MIFF, will highlight cinematic works from BRICS member states, including China, Russia, India, Iran, Egypt, and others. This year marks the 90th anniversary of the MIFF, which was first held in Moscow in 1935 and became regular since 1959. The main prize of the festival, Golden Saint George, is awarded for the best film of the competition program.

‘Death toll from US airstrikes on Yemeni oil port reaches 33’

Doha, April 18 (UNI) : The death toll from US airstrikes on the Ras Isa oil port in Yemen's western province of Al Hudaydah has reached 33, and 80 people have been injured, the Houthi Health Ministry’s directorate for Al Hudaydah said on Friday.

"According to preliminary data, the death toll as a result of US aggression at the Ras Isa oil facility has risen to 33, with 80 injured," the ministry was quoted as saying by the Almasirah broadcaster.

Most of the dead and injured are port workers and employees of port organisations, the report said. According to Al Hudaydah authorities, the United States carried out at least 14 strikes on the port.

On Thursday, the US Central Command (CENTCOM) said that the US military destroyed Houthi-controlled fuel port Ras Isa.

Iran condemns US actions in Yemen : Foreign Minister

Tehran, April 18 (UNI) : Iran condemns the military activities conducted by the United States in Yemen, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Friday.

Araghchi is currently visiting Moscow, where he met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov earlier in the day.

"We also had a conversation on the topic of Yemen. Those events that are taking place in Yemen that have relation to the United States, we condemn these actions of the Americans. We hope that the crimes against the Yemeni people will be stopped," Araghchi told a joint press conference.Since March 15, the US has conducted over 900 airstrikes on northern and central Yemeni regions, including the capital of Sanaa, controlled by the rebel Ansar Allah movement, also known as the Houthis. US President Donald Trump ordered the military action against the Houthis after they renewed attacks on Israel-linked ships in the Red Sea in response to the blockade of the Gaza Strip.

Russian President Putin meets Iranian FM Abbas Araghchi in Kremlin, discusses US-Iran deal

Moscow/Tehran, April 18 (UNI) : Russian President Vladimir Putin met with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in the Kremlin, and discussed various issues such as further cooperation and Moscow's help in mediating Tehran’s nuclear deal with Washington.

Calling the talks between Putin and Araghchi on Thursday as intense, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said "Yesterday, Russian President Vladimir Putin had a long and rich conversation, and he was very pleased with the conversation", according to Sputnik.The Russian FM added that the talks between Putin and Araghchi highlighted the unprecedented dynamics of the political dialogue between Moscow and Tehran.

Regarding the US-Iran nuclear deal, Moscow on April 16 said that it is prepared to do “everything” within its power to help diplomatically resolve the standoff between the United States and Iran over Tehran’s nuclear programme, as per the Moscow Times.

41 dead in pre-monsoon disasters in Nepal



Kathmandu, April 18 (UNI) : Forty-one people have lost their lives and 257 others sustained injuries in pre-monsoon disasters in Nepal, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority said on Friday.Properties worth hundreds of

millions of rupees have been destroyed in the disasters."Lightning strikes took most of the lives and caused injuries, followed by fire incidents," Ram Bahadur KC, spokesperson for the authority, told Xinhua.

The authority issued a statement urging the

public to remain alert and take precautions.The pre-monsoon season in Nepal starts in March and runs through May.As many as 747 people died in 8,915 disasters in the South Asian country from mid-April 2024 to mid-April 2025, according to the authority.

UN sees U.S.-Iran nuclear talks as "good sign": Spokesman

United Nations, April 18 (UNI) : The United Nations views the second round of negotiations between the United States and Iran this weekend as "a good sign," and hopes it will yield positive results, a UN spokesman said on Thursday.

The second round of U.S.-Iran indirect negotiations will be held in Rome on Saturday, according to the Iranian Foreign Ministry. The two sides will discuss Tehran's nuclear issues and Washington's sanctions.

"We very much hope that the dialogue between the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran yields a positive outcome, which we're seeing the lowering of tensions in the Gulf region, in the Middle East, and between the two countries," Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for the UN secretary-general, said at a daily briefing.

"We understand that there will be a second round from what I've seen, I think this weekend, which in itself is a good sign," he said. "We will obviously be

following it very closely."

In early March, U.S. President Donald Trump sent a letter to Iranian leaders, proposing negotiations on Iran's nuclear program, while Iran later agreed on indirect talks.The first round of U.S.-Iran indirect talks was held in the Omani capital of Muscat last week.

The White House said in a statement that the discussions were "very positive and constructive." Iranian Foreign Ministry described their talks as "constructive."

Ahmadi man lynched in Karachi

Karachi, April 18 (UNI) : A man belonging to the Ahmadiya community was lynched allegedly by Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) supporters who stormed into a religious place to prevent them from practicing their faith in Karachi's Saddar area on Friday.

The slain man closed his shop and rushed to the place of worship as soon as he learned about the incident, DIG Syed Asad Raza told Dawn.

“We have decided to lodge a murder case against the TLP leaders and workers. We are waiting for relatives to lodge the first information report (FIR). If they do not register the case, then the FIR will be registered on behalf of the state against the TLP workers,” the DIG said.

Due to rising incidents of similar attacks in the city, police were already deployed at the site, providing safety to the Ahmadi community members, when around 400 TLP workers gathered outside the community hall, he added.

DIG Raza said that the lynching incident happened at a market near the community hall. The man was taken to the hospital where he succumbed to injuries.

The police have retrieved the CCTV footage of the incident, and further investigation is on.

Mohd Yunus pledges to strengthen Dhaka-Islamabad ties

Dhaka/Islamabad, April 18 (UNI) : As Bangladesh and Pakistan held their first Foreign Office Consultations in more than 15 years, Chief Advisor Mohammed Yunus pledged to strengthen Dhaka's ties with Islamabad during his meeting with Pakistan’s Foreign Secretary Amna Baloch.

Yunus said the two countries should boost trade ties and explore new avenues for business, and also emphasised on promoting mutual cooperation in other areas between the two nations, Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha reported.

During the courtesy call by Amna Baloch, at the State Guest House Jamuna on Thursday evening, the

others present included Senior Secretary on Sustainable Development Goals Affairs Lamiya Morshed and Pakistan High Commissioner to Bangladesh Syed Ahmed Maroof.Referring to the historical wrongs committed by Pakistan in the pre-independence years, the CA said "There are certain hurdles. We have to find ways to overcome those and move forward," adding that both Dhaka and Islamabad must find ways to "harness the potential between the two countries".

"We have a huge intra-market potential on our own rights, and we should use it," Baloch said according to BSS. "We can't miss the bus every

Istanbul Airport launches simultaneous triple runway operations

Istanbul, April 18 (UNI) : Istanbul Airport has reached a "milestone" with the launch of simultaneous operations on three fully independent runways, significantly enhancing aviation efficiency in the region, according to authorities.

The system, which enables simultaneous takeoffs and landings, was put into operation at 10:00 a.m. local time (0700 GMT) on Thursday. With this system, Istanbul Airport became the first in Europe and the second in the world after the United States to operate with three runways, the semi-official Anadolu

Agency reported.Speaking at the launch ceremony, Transport and Infrastructure Minister Abdulkadir Uraloglu highlighted the advanced technology behind the new system, which involves "cutting-edge radar systems, precision navigation aids, and robust air traffic control protocols."The system also includes automated structures designed to predict flight paths and manage traffic flow, playing a crucial role in preventing runway incursions and ensuring safe, efficient operations, he added.

A commercial pilot, who

11 killed, 9 injured in armed attack at cockfighting venue in Ecuador

Quito, April 18 (UNI) : At least 11 people were killed and nine others injured in a mass shooting Thursday night at a cockfighting arena in Ecuador's coastal province of Manabi, local media reported Friday.

The attack occurred around 11:30 pm local time in the town of Valencia in El Carmen canton, when a group of armed men dressed in military uniforms arrived in three vehicles and opened fire on attendees, according to broadcaster Ecuavisa. Survivors said the assailants also stole about 20,000 US dollars in prize money.Authorities believe the massacre was linked to organised crime groups. Victims were transported to nearby hospitals in the province of Santo Domingo, where most of the deaths were confirmed.

Police have launched an investigation and are offering areward for information about those responsible.The massacre is considered the deadliest armed attack in Manabi's history. The province was placed under a 60-day state of emergency on April 12 amid a surge in violence tied to criminal gangs.Ecuador has been under a state of internal armed conflict since January 2024, declared by President Daniel Noboa in response to escalating violence. The government has designated 22 gangs as terrorist organisations

‘Sri Lanka turns down land connectivity project with India’

Colombo/New Delhi, April 18 (UNI) : Sri Lanka has turned down India's proposal for the construction of a land connectivity project linking the two countries via road and rail-bridge, stating that it was not yet ready for land connectivity, a media report said.The proposal was raised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his meeting with Sri Lankan President Anura Kumar Dissanayake, when the two met in Colombo earlier this month, the Daily Mirror reported.The proposal which was mentioned by New Delhi last year in December too during President Dissanayake's visit was turned down, deeming it unfeasible. During their latest meeting in April, the issue was not part of the discussions, the daily said.Still, on one occasion during the recent bilateral talks, Prime Minister Modi, referred to the importance of land connectivity between the two countries and the many advantages it could bring.

A land bridge connecting the two countries was mooted first during the 2002/2004 government led by Ranil Wickremesinghe as the then Prime Minister. The land connectivity project was also mentioned in a joint statement by PM Wickremesinghe’s visit to New Delhi as the President in 2023.

When he flew out of Sri Lanka on board an Indian Air Force helicopter after the visit, PM Modi observed Ram Setu which connected Sri Lanka and India in ancient times.

The ancient land bridge, said to have been constructed by Lord Ram’s army during their march to Lanka, is celebrated in both India and Sri Lanka for its geological, historical, and mythological significance.

Over 5k Afghan refugees expelled from Pakistan

Kabul, April 18 (UNI) : Pakistan expelled over 5,000 Afghan refugees on Thursday, the local media Tolonews reported on Friday.The refugees returned from Pakistan via Torkham and Spin Boldak crossing points to Afghanistan on Thursday, the report said, adding that the returnees have received necessary assistance.

Reportedly, nearly 600,000 Afghan refugees, most of whom are undocumented migrants, have been expelled from Pakistan over the past two weeks.

Meanwhile, Afghan authorities are building shelters at a cost of 800,000 U.S. dollars for recently returned refugees in east Afghanistan's Paktia province.

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.

other minorities, and the rise of Islamic extremism.

Amna Baloch hoped that the upcoming visit of Pakistan Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on April 27 would further boost relations between the two countries.

The CA said that he preferred closer ties with neighbouring countries, including Pakistan, in the framework of SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation).

He added that the countries should partake in more youth and cultural exchange programs to boost their people-to-people ties.

"We kept missing each other for a long time as our relationship was frozen. We

have to overcome the barriers," he said.

Recalling his meeting with Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in New York on the sidelines of the 79th UNGA in September 2024 and in Cairo on the sidelines of the D-8 Summit in December 2024, CA Yunus said that they were key in making progress in bilateral relations.

He added that Bangladesh and Pakistan will continue to work together closely at various levels, cooperating on both bilateral and multilateral levels alike, through regional forums like SAARC, or multilateral forums like the OIC (Organisation of Islamic Cooperation), and D-8.

Mine blast kills 3 children, injures 3 in Afghanistan

Kabul, April 18 (UNI) : Three children lost their lives and three others sustained injuries as a landmine left over from past wars went off in northern Afghanistan's Badakhshan province on Friday, provincial police spokesman Ehsanullah Kamgar said.

The deadly incident took place at 11:00 a.m. local time in the Zebak district, killing the three children aged from nine to 14 on the spot and injuring the other three kids aged between 10 and

14. All the trio in critical condition, the official confirmed.

Without providing more details, the official said that an investigation had been initiated into the incident.The war-torn Afghanistan reportedly is one of the most landmine-contaminated countries in the world with dozens of people, mostly children, killed or maimed every month due to the blasts of explosive devices left over from the past four decades of war and civil unrest.

Health

Ways to boost your Memory



We're not recommending any magic pill to boost your memory but rather some tips that will help you do so:

Clench your fist
This may sound weird but research suggests that balling up your right hand and squeezing it tightly actually makes it easier to memorise phone numbers or shopping lists. Later, when you want to retrieve the information, clench the left fist. Researchers think the movements activate brain regions key to the storing and recall of memories.

Alphabets to the rescue
When you're trying to recall a piece of information such as the name of an actor in a film but just can't seem to do so, use the alphabet search method. Basically, go through the alphabet to find the first letter of

the word or name you are trying to remember in order to jog your memory. This trick really works.

Exercise more frequently

This is no rocket science because many studies have shown that aerobic exercise improves cognitive function and is particularly good at enhancing memory. Also, exercise is believed to encourage the growth of new brain cells in the hippocampus - an area of the brain important in memory and learning.

Ditch drinking at night

Alcohol may help you fall asleep but it leads to a disrupted night's rest. Moreover, it has a harmful effect on concentration and memory, opine researchers. Not to forget the more you drink, the less deep - or REM - sleep you get.

Say the words out loud

Perhaps, the easiest of all methods for remembering anything is to say the words out loud, be it remembering where you put your car keys or what you need from the shop or revising for a test, say memory experts. Studies found that saying what you want to remember out loud to yourself - or even mouthing it - will help with recall.

Kick the butt

If you thought smoking only leads to cancer, you're wrong. A separate study found that middle-aged smokers performed less well on tests compared with those without the tobacco habit.



Give yourself a cue

If there's something you have to do every day at a specific time and often forget, a technique called implementation intentions can help you. For example, say to yourself 'On my way home, I have to pick up clothes from the dry cleaners.'

Get visually speaking

A type of memory aid involves using imagery or visuals rather than words. For example, a classic way of remembering a person's name is to try and imagine it (or something associated to it) on the person's face. Psychologists have found that the more bizarre and vivid the image, the better it works.

Consume more milk

For study purposes, scientists asked subjects to fill in detailed surveys on their diets for tests to check their concentration, memory and learning abilities. They found that

subjects who consumed dairy products at least five or six times a week did far better in memory tests compared with those who rarely ate or drank them.

Don't overeat

Eating too much can double the risk of memory problems in old age, according to an American research. Studies found a high-calorie intake can substantially increase the risk

Not many of us can boast of a sharp memory, and those who do, certainly seem to have an edge professionally and personally as well.

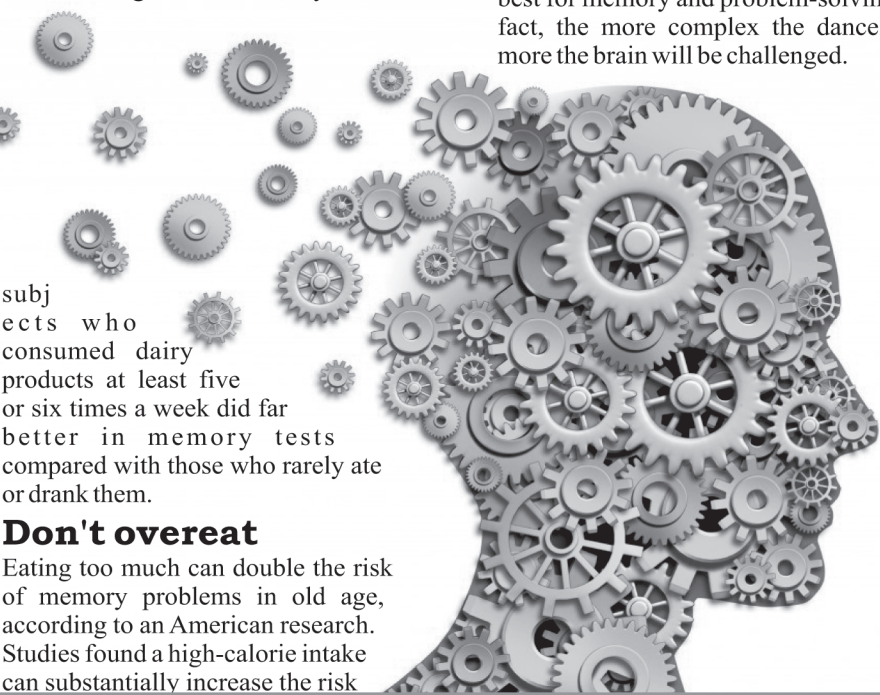
of developing mild cognitive impairment, or MCI, characterised by memory loss, which can precede dementia.

A walk in the park

A study found people who walked around a garden did 20% better on a memory test than those who walked around streets.

Dance away

Not only do music lovers perform better in cognitive tests, but research has also shown the beneficial effects of music on those with Alzheimer's disease. It is believed that music with strong rhythms and patterns, like reggae and salsa, are best for memory and problem-solving. In fact, the more complex the dance, the more the brain will be challenged.



Treat acidity with simple home remedies

We have all suffered from acidity at some point in our lives. With our busy work schedules, we sometimes fail to eat anything throughout the day. Sometimes we only eat two meals a day, and at other times we simply skip these meals. But, our bad eating habits can cause acidity.



Your stomach normally secretes acid that is essential for the digestive process. This acid helps in breaking down the food during digestion. Your stomach keeps secreting juices to digest food and when it does not get any food to act on it acts on the stomach lining, which causes acidity. Shreya Brahme, Dietician and Nutritionist and blogger at Dietician Shreya, helps us understand more about this common problem and ways to treat it.

Some common causes of acidity are:

Eating fast food regularly

Addiction to caffeine

Smoking

Too much alcohol consumption

Leaving too much of a gap in-between meals

Some easy remedies:

Have a glass of lukewarm water every day. Jaggery (gur), lemon, banana, almonds and yogurt (curd) are all known to give you instant relief from acidity.

Nariyal paani is known to soothe the system if you suffer from acidity.

Boil some mint or basil (tulsi) leaves in water and have a glass of this after meals. Include bananas, watermelons and cucumbers in your daily diet.

Sucking on a piece of clove is another effective remedy.

Besides, trying to correct the cause, avoid excessive intake of caffeine and alcohol.

Should you eat curd at night?

The hot season is here and so is the urge to consume foods that cool down your system. Curd, evidently, stands on top of the list. And why not. Curd is an excellent source of good bacteria and aids digestion. It is good for your teeth and bones. But as with most of the foods, there are some rules that you need to follow for consuming curd. One of the most commonly heard rules is to avoid eating it at night. But is it valid for everyone. Here are some of the rules:



Do not eat curd at night, especially if you are prone to cough and cold. Ayurveda explains that curd consumption at night is not good as it leads to mucus development. But if you can't do without it, opt for buttermilk instead. If you are eating curd during the day, have it without sugar but if you are eating curd at night, add sugar or some black pepper. It will assist in digestion and calm your digestive system. Never have hot curd. While the basic rules apply, if you are a curd lover, we bring you some easy options to include it in your diet, anytime of the day:

Curd rice: This is very good for the stomach and a light option for the summers too. Curd with sugar: Add a spoonful of sugar to your curd and you are good to go. Buttermilk/ Lassi: Ditch aerated drinks for these two options. Raita: A common Indian side dish, you can add onion, cucumber, tomato to your curd with some herbs and a healthy option is all set. Kadhi: Mixing gram flour (besan) with buttermilk makes for an appetizing curry called Kadhi. It is mostly eaten with rice (you might want to opt for brown rice).

Mostly known for its hair and skin benefits, castor oil has some amazing therapeutic advantages not many of us are aware of. Here are a few...



Although, our elders have always spoken about the goodness of castor oil, most of us are only aware of its hair and skin benefits. In addition to this, castor is known for its anti-bacterial properties and various medicinal and therapeutic benefits. Here's how castor oil is beneficial otherwise...

To increase immunity:

For those who follow naturopathy, castor oil strengthens the immune system by increasing white blood cells and thus fights infections. It is also proven that castor oil increases the count of T-11 cells (a type of white blood cells) and the production of lymphocytes in the blood within hours of application. This initiates the body to produce more antibodies

as well as to kill viruses, fungi, bacteria and cancer cells.

To induce labour:

A lot of pregnant women at full term are orally given castor oil, as it induces labour by pushing uterus contraction, say gynaecologists. The ricinoleic acid in the oil activates EP3 prostanoïd receptor in uterus, thus helping in delivery. However, it is not recommended in a lot of cases, as it makes the woman feel nauseous.

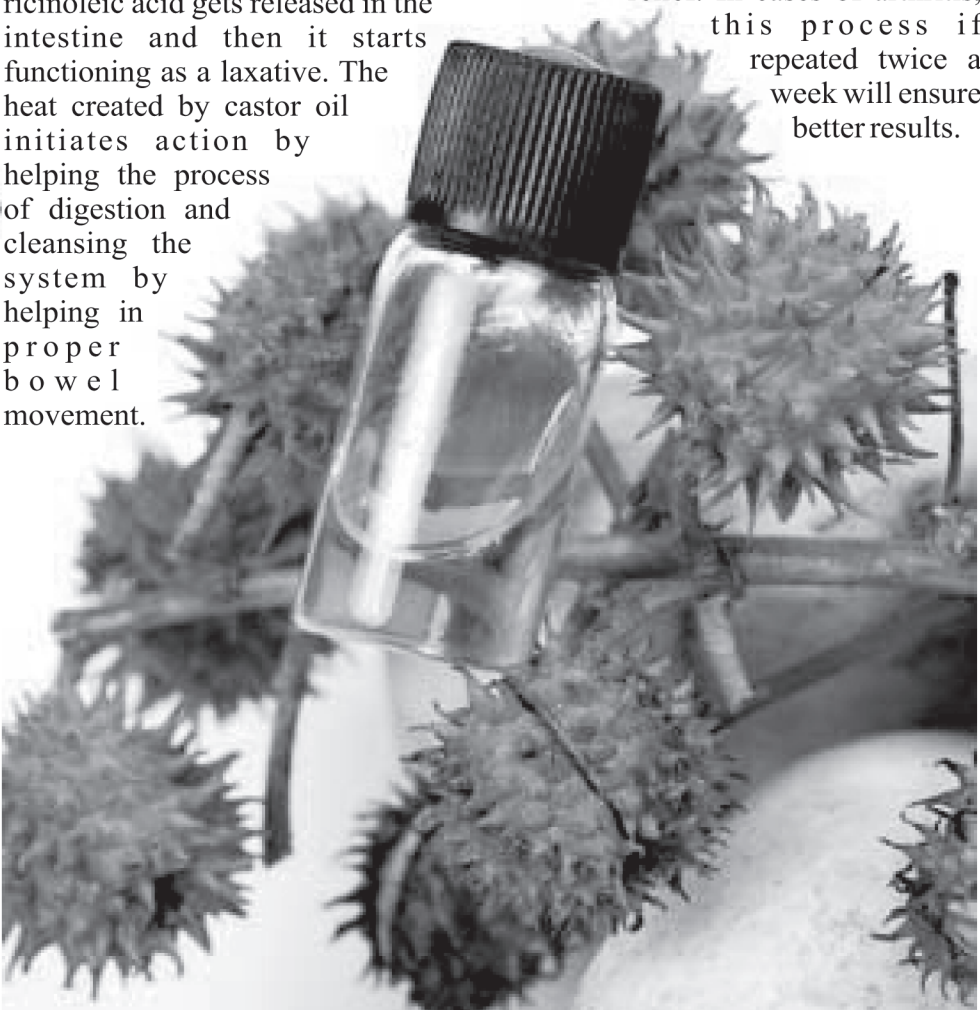
To get rid of moles and cysts:

Applying castor oil with a pinch of baking soda on the infected area is known to give the desired result. In fact, topical application of castor oil also solves the problem of cysts and

corns by dissolving them. It is also said that castor oil helps dissolve cysts in the ovary as the fatty acid in castor oil is easily absorbed by the skin.

For constipation:

Castor oil is also beneficial as a laxative — when taken orally, ricinoleic acid gets released in the intestine and then it starts functioning as a laxative. The heat created by castor oil initiates action by helping the process of digestion and cleansing the system by helping in proper bowel movement.



To treat joint pains:

Castor oil is known for treating arthritis, its anti-inflammatory properties make it an ideal massage oil for relieving joint pain, nerve inflammation and sore muscles. Massaging the joint with castor oil and placing a hot water bag helps in pain relief. In cases of arthritis, this process if repeated twice a week will ensure better results.

Health benefits of Castor oil

RCB slump to another home defeat

Bengaluru, April 18 (UNI) : Royal Challengers Bengaluru’s (RCB) campaign took another hit on Friday night as they slumped to their third successive home defeat, this time at the hands of Punjab Kings (PBKS), who galloped to a five-wicket win in a rain-curtailed 14-over clash at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium.

Set a modest target of 96, Punjab completed the chase with 11 balls to spare, thanks to a composed unbeaten 33 off 19 balls from Nehal Wadhwa and a finishing six by Marcus Stoinis that sealed the game in 12.1 overs.

RCB’s total of 95/9, rescued almost single-handedly by Tim David’s explosive 50 not out off 26 balls, was never going to be enough — even on a sticky surface. David’s late fireworks, including three sixes in the final over off Harpreet Brar, gave the home fans some hope after a calamitous top-order collapse had left them floundering at 42 for 7.

Arshdeep Singh (2/23), Marco Jansen (2/10), and Brar (2/25) wreaked havoc early on, dismantling RCB’s



batting with discipline and variation. None of RCB’s top six managed to cross double figures, and were it not for David’s counterpunch, the total might have been embarrassing.

In response, PBKS began briskly. Openers Priyansh Arya (16) and Prabhsimran Singh (13) played positively, with the latter lacing three crisp boundaries off Bhuvneshwar Kumar in one over. But RCB hit back, dismissing both openers in quick succession — David taking a sharp catch at mid-off to remove Prabhsimran, while Arya miscued a pull off Josh Hazlewood.

Hazlewood (3-0-14-3) bowled with heart and precision, removing Shreyas Iyer (7) and Josh Inglis (14) in successive overs to reduce Punjab to 53/4 and momentarily shift momentum back in RCB’s favour.

But Wadhwa had other ideas. Calm under pressure, the young left-hander paced his innings smartly. He dismantled Suyash Sharma’s third over with a flurry of attacking strokes — two sixes and two fours, including a reverse sweep and a flat pull that soared into the stands — to swing the pendulum back in PBKS’s favour.

Even the late dismissal

of Shashank Singh (1) didn’t deter him. Wadhwa took on Bhuvneshwar again in the 12th over, clubbing a six over fine leg and following it with a cracking cover drive. That left just two to win.

Stoinis didn’t wait around. Yash Dayal’s first delivery in the 13th over was dispatched over deep mid-wicket with brutal authority, confirming Punjab’s dominance and extending RCB’s woes.

The result lifts PBKS up the table with renewed momentum, while RCB are left to search for answers — particularly around a misfiring top order and continued failures on home turf.

Wang fends off fierce challenge from Duda at ITTF WC

Macao, April 18 (UNI) : Olympic gold medalist and China’s star paddler Wang Chuqin narrowly survived a major upset by Germany’s Benedikt Duda on Friday to secure his spot in the semifinals of the ITTF Men’s and Women’s World Cup Macao 2025.

In an epic clash of left-handed players, Wang overcame Duda to win 4-3. After trading the first six

games, Duda claimed match point in the decider, but Wang held his nerve and reeled off three straight points to seal a 12-10 victory.

"Starting from the third game, I was at a clear disadvantage. My opponent’s consistency and shot quality during rallies exceeded what I expected. Even my high-quality shots were blocked

and shut down by his placement," said Wang after the match. "I had to fight for every point, just trying to hang in there."

Another clash featured China’s Lin Shidong against Sweden’s star Truls Moregard. Lin swept the Olympic singles silver medalist 4-0 (11-7, 11-9, 20-18, 11-6) to face teammate Liang Jingkun in the semifinals. Liang defeated

Slovenia’s Darko Jorgic 4-2 earlier. In the women’s singles, China’s Chen Xingtong beat Bruna Takahashi of Brazil 4-1, while defending champion Sun Yingsha of China eased past Cheng I-Ching of Chinese Taipei by the same score.

The two will face off in the semifinals on Saturday. China’s young talent Kuai Man came from two games

Thomas equals course record to lead RBC Heritage

South Carolina, April 18 (UNI) : Justin Thomas equalled the course record to take a three-shot lead after the opening round at the RBC Heritage. Thomas made 11 birdies in a 10-under-par 61 at Harbour Town Golf Links here, the BBC reported on Friday. The 31-year-old American, who is seeking his first victory since winning his second major at the 2022 US PGA Championship, leads compatriots Russell Henley and world number one Scottie Scheffler. Former US Open champion Wyndham Clark is one shot further back, while England’s Matt Fitzpatrick is among a group on five under after an opening 66.

Justin Rose is in a tie for 10th after hitting 67 in his first round since losing to Rory McIlroy in a play-off at the Masters.

Thomas set the pace with six birdies on the front nine, before he recovered from a bogey on the 10th by hitting five birdies in six holes on the back nine.

Verstappen very relaxed about Red Bull future

Riyadh, April 18 (UNI) : Max Verstappen says he is "very relaxed" about his future despite Red Bull's difficult start to the 2025 Formula 1 season.

Following his sixth place at the Bahrain Grand Prix last weekend, Red Bull motorsport adviser Helmut Marko told Sky Germany he has "great concern" about Verstappen potentially leaving the team.

The Dutchman, who is aiming to win a record-equalling fifth consecutive drivers' title this year, is third in the championship, eight points behind leader Lando Norris of McLaren, the BBC reported.

Round five takes place in Saudi Arabia this weekend, with Sunday's race starting at 18:00 BST.

"A lot of people are talking about it except me," said Verstappen on Thursday.

"Like I said before, I just want to focus on my car, work with the people in the team - that's the only thing I'm thinking about in Formula 1 at the moment," he said.

"I'm very relaxed," Verstappen said.

Verstappen has a contract with Red Bull until 2028. But Marko told BBC Sport this month that it contains a performance clause that could allow him to depart the team.

The 27-year-old has been linked with moves to Mercedes and Aston Martin for 2026 when new regulations are being introduced. He held talks with Mercedes last year but their team boss Toto

Wolff said at the season-opener in Australia last month that a pitch to sign Verstappen for next season is "not on any radar". Asked in the drivers' news conference whether he would like Verstappen as a team-mate at Aston Martin, Fernando Alonso said: "Yes, but that's unlikely to happen, very unlikely." Alonso's current team-mate is Lance Stroll, the son of Aston Martin team owner Lawrence Stroll.

Verstappen moved to within one point of Norris in the standings with a brilliant win at the Japanese Grand Prix from pole position two weeks ago.

His weekend in Sakir was a stark contrast to the highs of Suzuka as he qualified in seventh and finished the race three places lower than Briton Norris, who ended his day on the podium in third. Verstappen continued: "I just go race by race. I think [Saudi Arabia] will be better than Bahrain. The rest is out of my hands.

"At the moment, we are not the quickest so it is tough to fight for a championship, but it is a long road. Last year here it all looked great and we know how the season ended up." Red Bull were untouchable in Jeddah last year with Verstappen first and then team-mate Sergio Perez second. But while the Dutchman went on to seal his fourth title in a row, Red Bull lost out to McLaren in the constructors' championship, eventually dropping behind Ferrari and finishing third.

"I enjoyed last year and the year before when we were dominant," said Verstappen. "Now it is enjoyable in a way of the challenges that are out there and trying to improve the situation I would say." I am happy, I am not very happy with my car. But we all want to be better, there is no secret in that. We all want to improve," Verstappen added.

Punit Balan Group's Kolhapur Tusker team ready for third season of MPL

(Standard Post Bureau)

Pune, April 18 : Punit Balan Group's 'Kolhapur Tusker' team is ready for the third season of the Maharashtra Premier League (MPL), which has become popular in a short time. In the player auction held for this league, 'Punit Balan Group' has given a chance to new talented faces along with the old players of the team.

Maharashtra Cricket Association' has started the 'Maharashtra Premier League' (MPL) on the lines of the Indian Premier League (IPL). This league, which started in 2023, includes six teams namely Pune, Kolhapur, Ratnagiri, Sambhajanagar, Nashik and Solapur.

It also includes the team of Pune-based young entrepreneur and Puneet Balan, chairman of Puneet Balan Group, 'Kolhapur Tusker'. Meanwhile, the player auction process for the third season of the league was held in Pune. In it, the 'Kolhapur Tusker' team has retained 11 old players and has also included 18 new players in its team by bidding for them, said Balan in a press statement on Friday.

The 'Kolhapur Tusker' team will now have 29 players and this has become the super team in MPL. The highest bid for

this team's player, Rajneesh Gurbani, was 5 lakh 20 thousand. In it, the 'Puneet Balan Group' paid the highest bid and took this player into the team.

Tuskar team:

Old players- Rahul Tripathi (captain), Ankit Bavane, Atharva Dakve, Atman Pore, Siddharth Mhatre, Shrikant Mundhe (vice-captain), Shreyas Chavan, Sachin Dhas, Nihal Tusmad, Sumit Markali

New players- Rajneesh Gurbani, Atharva Vanve, Digvijay Jadhav, Anand Thenge, Deepak Dang, Bhargav Pathak, Hardik Kurangle, Vedant Patil, Arya Shah, Vishant More, Sumit Dhengre, Ayush Ubhe, Rituraj Virkar, Shubham Mane, Nilay Newaskar, Rajveer Jagtap, Dhanraj Shinde, Dilip Malviya and Sunil Yadav.

"Our 'Kolhapur Tusker' team performed well in both

SAI take headstart in Group G of Swami Vivekananda U20 NFC

N a r a i n p u r (Chhattisgarh), April 18 (UNI) : Sports Authority of India (SAI) beat Assam 4-0 on the opening day of Group G in the Swami Vivekananda U20 Men's National Football Championship at the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama Ground here on Friday.

Rajkumar Lanchenba Singh opened the scoring for SAI with a sliding finish from point-blank range in the 36th minute. Oinam Romio Singh doubled the advantage in the 68th minute after a melee in the box following Bless Vashum's corner.

Vashum turned scorer in the 81st minute, finishing off a cross from Vikram A to make it three. Captain Robert Thokchom wrapped up the scoring in the 85th minute with a good left-footed finish into the bottom corner.

In the other match, Odisha and Goa played out a goalless draw. As a result, Sports Authority of India are now at the top in Group G with three points, followed by Odisha and Goa with one each, and Assam with none. Only the group winner will book their place in the quarter-final.

There was no winner in the evening kick-off at the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama Ground. Odisha, reduced to 10 after Nirmal Oram's second yellow card, held Goa to a 0-0 draw.

Both sides finished second in their respective groups in the 2024 edition and are looking for their maiden knockout phase appearance.

Athletic Bilbao keeps Europa League dream alive with Rangers win

Bilbao (Spain), April 18 (UNI) : Athletic Bilbao kept alive its hopes of playing the UEFA Europa League final at its home San Mames Stadium with a 2-0 (2-0 aggregate) win over Rangers in the second leg of their quarterfinal.

A penalty from Oihan Sancet on the stroke of halftime and a powerful header from Nico Williams led to a fully deserved win by Athletic on Thursday.

Athletic was without Inaki Williams, but controlled nearly all of the play in the first half, with Sancet seeing a shot blocked and firing over when he looked set to score, while powerful forward Maroan Sannadi was proving to be a handful for the Rangers defense.

The striker was playing in Spain's third tier just three months ago, but had arguably his best game since making the step up, and won the penalty when he was caught from behind in first-half injury time.

Winger Alex Berenguer had missed a penalty last week in Glasgow, but this time Sancet stepped up and made no mistake.

Athletic continued to control matters after the break until Rangers took a step forward midway through the second half. However, the visitor's football was limited to looking for high balls into the box.

Ghai ends long wait for second title with tenacious 70 on final day of Calance Open

New Delhi, April 18 (UNI) : Gurugram’s Tapendra Ghai hung on to his lead with a tenacious even-par 70 on the final day to end his long wait for a second title at the Rs 1 crore Calance Open 2025 played at the Qutab Golf Course here on Friday.

The 29-year-old Ghai (64-67-62-70), the overnight leader by four shots, who won his only previous title on the PGTI in 2018, signed off for the week with a total of 17-under 263 to prevail by one shot. His steady last round featured three birdies and three bogeys.

Ghai's win saw him pick up the winning cheque worth INR 15,00,000 that lifted him from 53rd to 15th position in the PGTI Order of Merit.

Delhi-based Arjun Prasad (67-68-67-62) shot the lowest score of day four, an eight-under 62, to rise 10 places and finish as the joint runner-up at 16-under 264. Arjun picked up a cheque worth INR 7,99,900 that pushed him up from sixth to second position in the PGTI Order of Merit.

Prasad’s season earnings now stand at INR 46,57,749. Arjun, who has posted five top-10s so far this season, trails the PGTI Ranking leader Joshua Berry of England by over INR 7.5 lakh.

Honey Baisoya (64-68-65-67) of Delhi returned a

67 in round four to also end the week as the joint runner-up at 16-under 264.

Kshitij Naveed Kaul, another Delhi-based professional who set the course record of 60 earlier in the week, brought in a card of 64 on Friday to secure fourth place at 15-under 265.

Dubai-based Yash Majmudar fired a second straight 63 to claim tied fifth position at 14-under 266 along with Chandigarh’s Yuvraj Sandhu (69) and Ludhiana’s Pukhraj Singh Gill (69).

Tapendra Ghai had a slow start on Friday as he bogeyed the second hole. Ghai then bounced back with birdies on the fourth and seventh, sinking a 12-footer on the former. A par-save from 15 feet on the ninth and a chip-in for birdie on the 11th kept Tapendra ahead of the chasing pack led by Arjun Prasad.

With the birdies drying up for him and Tapendra also conceding a bogey on the 14th, he continued to keep his calm and knocked in another crucial par putt from 15 feet on the 15th.

Ghai, also known as ‘Tapy’, dropped a bogey on the closing 18th but still managed to close out the match with a one-shot margin as his nearest rivals Arjun Prasad and Honey Baisoya couldn’t catch on

the last two holes.

Tapendra said, “It was a day when birdies were not easy to come by for me so the par-saves kept me in the game and kept my momentum going. I sank a couple of 15-footers for pars that gave me the confidence to finish well and get the job done.

“Once on the back-nine, I told myself if I can play two-under for the day, it would be good enough. The chip-in for birdie on the 11th was a key moment in the day for me.

“I had not been putting well coming into this week but I was extremely consistent with the putter through this tournament and was feeling good about my game. I just kept on repeating the same routine and tried to make sure I was following the same pattern from start to finish.

“It feels great to win after six years. I would like to thank my coach Ricky Jaswal for all his support and guidance.”

While Arjun Prasad made a charge with a bogey-free 62 in round four, Honey Baisoya’s last round featured an eagle, three birdies and two bogeys.

Honey emerged as a threat to the leader towards the final stages after he made an eagle on the 16th. Baisoya missed his birdie putt narrowly on the 18th that could’ve taken him into the playoff with Ghai.

Printed, Published and Owned by
Mohammed Shafi

Printed at KR Graphics,
2-3-703/8, Tirumala Nagar Colony, Amberpet,
Hyderabad - 500 013 and
Published from # 2-3-645/8/1,
Back Side of CPL Church, Prem Nagar,
Amberpet, Hyderabad-500 013

Editor: Mohammed Shafi
R.N.I.No. : TELENG/2011/39668

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Central Railway Observes World Heritage Day 2025 on the theme “Disaster and Conflict Resilient Heritage Actions in Relation to Safeguarding Heritage”

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 18 : Central Railway celebrated World Heritage Day 2025 with great enthusiasm and pride, coinciding with its 172 years of distinguished service to the nation. Observed annually on 18th April, World Heritage Day was instituted by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) to raise awareness about the importance of cultural heritage and the need for its preservation. The theme for 2025, as proposed by ICOMOS, is “Disaster and Conflict Resilient Heritage Actions in Relation to Safeguarding Heritage.”

To mark the occasion, a special Heritage Exhibition was organized at the Heritage Alley, located between Platforms 14 and 15 at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT), Mumbai. The exhibition drew the attention of passengers and history enthusiasts, showcasing rare artefacts and captivating glimpses into the glorious past of Indian Railways.

The UNESCO World Heritage Site – Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus was beautifully illuminated with multicolour lights. The 138-year-old architectural marvel, designed by British engineer Frederic William Stevens, is a stunning example of Indo-Gothic architecture. Its Construction began in 1878 and was completed in 1888 at a cost of Rs 16,13,863. The building blends Victorian Gothic Revival style with Mughal and traditional Indian architectural elements, symbolizing India’s rich and diverse heritage.



Today’s program began with paying homage to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj by garlanding his statue located at CSMT Mumbai.

A ‘Heritage Walk’ was conducted as part of the celebrations, led by Shri Prateek Goswami, Additional General Manager, and Shri Subodh Kumar Sagar, Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer, along with Principal Heads of Departments. The walk highlighted the architectural grandeur of CSMT and celebrated the rich legacy of Indian Railways, people from various walks of life, members of Civil Defence, Scouts & Guides, sanitation workers, and a large number of Railway

staff also actively participated in the walk.

In addition, a Fire Brigade Exhibition was held at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, by Mumbai Fire Department, aimed at creating awareness about fire safety, especially concerning the protection of heritage structures and artefacts. “Central Railway has undertaken significant efforts to conserve and promote its heritage across various locations:

- Byculla Station, one of the oldest surviving railway stations in India, was part of the first historic train journey from Bori Bunder to Thane on 16th April 1853. Now 172 years old, the station has been meticulously restored to its

original Gothic architectural glory and continues to be preserved with great care.

- The Neral–Matheran Light Railway, a 118-year-old heritage line, commenced operations in 1907. This scenic narrow-gauge railway remains a delightful experience for adults, children and senior citizens alike. It offers passengers a unique journey through lush forests and hilly terrain, preserving the charm of vintage rail travel.

Central Railway remains deeply committed to preserving the timeless legacy of Indian Railways while embracing modernization and innovation for a progressive future.

WR to run superfast Teja special trains between Mumbai Central - Rajkot

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 18 : For the convenience of passengers and with a view to meet the travel demand especially during the summer season, Western Railway has decided to run Superfast Tejas Special Train on Special Fare between Mumbai Central - Rajkot. 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. 09005/09006 Mumbai Central - Rajkot Superfast Special [34 Trips]

Train No. 09005 Mumbai Central - Rajkot Special will depart from Mumbai Central every Monday, Wednesday & Friday at 23.20 hrs and will reach Rajkot at 11.45 hrs, the next day. This train will run from 21st April to 28th May, 2025. Similarly, Train No. 09006 Rajkot – Mumbai Central Special will depart from Rajkot every Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday at 18.30 hrs and will arrive Mumbai Central at 07.30 hrs, the next day. This train will run from 22nd April to 29th May, 2025. Enroute this train will halt at Borivali, Vapi, Surat, Vadodara, Anand, Ahmedabad, Viramgam, Surendranagar, & Wankaner station in both directions. This train comprises of First AC, AC 2-Tier and AC 3-Tier Coaches.

The booking for Train No. 09005 & 09006 will open from 19.04.2025 at all PRS Counters and on IRCTC website. For detailed information regarding timings of halts and composition, passengers may please visit www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in.

Many steps taken to improve working conditions of loco pilots

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 18 : Loco pilots are key members of Indian railway family. Many steps have been taken to improve their working conditions. In last ten years all running rooms have been upgraded to air conditioned and are well furnished. Before 2014, not a single running room was air conditioned.

Further more than half the loco cabs have been upgraded with ergonomic seats, air conditioning and other improvements. Before 2014, not a single loco cab was air conditioned.

Toilets are being fitted in all new locos manufactured. This was not even part of the production plan before 2014.

Older locomotives are being retrofitted with toilets.

Design modifications are being done in older locomotives for this purpose.



New running rooms are being added on the routes with heavy congestion. These steps have already brought down the working hours significantly.

New safety features like fog safety devices, kavach, driver alert systems and better technology for braking systems are further improving safety.

Onboard facilities, better technologies, and better rest timings are improving the working conditions.

Railway takes care for necessary requirements of

all type of loco pilots. Goods Trains stop at many stations and yards for significant time.

Timing at these stations is sufficient for using toilets. Crew also use this time for light snacks.

In Suburban Trains, loco pilots work on short distance trains and crew of these trains use toilets at terminal stations. Crew of passenger trains use toilet of train when train is standing at station and also use this time for snacks. All above steps are continuously being implemented.

WR Celebrates World Heritage Day With a Walk Through History

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 18 : On April 18th, Western Railway marked World Heritage Day in a way that was both meaningful and memorable — by celebrating the stories hidden in plain sight. A heritage walk was organised at the Churchgate Headquarters, for female staff members. The group was guided through the rich legacy of Western Railway and its over a century-old headquarters building.

A total of 32 women participated in the walk, being told stories, soaking in the architecture, and discovering how deeply the history of the railways is tied to the city of Mumbai. This was more than just a walk down corridors of an office building — it was a walk down memory lane. Other divisions of Western Railway also celebrated the World Heritage Day by organising various events thus inculcating a sense of pride and responsibility in preserving our rich heritage. The iconic Western Railway HQ is a piece of living history. It’s construction started way back in 1894 and finished in 1899. The building was designed by the well-known Frederick William Stevens, the same man behind Victoria Terminus (now CSMT), Municipal Corporation Building and several other iconic buildings dotting south Mumbai. It originally housed the headquarters of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway

(BB&CI) and still serves as the beating heart of Western Railway today.

Built at a cost of Rs. 7.5 lakhs, the building is a blend of Venetian Gothic, Indo-Saracenic, and Italian styles. With blue basalt stone, intricate domes, and a central tower that rises from square to octagonal to dome, it’s sight to behold.

The interiors are equally captivating, with marble flooring, teak-panelled ceilings and corridors that stretch across three floors.

The building has lived through it all — from a fire during the 1905 royal visit, to the addition of an Annexe in 1926 and a new floor during World War II. Yet, even with all the change, it’s held on to its character. The building recently completed 125 years and various celebrations were held to mark the occasion.

The Queen of the Suburbs While the WR HQ impresses with grandeur, Bandra Station charms with its old-world vibe. First opened in 1864, Bandra station was built with cheap materials and temporary ticket windows and station. It was 24 years later, in 1888, that the station building we know and love today was constructed. It is mix of Victorian Gothic and vernacular architecture. Bandra Station is a Grade I Heritage Structure, as designated by the Government of Maharashtra, and one of the few suburban stations

in the country with that honour.

The station’s design is both beautiful and clever — honeycomb basalt masonry, teakwood eaves, and a façade that’s perfectly symmetrical. But it’s not just pretty. It’s functional too. The wide verandahs, high ceilings, and deep overhangs are meant to keep the station cool and breezy, even during Mumbai’s humid summers.

Perhaps the most unique feature lies in its platforms — steel columns made from railway “T” track sections, joined to create elegant hexagonal shapes, topped with ornate iron brackets and coats of arms. It’s part engineering, part art, and probably unlike anything else you’ll see on a train platform.

Bandra Station has stood quietly through the century — a silent witness to the city’s growing suburbs, daily commutes, and generations of memories.

More Than Just Stone and Steel

Western Railway HQ and Bandra stations aren’t just buildings. They’re stories in stone. They’ve seen empires fade, wars come and go, cities evolve, and millions of people pass through their halls and platforms.

Western Railway’s celebration of World Heritage Day is a reminder that heritage isn’t just about preserving old walls — it’s about celebrating the people, the places, and the purpose behind them.

WR to provide additional stoppage to two pairs of special trains at Vyara Station

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 18 : For the convenience of passengers, Western Railway will provide additional stoppage at Vyara station to Train No. 09025/09026 Valsad – Danapur Weekly Special and Train No. 09059/09060 Udhna – Khurda Road Weekly Special. According to a press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Shri Vineet Abhishek, the details are as under:-

1. Train No. 09025 Valsad – Danapur Weekly Special has been provided with additional halt at Vyara station w.e.f journey commencing Ex Valsad on 21st April, 2025. The train will arrive Vyara station at 10.08 hrs and depart at 10.10 hrs. Similarly, Train No. 09026 Danapur – Valsad Weekly

Special has been provided with additional halt at Vyara station w.e.f journey commencing Ex Danapur on 22nd April, 2025. The train will arrive Vyara station at 10.06 hrs and depart at 10.08 hrs.

3. Train No. 09059 Udhna – Khurda Road Weekly Special has been provided with additional halt at Vyara station w.e.f journey commencing Ex Udhna on 23rd April, 2025. The train will arrive Vyara station at 12.50 hrs and depart at 12.52 hrs. Similarly, Train No. 09060 Khurda Road – Udhna Weekly Special has been provided with additional halt at Vyara station w.e.f journey commencing Ex Khurda Road on 25th April, 2025. The train will arrive Vyara station at 11.48 hrs and depart at 11.50 hrs.

CR, Solapur Division Achieves Remarkable Goods Revenue of Rs 421.56 Crore in FY 2024-25



Bale, Wadi and Tilati.

“-Sidings: ACC Cement/ Wadi, Ultratech/Hotgi, Chettinad/Tilati, Zuari/ Tilati, NTPC/Hotgi, and IOCL locations at Hirenanduru and Pakni

“-Gati Shakti Multi-Modal Cargo Terminal: BPCL GCT at Hirenanduru

Highlights of FY 2024-25:

POL traffic commenced at IOCL Pakni (IOCL’s 1st

rake loading facility in Maharashtra) on 28th January 2025. 24 rakes were loaded with a revenue generation of Rs 3.01 crore.

“* Molasses traffic successfully revived at Pandharpur and Bale after two years. 5 rakes loaded Revenue Generated: Rs 2.70 crore

“* Jaggery traffic grew to 11 rakes loaded with a revenue generation of ? 5.16 crore

“* New Fertiliser Loading Initiatives resulted

in first-ever loading from Kurduvadi and Pandharpur to Verna in Konkan Railway. 2 mini rakes were loaded generating a revenue of ? 30 lakh.

“* First Combined Commodity of Sugar-Jaggery traffic was successfully done with 2 rakes loaded from Latur generating a revenue of ? 1.59 crore.

“* Coal Handling at Bhigvan with coal unloading under BDU (Business Development Unit) initiative in May 2024 where 4 rakes from Umrud Colliery Siding (Nagpur Division) were unloaded.

“* New Freight Destinations Added - Clinker: PPCP (Penna Cement), OCPC (Orient Cement Ltd., Chittapur); Sugar: Roorkee (Uttarakhand), Salem (Tamil Nadu); Jaggery: New Tinsukia and Lanka in Assam

“* Short Lead Traffic

Captured (26 km) Clinker traffic from ACC Wadi to OCPC (Chittapur) where 4 rakes were successfully loaded.”

This performance is the result of continuous efforts from former Assistant Commercial Manager (Goods) Shri Lakhanji Jha, current Assistant Commercial Manager (Goods) Shri A K Yadav, Chief Commercial Inspector (Goods) Shri Deepak Mishra, Commercial Inspector (Goods) Shri Nihal Singh and other dedicated team members of Solapur Division” said Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Shri Yogesh Patil.”

The Solapur Division continues to strive toward operational excellence and customer satisfaction in line with Indian Railways’ vision of efficient, sustainable and growth-oriented freight services.

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 18 : The Solapur Division of Central Railway has recorded an impressive performance in freight operations for the financial year 2024-25, achieving a substantial goods revenue of Rs 421.56 crore. This outstanding result reflects the Division’s strategic initiatives, infrastructural upgrades, and effective customer outreach.”

Key Performance Overview:

“Total Revenue Generated: ? 421.56 crore

“Total Rakes Loaded:

1,783

“Total Freight Volume: 5.34 million metric tons

Key Commodities Handled: Cement, Clinker, Sugar, Jaggery, DOC (De-oiled Cake), POL (Petroleum, Oil & Lubricants), Molasses, Fertilisers, Limestone, Food Grains, Coal, Ash, Gypsum, Bauxite and others.

Infrastructure & Operational Spread: The Solapur Division operates with

“-Goods Sheds: Latur, Solapur, Tajsultanpur, Pandharpur, Arag, Bhigvan, Kurduvadi, Usmanabad,