

IN BRIEF

Protests continue, tension prevails at HCU

Hyderabad, April 2 (UNI) : Students and faculty members of Hyderabad Central University (HCU) continued their protest on Wednesday over the Kancha Gachibowli land dispute.

Protesters gathered inside the university gate, demanding clarity on the land issue. When they attempted to move towards the 400 acres of land being leveled by the government, police intervened and stopped them. At one point, the police resorted to a lathi charge to disperse the protesters.

Heavy security has been deployed as the agitation escalated.

During a press conference at the Secretariat on Tuesday, Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu reiterated that the 400 acres of land in Survey No. 25 in Kancha Gachibowli have always been government property.He further clarified that the government has not taken even a single inch of land belonging to Hyderabad Central University.

Six killed, over 24 injured in road accident

Mumbai, April 2 (UNI) : Six people were killed and more than 24 injured in an accident involving three vehicles in Maharashtra's Buldhana district on Wednesday morning.

As per the information, the accident occurred on the Shegaon-Khamgaon highway at around 5:30 am.The accident occurred when a speeding SUV car collided with a state government run passenger bus. Moments later, a private passenger bus approaching from behind rammed into the already damaged vehicles.

Authorities rushed the injured to nearby hospitals, and rescue operations were carried out immediately.The impact of the collision was so severe that vehicles were mangled, and the highway remained blocked for hours.The deceased were identified as Dhaneshwar Maravi from Madhya Pradesh, Krishnakumar Mohan Singh Sarote from Shegaon , Shivpal, Shivaji Samadhan Munde from Shegaon), Mehrunisa Sheikh Habib from Dhule and Ranjit Wankhede, from Akola district.

SLBC relief work to be completed in 15 days: Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy



Hyderabad, April 2 (UNI) : Relief work related to the accident in the Srisailem Left Bank Canal (SLBC) tunnel will be completed within 10 to 15 days, ensuring that the Nalgonda and Khammam districts benefit from Krishna River waters in another two and a half years, said State Revenue, Housing, Information, and Civil Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy.

After inspecting the SLBC tunnel accident site, the minister addressed reporters in Srisailem on Wednesday.

He stated that relief efforts in the tunnel are progressing rapidly under the instructions of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy.

He added that the critical stage of the operation will be reached once excavation of another 105-110 meters is completed. The accident site is currently obstructed by a 250-meter-long pile of rocks and mud.

Over the past 40 days, 700-800 experts from various organizations have been working round the clock under the supervision of

officials. Currently, around 550-560 personnel are engaged in rescue operations using advanced equipment. The presence of iron and other objects entangled in the heavy drilling machine inside the tunnel has made the removal of debris particularly challenging and hazardous. However, the state government has ensured that all necessary arrangements are in place to facilitate smooth relief operations.

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has directed the Collector, Special Monitoring Officer Shivshankar Loteti, Disaster Management Officer, and the Superintendent of Police to remain available at all times.

So far, two bodies have been recovered from the incident. The Collector has been instructed to expedite compensation to the families of the remaining victims. In response to the tragedy, steps are being taken to enhance safety measures during tunnel excavation to prevent future incidents.

The SLBC project, conceptualised during the tenure of the late Chief Minister Y S Rajasekhara Reddy, is expected to provide irrigation water during the tenure of the current Indira government.

The SLBC tunnel accident occurred on February 22, trapping eight workers. Efforts to remove collapsed rocks and TBM (Tunnel Boring Machine) parts are ongoing, with welding and excavation work being carried out continuously. The accumulated debris, silt, and spring water are also being cleared. However, the rescue operation remains challenging due to poor air circulation and low visibility at the accident site, located 14 km from the tunnel's inlet.

Expressing deep regret over the loss of lives, Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy emphasised the government's commitment to completing relief efforts swiftly. As part of his visit, the minister, along with his wife, offered prayers at the Srisailem Bhramarambhika Mallikarjuna Swamy temple.

HC halts work on land near Hyderabad University

Hyderabad, April 2 (IANS) The Telangana High Court on Wednesday ordered a halt to the ongoing work on 400 acres in Kancha Gachibowli near the Hyderabad Central University (HCU) till Thursday. The court gave the interim order while hearing the Public Interest Litigations filed by HCU students and the Vata Foundation.

The court took up the PILs for hearing on Wednesday. While adjourning the hearing to Thursday, the court directed the Telangana Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TGIIC) to stop all work.

The counsels for petitioners sought a stay on the works, saying the TGICC was cutting the trees by using several bulldozers.

The petitioners submitted to the court that the government in June last year issued a Government Order, allotting 400 acres of government land to the TGIIC. They argued that even if this is government land, the authorities concerned have to follow the Supreme Court orders. The court was told that heavy vehicles were being used to uproot trees and to level the ground.

The counsels for the petitioners contended that as per the Supreme Court order, a committee of experts has to be constituted to remove trees from a forested land. If the land inhabited by wildlife is to be levelled, an expert committee has to visit that place and study it for a month.

The petitioners told the court that the land has three lakes, several rocks, and many species of animals and birds, and they need to be protected. The court was told that authorities were acting against the Supreme Court guidelines, and for the last few days, a tense situation has

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Kishan Reddy slams CM over BC reservations, calls sit-in a political drama

Hyderabad, April 2 (UNI) : Union Minister and Telangana BJP President G Kishan Reddy criticised Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, calling his sit-in at Jantar Mantar in Delhi an attempt to evade the implementation of 42 per cent BC reservations.

He alleged that the protest, held under the guise of BC organisations, was merely a political stunt.

In a statement on Wednesday, Kishan Reddy accused Revanth Reddy of insincerity in providing BC reservations, claiming that he sees BCs only as a vote bank rather than genuinely working for their welfare.

He questioned how Revanth Reddy could now blame the Centre for not implementing the 42 per cent reservation when he himself had promised it before the elections. He alleged that the Chief Minister was deliberately

No provision to appoint any non-Muslim member to Waqf, Amit Shah clarifies over Waqf Amendment Bill

New Delhi, April 2 (UNI) : Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday slammed the Congress for allegedly spreading "misinformation" on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024 and assured that the legislation does not seek to interfere in Muslims' religious matters.

"This is a huge misconception that this Act will interfere with the religious conduct of Muslims and interfere with the property donated by them. This misconception is being spread to instil fear among minorities for their vote bank," Shah said while participating in the debate on the legislation in the Lok Sabha.

The Union Home Minister also clarified that non-Muslims will not be of committee which will interfere in religious matter and said that non-Muslims will only look after the administration of property donated by someone under Waqf Law, whether it is being done as per law, whether the property is being used for the intent with which it was donated."

Shah made these remarks after the Opposition raised the question on selection of the 12 non-Muslims in the new Board.

He asserted that any dispute on Waqf properties will be decided by courts, saying, "If the public whose property has been taken over by Waqf, where will he go apart from the courts."

He further noted that Waqf Board is a statutory body and not a Muslim community's exclusive domain.

"Someone said that this Bill will not be accepted by Muslims, what threats are these? The Parliament's law has to be accepted by all," said Shah. On being taunted on West Bengal polls, he added that, "I will come to Bengal and say that we will win more seats."

Giving details about the property under the Waqf, the Home Minister said, "From 1913 to 2013, 18 lakh acre land was under Waqf control, and it increased to 21 lakh acre by 2025 and they are saying it is not being misused."

He said, "Between 2001-12, Waqf properties worth Rs two lakh crore were transferred to private institutions on a 100-year lease. The High Court in Bengaluru had to intervene and stop the confiscation of 602 acres of land. This money belongs to the poor Muslims of the country, it is not for the rich to steal."

Giving more details over the Bill in Lok Sabha, the Home Minister said, "No land can be made Waqf property by mere declaration. Lands of ASI, governments, tribal communities, private citizens will be protected by the law." He said that after the passage of the Bill, all Muslim communities be it Shia, Pasmanda, Ahmadiya, Bohris can register trusts, do not need to go via Waqf."



President Murmu to pay state visits to Portugal, Slovakia

President Droupadi Murmu will embark on State Visits to Portugal and Slovakia from April 7-10, which will help further strengthen and broaden India's bilateral ties to both European nations. President Murmu will visit Portugal from April 7-8 at the invitation of President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa. The visit is taking place after a gap of 27 years, and comes as India and Portugal are celebrating 50 years of re-establishment of diplomatic relations. The last State Visit took place in 1998 when President K. R. Narayanan visited Portugal, a statement said.

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CJI highlights India's Constitutional connection ...



Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna on Wednesday welcomed Supreme Court of Ireland Judge Justice Gerard Hogan to the Indian judiciary, acknowledging his esteemed contributions to legal scholarship."I have the pleasure to announce that a judge of the Supreme Court of Ireland, Justice Gerard Hogan, is with us.

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Duffy grabs top spot in ICC Men's T20I Bowling Rankings



New Zealand seam bowler Jacob Duffy has grabbed the top spot in the ICC Men's T20I Bowling Rankings after playing a useful part in his team's comprehensive victory in the last match against Pakistan in Wellington for a 4-1 series verdict.

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BJP policies and intentions "flawed" : Akhilesh on Waqf ...



Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav strongly criticised the BJP in the Lok Sabha over the Waqf Amendment Bill, accusing the ruling party of having neither the right policies nor the right intentions.

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On the occasion of Vaishya Ekta Diwas, a charitable initiative and tribute program in the old age home



(Standard Post Bureau)

Thane, April 2 : On the auspicious occasion of the death anniversary of Shri Ramdas Agarwal Bhaisahab, the founder president and guide of the International Vaishya Mahasammelan and the Vaishya Ekta Diwas, all the elderly people were met by visiting Rasayani Rajashraya Old Age Home and Sewangan Old Age Home in Pen in Raigad district (Khopoli, Karjat, Pen, Panvel). Welfare discussions were held with them, and blankets and fruits were distributed to them. On this occasion, the President of the International Vaishya Federation Raigad, Shri Kailash Pote, Women



President Smt. Harshala Tamboli and all the members paid emotional tribute to late Ramdasji Agarwal Bhaisahab. During the program,

Ramdasji Bhaisaheb had established the International Vaishya Maha Sammelan to unite various Vaishya communities across the world and empower the society.

In the musical program, guitar player Shri Pritesh Chaudhary mesmerized everyone with his songs. The elderly were very happy to hear the songs and became happy while dancing.

Present in the program were International Vaishya Federation Raigad Secretary Mr. Subhash Tamboli, Treasurer Mr. Sunil Bhopatrao, Executive Members Mr. Yogesh Tamboli, Mr. Vivek Angre, Mr. Suryakant Gupta, Mr. Rajendra Chaudhari, Mr. Prakash Manore, Mr. Rajan Chaudhari, Mr. Uday Manore, Members Mr. Sachin Jhinje, Mr. Vijay Tamboli, Mr. Naresh Tamboli, Mr. Shivsevak Gupta, Mrs. Seema Tamboli, Mrs. Shriya Vivek Angre, Mr. Mayur Manore, Mr. Ankesh Manore, Mr. Darpan Gupta and all the dignitaries who helped in the program.

GM's Safety Award for Staff of Solapur Division of Central Railway



(Standard Post Bureau)

Solapur, April 2 : General Manager, Central Railway Mr Dharam Veer Meena felicitated 1 Central Railway staff from Solapur Division with Safety Award in a function held at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, Mumbai on 02.04.2025.

The award was given in appreciation of his alertness during duty, his contribution in averting untoward incidents and ensuring safety in train operations during the previous months. The award consists of a medal,

commendation certificate, a citation of exemplary safety work and cash of Rs 2000/.

Mr Samadhan Prabhu, Electric Signal Maintainer, Signal & Telecommunication, Kurduvadi on 07.03.2025, while checking the track down, he noticed a weld fracture. He informed all concerned. Due to his alertness, a possible accident was averted.

The General Manager in his address congratulated the awardees and complimented them for their alertness and dedication towards their duties. He

said that such acts of alertness and bravery will motivate others to sincerely work towards the safety of passengers and avert loss of freight and railway property. Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) of Solapur Division, Dr. Sujeet Mishra appreciated the award winning employees.

Additional General Manager Shri Prateek Goswami, Principal Chief Safety Officer Shri Chandra Kishore Prasad, other Principal Heads of Departments and Senior Officers of Central Railway were present on the occasion.

Farmers in UP can sell their crops from home until June 30

Lucknow, April 2 (UNI) : In a relief for farmers in Uttar Pradesh as they can now sell their pulses and oil seeds directly to the government from their homes under the Price Support Scheme (PSS), official sources said here on Wednesday.

Sources said that the Yogi government's initiative, which runs from April 2 to June 30, allows

farmers to sell their produce at the Minimum Support Price (MSP) without the hassle of middlemen or market fluctuations.

Sources said that the scheme aims to ensure fair pricing and boost farmers' income, providing them with a seamless and transparent selling process. By taking advantage of this opportunity, farmers can secure better returns for

their crops. "Under the PSS, different districts in UP have been assigned to two key agencies for crop procurement, including NAFED and NCCF.

State Head of NAFED Rohit Jaiman said that farmers will receive payments directly into their Aadhaar-linked bank accounts within three working days after selling their crops.

President Murmu to pay state visits to Portugal, Slovakia

New Delhi, April 2 (UNI) : President Droupadi Murmu will embark on State Visits to Portugal and Slovakia from April 7-10, which will help further strengthen and broaden India's bilateral ties to both European nations.

President Murmu will visit Portugal from April 7-8 at the invitation of President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa. The visit is taking place after a gap of 27 years, and comes as India and Portugal are celebrating 50 years of re-establishment of diplomatic relations. The last State Visit took place in 1998 when President K. R. Narayanan visited Portugal, a statement said.

President Murmu will meet and hold delegation level talks with her counterpart, President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa. She will also meet the Prime Minister Luis Montenegro and the President of the National Assembly (Parliament), Jose Pedro Aguiar-Branco. India and Portugal share historic and friendly bilateral ties which have evolved over the years into a modern, multifaceted, and dynamic partnership, characterised by robust growth and expansion across several areas of cooperation. The visit will provide further impetus and renewed momentum to India's growing relations with Portugal.

She will visit Slovakia from April 9-10 (RPT) 9-10, at the invitation of the President of Slovakia Peter Pellegrini. This will be the first visit by the President of India to Slovakia in 29 years.

Railways to Run 60 Trips of Summer Special Trains between Kalaburagi-Bengaluru

(Standard Post Bureau)

Solapur, April 2 : On passengers' demand Indian Railways will run 60 summer special train services between Kalaburagi-Bengaluru to clear the extra rush of passengers during summer vacations.

These special trains will halt at 2 stations of Solapur Division of Central Railway, namely: Kalaburagi and Shahabad.

Kalaburagi-SMVT Bengaluru Tri-Weekly Summer Specials (60 trips).

- Train No 06519 Special will depart SMVT Bengaluru at 21:15 hrs every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 04.04.2025 till 15.06.2025 and will arrive Kalaburagi at 07:40 hrs next day. (30 trips)

- Train No 06520 Special will depart Kalaburagi at 09:35 hrs every Saturday, Sunday and Monday from 05.04.2025 till 16.06.2025

and will arrive SMVT Bengaluru at 20:00 hrs same day. (30 trips)

Halts: Shahabad, Yadgir, Krishna, Raichur, Mantralayam Road, Adoni, Guntakal, Anantapur, Dharmavaram and Yelahanka.

Composition: 1 AC-II Tier, 1 AC-III Tier, 11 Sleeper Class, 4 General Second Class and 2 Luggage cum Guard's Brake Vans. (19 Coaches)

Reservation: Reservations for special train nos. 06519/06520 on special charges will be available at all computerised reservation centres and on website www.ircet.co.in. Bookings for unreserved coaches can be done through the UTS system.

For detailed timings and halts of these Special Trains, please visit www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or download NTES App.

Controversial Waqf Amendment Bill introduced in LS amid pandemonium

New Delhi, April 2 (UNI) : Amid uproar, Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Wednesday introduced the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, as reported by Joint Committee and The Mussalman Waqf (Repeal) Bill, 2024' in the Lok Sabha and stated that the Bill does not aim to snatch land and mosques and religious places of the minority community.

He said the Bill is in the interest of the Muslim children and women. While moving the Bill, Opposition members resorted to sloganeering and tried to disrupt the proceedings of the House.

Rijiju rebuffed Congress Deputy Leader Gaurav

Gogoi's allegation that this Bill is aimed at defaming , disfranchising the minorities and dividing the country.

The aim of the Bill is to provide better management of Waqf property, the Minister said.

He said the amendments in the Bill were required to make change in the legislation, which were passed during the UPA government.

Targeting the Congress, the Minister said that 123 properties were handed over to Waqf Board by the previous government.

"If we would have not introduced this amendment, even the Parliament building could have been

claimed as Waqf property," he said.

Giving details about the provisions of the Bill, Rijiju said that in the Waqf council, there would be upto four non-Muslim members besides two women. The role of Waqf Board is to supervise the management of Waqf properties by Mutawallis, adding that Waqf board in no way will manage these properties.

Rijiju said that the government wants "a secular and an inclusive Waqf Board" with non-Muslim members as well as women. The Bill allows up to four non-Muslim experts in the Central Waqf Council, besides two women members.

MMRDA is responsible for the repair of the Kavadas pumping station

(Standard Post Bureau)

Kalyan/Vasai/Palghar . April 2 :MMRDA (Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority), which supplies water to Vasai-Virar Municipal Corporation's Water Supply Department, has been given water supply at Surya Project and high-voltage power connection to the pumping station at Kavadas by Mahavitaran. Since MMRDA is a high-voltage consumer, Mahavitaran is responsible for the smooth supply of power up to its meter. Whereas MMRDA is entirely responsible for the transformer after the meter and the power supply beyond it. The power supply up to the meter of MMRDA is being provided smoothly by Mahavitaran and the responsibility of repairing the faulty

transformer lies with MMRDA. While Mahavitaran has no connection with the repair of this transformer, the Vasai-Virar Municipal Corporation's Water Supply Department has clarified that the leaflet issued for publicity is misleading."

Mahavitaran has provided a 33/6.6 KV power connection to MMRDA's pumping station at Kavadas in March 2023. On March 25, the MMRDA transformer at Kavadas malfunctioned. Since MMRDA is a high-voltage consumer, the responsibility for repairing this transformer lies with MMRDA. Accordingly, they repaired the relevant transformer and made it operational on the evening of March 30. However, the

next day, on the evening of March 31, this transformer malfunctioned again. It is MMRDA's responsibility to repair the malfunction in the transformer and make it operational again. Meanwhile, Mahavitaran's power supply is continuing smoothly up to the MMRDA transformer at Kavadas.

Despite this fact, the Vasai-Virar Municipal Corporation's water supply department issued a press note on April 1, misleading people by mentioning Mahavitaran when it has no connection. Mahavitaran is providing an explanation that mahavitaran has no connection with the repair of the faulty MMRDA crane at Kavadas and the disruption to the water supply of Vasai-Virar city.

BIMSTEC Summit to call for setting up of Centre of Disaster Management in India after Myanmar quake

Bangkok/New Delhi, April 2 (UNI) : The upcoming BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok, Thailand, on April 4 will see the leaders, including PM Modi, adopting a joint statement calling for the early establishment in India of a BIMSTEC Centre of Excellence in Disaster Management, in the wake of the massive earthquake in Myanmar.

This was among the issues decided at the 25th Meeting of Senior Officials' of the BIMSTEC nations held in Bangkok today, ahead of the Summit meeting on April 4 that will see the participation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Secretary (East) P. Kumaran participated in the meeting. The Meeting discussed the progress in the identified sectors of cooperation and the preparation of the 20th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers to be held tomorrow, and the 6th BIMSTEC Summit scheduled on April 4.

The key outcomes of the 25th Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical

and Economic Cooperation are: Finalization of the Draft Declaration of 6th BIMSTEC Summit, outlining vision, decisions and directives of the Leaders, to be adopted at the Summit;

Finalization of the Draft Report of 20th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting, which the Foreign Ministers will consider and adopt at the 20th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting; Consideration of the Report of Eminent Persons Group on the Future Direction of BIMSTEC, which includes recommendations to reform and revitalize BIMSTEC. The Report will be reviewed by the 20th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting and BIMSTEC Leaders at the Summit; Consideration of the Reports of the Meetings held since the 24th Session of BIMSTEC SOM, including the meetings of the BIMSTEC Permanent Working Committee;

Consideration of the Report of Panel of Auditors for Financial Year (2014-2015); Consideration of the Draft Concept Note on BIMSTEC Centre of Excellence on Tropical Medicine, which will serve

as a framework for establishing the BIMSTEC Centre for Excellence on Tropical Medicine in Bangkok, Thailand; and

Consideration of the draft Joint Statement by the BIMSTEC Leaders on the Impact of the Earthquake in Myanmar and Thailand on 28 March 2025, underscoring early establishment of BIMSTEC Centre of Excellence in Disaster Management in India. The draft Joint Statement will be considered by the 25th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting and adopted at the Summit. The BIMSTEC SOM is the key consultative and decision-making mechanism and it comprises Foreign Secretaries /Secretaries / appropriate Senior Officials of the member States. The Leaders of the Delegations of the member States expressed their deep appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand for successfully hosting the 25th SOM, paving the way for the upcoming 20th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting and the 6th BIMSTEC Summit.

Civil society and academics protest destruction of Kancha Gachibowli urban forest

Hyderabad, April 2 (UNI) : Eminent intellectuals, professors and representatives of civil society condemned the ongoing destruction of the Kancha Gachibowli urban forest, which has long been an integral part of the Hyderabad Central University (HCU) campus.

Talking to the media here on Wednesday, they said that despite appeals from environmental groups and university representatives, the government has continued its bulldozing activities, disregarding concerns about ecological damage and legal violations.

Speakers at the event included Prof G Haragopal, Prof D Narasimha Reddy, Kirankumar Vissa, Arun Vasireddy, Shivani from Save City Forests, and John Michael from NAPM Urban Struggles Forum.

They criticised the government's refusal to halt destruction despite a detailed representation submitted to authorities yesterday. They emphasised that while the legal ownership of the land is debated, the critical issue remains the irreversible environmental loss caused by the deforestation of a

biodiversity-rich area.

The civil society delegation, which met Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka and other ministers, had urged an immediate halt to the bulldozing. However, as the destruction continued unabated, speakers condemned the government's disregard for environmental laws, pointing out violations of the Environmental Protection Act, Wildlife Protection Act, WALTA Act, and Supreme Court rulings on forest conservation.

They highlighted that Kancha Gachibowli is home to 233 bird species, 72 tree species, and endangered wildlife, including the spotted deer, and plays a crucial role in maintaining the city's water system and air quality.

Public opposition to the deforestation is mounting, with an online petition by the Save City Forests group garnering over 1.42 lakh signatures, including 71,340 signatures just today. Environmentalists and citizens expressed outrage at the state government's proposal to develop the forest into an IT hub, warning of severe ecological and climatic consequences.

Punjab SC Commission directs police to ensure security of Ambedkar's statues

Chandigarh, April 2 (UNI) : Punjab State Scheduled Castes Commission (SSCC) Chairman Jasvir Singh Garhi on Wednesday wrote to the state police chief to ensure the security of Baba Sahib Ambedkar's statues in the state.

Garhi stated that anti-national slogans were written on the statue of Ambedkar in Nangal village of Phillaur tehsil, for which Gurpatwant Singh Pannu has taken responsibility by releasing a video.

In view of this, a case of sedition should be registered and a Red Corner Notice issued against Pannu who must be brought to India through the country's central agencies. Appropriate legal action must be taken against him, the letter said. He also demanded the state police to instal CCTV cameras for ensuring the security of Ambedkar's statues at various places in the state so that no anti-social element can commit such an incident in the future.

HC halts work on ...

(Contd from page 1) been prevailing there. Appearing on behalf of the state government, Advocate General Sudershan Reddy informed the court that the land was allotted to the IMG Academy in 2004 and since the company did not utilise the land as per the agreement, the then government cancelled the allotment.

The Advocate General argued that it's not forest land, noting that high-rise buildings were constructed on HCU lands adjacent to this land, and they also have four helipads. He stated that several areas in Hyderabad have snakes, peacocks, and trees, and if one goes by the argument of the petitioners, these areas also have to be declared forests.

After hearing arguments from both sides, the division bench of the High Court headed by

Acting Chief Justice Sujoy Paul directed that the ongoing works be stopped till Thursday.

Vata Foundation, an NGO working for environmental conservation, sought deemed forest status to the land and demanded that it be declared as a national park under Section 35 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act.

The petitioner's counsel also submitted to the court that the HCU campus had all the features of biodiversity hotspots and was ecologically sensitive as recognised by the Supreme Court for conferment of deemed forest status in the Godavarma case.

The university students launched a protest recently after the TGIIC began the work to clear the land of trees and rocks for its auction for the development of IT parks.



In this image posted by @INCIndia via X, LoP in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi during the Congress Parliamentary Party meeting, at Parliament House in New Delhi on Wednesday.

Thunderstorms with lightning and gusty winds likely in

Telangana over the next four days: Met

Hyderabad, April 2 (UNI) : The Meteorological Centre has forecasted thunderstorms accompanied by lightning and gusty winds with speeds ranging from 40-50 kmph at isolated places in Telangana over the next four days. According to the daily weather report issued on Wednesday, light to moderate rain or thundershowers are also likely at isolated places in the state during this period and on April 8. However, dry weather is expected to prevail on April 6 and 7.

Air Force grants approval for Adilabad airport: Komatireddy Venkat Reddy

Hyderabad, April 2 (UNI) : Telangana Roads, Buildings, and Cinematography Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy announced that the Indian Air Force (IAF) has approved the establishment of a civil airport in Adilabad.

He extended his best wishes to the people of Adilabad and Telangana, highlighting that this approval follows the recent green signal for Mamunur Airport. He credited the Telangana government's relentless efforts for securing permissions for two airports within six months, an official statement said on Wednesday.

Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy revealed that the IAF, through an official letter (Letter No.: 5608/Airports/2024, Date:

18.12.2024), has expressed its willingness to facilitate the development of Adilabad Airport for civil aviation services.

The letter also indicates the possibility of setting up an Air Force training center at the site in the future. He emphasised that the IAF has granted the necessary permissions to commence civil aviation operations in the region. The Minister explained that the IAF has suggested developing Adilabad Airport as a joint user airfield, accommodating both civil and Air Force aircraft movements. Infrastructure enhancements, including runway reconstruction, a civil terminal, and the development of an aircraft apron for parking and operational needs, have been recommended. The Airports Authority of India

(AAI) has been asked to provide the required land for these developments.

Additionally, the AAI has requested the IAF to submit detailed proposals to secure all necessary permissions for the airport. Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy confirmed that officials are reviewing the next steps and will compile a comprehensive report to be submitted to the Central government and relevant departments soon. Expressing gratitude, Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu, and Telangana Chief Minister Eenumula Revanth Reddy for their support in obtaining approvals for both Mamunur and Adilabad airports.

Uber launches Uber for Teens

Hyderabad, April 2 (UNI) : Uber has introduced 'Uber for Teens,' a dedicated service aimed at providing safe and reliable transportation for teenagers aged 13 to 17 years. The service is now operational in 37 cities across India, including Hyderabad, Delhi NCR,

Mumbai, Bangalore, Pune, Chennai, and Kolkata, a company statement said on Wednesday. Uber for Teens is designed to offer greater independence to teenagers while ensuring parental supervision and safety.

The service allows parents to set up and monitor their teen's rides through a dedicated account.

Key safety features include GPS tracking, real-time ride monitoring, and an in-app emergency button. Parents receive instant ride notifications and detailed ride summaries, providing them with an added layer of security and assurance.

A recent Uber survey highlighted the growing need for reliable transportation solutions for teenagers. According to the findings, 92 per cent of

parents reported challenges in securing dependable transport for their teens, while 72 per cent identified safety as their primary concern.

Additionally, 93 per cent of parents expressed a willingness to use a dedicated ridesharing service for their teens, with 64 per cent stating they would use it regularly.

To use Uber for Teens, parents or guardians with a verified Uber account can invite their teen to join the service. The teen then sets up their account, adding their parent as a guardian.

Samvardhan) Adhiniyam. The state Forest Department has also been asked to ensure that there is no violation of any other Acts or orders of the courts and tribunals.

The Telangana High Court on Wednesday ordered a halt to the felling of trees and other works on the land located near Hyderabad Central University (HCU) till Thursday.

The court gave the interim order while hearing the Public Interest Litigations filed by HCU students and the Vata Foundation.

Student groups alleged that even after the High Court order, bulldozers were seen in action, felling

BC associations on dharna at Jantar Mantar, demanding 42 pc reservation

Hyderabad/New Delhi, April 2 (UNI) : Backward Class (BC) groups, under the auspices of the Backward Class Welfare Association National Committee, began their dharna at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi, on Wednesday, demanding that the Centre implement 42 per cent reservation by including it in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution.

It is known that the Telangana Assembly has passed the BC Bill, providing 42% reservation for BCs in education, employment, and politics.

The BC groups have invited all parties, including the Congress, to join the dharna.

Telangana Ministers Konda Surekha, Ponnampalabharathi, TPCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud,

Government Whip Adi Srinivas, Senior Congress leader V Hanumantha Rao, and others participated in the protest.

AIMIM President Asaduddin Owaisi, MPs Kanimozhi, Supriya Sule, and other leaders also attended the protest to express their solidarity.

AICC leader Rahul Gandhi, Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, and others are also expected to participate in the dharna.

BDL achieves record turnover of Rs 3,300 cr in FY 2024-25

Hyderabad, April 2 (UNI) : Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) has recorded its highest-ever turnover of over Rs 3,300 crore (Provisional & Unaudited) for the financial year 2024-25, marking a remarkable 40 per cent growth compared to the previous year's turnover of Rs 2,369 crore.

A significant highlight of this achievement is BDL's highest-ever export turnover of Rs 1,200 crore, a staggering 640 per cent increase from the previous year's export revenue of Rs

161 crore. This milestone underscores BDL's expanding footprint in global defense markets.

During FY 2024-25, the company secured orders worth Rs 6,668 crore, further strengthening its position as a leading defense manufacturer. As of April 1, 2025, BDL's order book stands at approximately Rs 22,700 crore (Provisional & Unaudited), reflecting strong business momentum and sustained growth prospects, a BDL statement said on Wednesday.

trees.

HCU students, green activists, and opposition parties have been protesting against the state government's move to clear the land and auction it for the development of IT parks. Accusing the government of destroying the environment, they have demanded an immediate halt to the work.

Students continued their protest on the campus on Wednesday. Teachers and other staff members also joined them in the protest to demand protection of the forested land.

The campus remained tense with repeated scuffles between police and protestors. The police

personnel stopped students and faculty from marching towards the East Campus of the University.

The TGIIC has deployed more than 40 JCBs to clear the area, considered as home to many species of animals and birds, lakes and mushroom rocks.

The students are demanding immediate removal of JCBs from the area and a written assurance that the university will take steps to ensure that the land is registered under the university.

The state government maintains that it is government land and it is utilising it to develop IT parks to provide jobs for youth.

Amid Waqf Bill debate, Mirwaiz says Muslims feel let down

Srinagar, April 2 (UNI) : Amid a raging debate over the Waqf Amendment Bill, Kashmiri separatist leader and Hurriyat Conference chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq Wednesday said that crores of Muslims in India are feeling greatly let down.

Mirwaiz, who also heads the Muttahida Majlis-e-Ulema (MMU), a conglomerate of major religious bodies of Jammu & Kashmir, had met the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill in January highlighting MMU's grave concerns over the proposed amendments. The MMU head told the JPC during their meeting to "engage in meaningful talks with the Muslim community" to address their apprehension and concerns.

"As one watches the ruling party defend the indefensible Waqf Amendment bill in parliament, it is very

unfortunate and disturbing that not even one of the serious concerns and reservations raised by the Muslim organisations including the MMU which I lead before the JPC in New Delhi was addressed by them," Mirwaiz said in a post on X.

"Today crores of Muslims in India like mute spectators are helplessly watching their rights and institutions being blatantly undermined and feel greatly let down," he added.

Several mainstream political parties have opposed the Waqf amendment bill.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY E-Tender Notice No. 45 UBL 2024-25 Dated : 26.03.2025 The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following works.		
Sl.	Name of the Work	Approx. Value
1]	Hubballi Division : Provision of Station master's Rest Room of 4 mtr x 5 mtr with wash room facility at Tavargatti, Shivthan, Doodhsagar, Caranzol, Sonalium, Tadval, Hombal, Vyasa Colony, Kambarganvi, Harlapur, Sompur Road, Bannikoppa.	[Rs. 1,94,95,621/-
2]	Hubballi Division : Provision of Station master's Rest Room of 4 mtr x 5 mtr with wash room facility at Tavargatti, Shivthan, Doodhsagar, Caranzol, Sonalium, Tadval, Hombal, Vyasa Colony, Kambarganvi, Harlapur, Sompur Road, Bannikoppa.	[Rs. 1,32,31,434/-
3]	Hubballi Division : Supply of Ballast at Hombal depot in Sr. DEN/Central/UBL Jurisdiction. (Note Ballast Certificate)	[Rs. 4,81,02,000/-
4]	Hubballi Division : Navalur Yard : Proposed Extension of short shunting neck for 80m at Navalur Yard.	[Rs. 34,18,575/-
Last date for submission of bids: Up to 11:00 Hrs on 24-04-2025		
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in		
Senior Divisional Engineer/Co-ordination		
PUB/82/AS/PRB/SWR/2024-25		
Hubballi		
South Western Railway - SWR		

STANDARD POST

Air pollution exposure in childhood may affect brain's thinking, controlling capacity

Children exposed to higher levels of air pollution in early and mid-childhood may have weaker connections between key brain regions that can highly impact their thinking and controlling capacity, according to a study.

The findings, published in Environment International, highlight the potential impact of early exposure to air pollution on brain development.

The research led by the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal) in Spain showed reduced functional connectivity within and between certain cortical and subcortical brain networks in kids with increased exposure to air pollution.

These networks are systems of interconnected brain structures that work together to perform different cognitive functions, such as thinking, perceiving, and controlling movement, said the team.

"These associations persist throughout adolescence, which may indicate persistent disruptions in the normal development of brain networks due to pollution exposure. This could affect emotional processing and cognitive functions," said Monica Guxens, ICREA researcher at ISGlobal.

The study analysed data from 3,626 children exposed to air pollution at the participants' residences, including particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10), nitrogen dioxide (NO2), and nitrogen oxides (NOX).

The results show that greater exposure to air pollution from birth to three years old is associated with lower connectivity between the amygdala and the cortical networks involved in attention, somatomotor function -- which coordinates body movements -- and auditory function.

Additionally, higher exposure to PM10 particles in the year before the neuroimaging assessment was associated with lower functional connectivity between the salience and medial-parietal networks -- responsible for detecting stimuli in the environment and for introspection and self-perception.

"However, more research is needed to confirm these findings and to understand their exact impact on brain development," Guxens said.

On the Fast Track: How Gujarat is Redefining Railway Infrastructure and Development



Pravin Parmar
IRTS (Ret.),
Former Principal Chief
Commercial Manager,
Western Railway

(Standard Post Bureau)
Gujarat has long been distinguished as India's Growth Engine owing to its noteworthy accomplishments in industrial expansion and infrastructural development. By fostering entrepreneurship and manufacturing, the state has built a thriving economy strengthened by a resilient transportation network. This year's Railway Budget reinforces Gujarat's commitment to modernising its railway infrastructure. Significant investments are aimed at enhancing safety, improving passenger experience, and boosting regional economic growth.

The Railway Budget announcement was met with widespread applause and appreciation. The budget stood out with 40% of expenditure allocated to augment the safety on Indian Railways through various projects. According to Railway Minister Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw the record-breaking allocation of Rs. 17,155 crores will be invested in various

ongoing rail projects within the states.

Railway safety remains a keystone of Gujarat's modernisation efforts. Among the most significant measures is the elimination of railway level crossings, replacing them with Road Over Bridges(ROBs) and Road Under Bridges (RUBs). This initiative reduces accidents, promotes seamless vehicular movement, and enhances rail efficiency. Over the past decade, almost 1050 level crossings have been replaced with ROBs/ RUBs. Moreover, all unmanned level crossings over the Broad Gauge network in Gujarat have been eliminated in 2018.

Gujarat state government in collaboration with Railways is working towards making Gujarat completely level-crossing free (Fatak-mukt Gujarat). The state government has approved Rs. 1372.91 crores for the elimination of 83 level crossings by replacing them with ROB/ RUB, of which 11 level crossings have already been replaced with ROB/ RUB and the rest, are at different stages under progress.

This will not only improve the safety of road users but will also eliminate waiting time at level crossing, saving both time and fuel. The state has also made a Joint Venture with the Ministry of Railways i.e. Gujarat Rail Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (G-RIDE) which developed connectivity to Bedi port, gauge conversion of the

Katosan-Becharaji-Ranuj line, and developed a Railway siding to Maruti Suzuki car plant for loading of manufactured cars to be transported to various parts of the country and ports for export.

In addition, the deployment of the indigenously developed Kavach technology is being expedited over 1800 route kilometres (RKM). Such initiatives reflect a comprehensive approach to railway safety.

Beyond safety, the railway Infrastructure in Gujarat is undergoing a transformation with major infrastructure investments aimed at bolstering both passenger and freight connectivity. Currently, 87 stations in Gujarat are undergoing a revamp to modernise station facilities and improve amenities and accessibility. All major ports, like Kandala, Mundra, Dahej, Hajira, Sikka, Bedi, etc, are already connected with railways and the plan to connect Jakhau port is also under process. To boost the freight traffic 8 Private freight terminals (PFTs) and 10 Gatishakti Cargo Terminals(GSTs) have already been established in the state and a few more are expected to be developed. Recently, an exclusive Railways container terminal has been opened at Unjha, facilitating the seamless movement of agricultural products to different parts of the country, and boosting export.

Mission Raftaar and Western Dedicated

Corridor (WDFC) are two notable projects that underscore the commitment to speed and efficiency for both passengers and freight transportation. Mission Raftaar's aim to increase train speed on high-density corridors such as Mumbai – Surat - Vadodara – Delhi and Mumbai – Vadodara – Ahmedabad routes. Western Dedicated Freight Corridor(WDFC) is an ambitious project aimed at facilitating dedicated tracks for swift and efficient transportation of goods to alleviate congestion on passenger routes. A stretch of 565 km of WDFC (38% of the total length) runs through Gujarat and is now fully operational.

Integral to this vision of modern railway infrastructure is, the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train project, spearheaded by the National High-Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL). The bullet train promises to redefine high-speed travel in India, significantly reducing travel time and transforming the regional transportation landscape. As work progresses rapidly on this ambitious project, Gujarat is solidifying its reputation as a hub for cutting-edge railway infrastructure

Ultimately, the success of these advances lies in their impact on passengers. With rapid urbanisation shifting travel dynamics, railway innovations must go beyond merely expanding tracks and stations - it

must prioritise efficient integrated transport solutions. The state's Multi-Modal Transport Hubs (MMTHs) is one such initiative aimed at ensuring seamless connectivity between different modes of transportation. Two prominent projects, Sabarmati MMTH and Surat MMTH, are set to revolutionise passenger movement by integrating rail, metro, bullet train, and bus services within a single facility. Features like digital ticketing, modern waiting lounges and retail spaces will significantly enhance the passenger experience. With these initiatives, Gujarat is on its way to becoming a benchmark for excellence in public transport in India.

The presence of four Vande Bharat trains in the state, including two serving the high-demand Mumbai - Gandhinagar and Mumbai – Ahmedabad sectors, highlights the efforts to provide high-speed premium travel thus catering to evolving passenger demands. The introduction of Namo Bharat Rapid Rail between Ahmedabad and Bhuj is a step towards boosting tourism by offering fast and comfortable travel to destinations like Rann of Kutch.

This indigenously manufactured train comprises only unreserved coaches and is fully air-conditioned as well as offers a myriad of modern passenger amenities.

Beyond Passenger convenience, investment

in the modernisation of railway infrastructure generates employment opportunities, stimulates industrial growth, and facilitates smoother trade operations. The efficiency of goods movement is greatly enhanced by improved railway connectivity - thus reducing costs and further enhancing Gujarat's appeal as a prime destination for businesses and investors. Additionally, tourism is also expected to flourish with a seamless integrated transportation infrastructure. Modernised railway stations, high-speed connectivity and streamlined travel options are poised to make Gujarat a preferred destination for both business and leisure travel, attracting domestic and international entities alike.

Gujarat's railway transformation is a visionary jump into the future of seamless integrated transportation. By focusing on three key areas - safety, cutting-edge infrastructure and passenger experience, the state is setting a benchmark for railway modernisation in India. As these ambitious projects take shape, Gujarat is proving that strategic investments in transportation can lead to broader economic prosperity, reinforcing its position as a leader in India's infrastructural evolution. It is not just about railways but about the growth where connectivity that unleashes infinite possibilities.

Incentive Award ceremony honors outstanding govt school students amidst challenges of accessibility

Imphal, April 2 (Waari Singbul Network) : The Department of Education (Schools), Manipur, organized the Awards Ceremony for the "Incentive to Government School Students Who Excel in High School Leaving Certificate Examination and Higher Secondary Examination" for the academic year 2024-25. The event, which celebrated academic excellence among government school students, was held at the Palace Auditorium of the Manipur State Film Development Society (MSFDS).

Chief Secretary of Manipur, Shri Prashant Kumar Singh, IAS, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Reflecting on his own experiences attending school award ceremonies, he highlighted the immense pride and joy that parents feel when their children succeed. He elaborated on the state's incentive scheme, introduced in 2018, which provides financial support to top-performing students."At the state level, students securing the first to fourth positions receive Rs. 5,00,000, Rs. 4,00,000, Rs. 3,00,000, and Rs. 1,00,000, respectively. At the district level, students who secure at least 70% marks are awarded Rs. 50,000 for the



first position and Rs. 25,000 for the second position.

This year's ceremony carried additional significance due to the ongoing ethnic unrest between the Kuki-Zo and Meitei communities, which has led to displacement and restricted movement in several districts. Despite the Union Home Minister's directive to ensure free movement on all highways, districts such as Churachandpur, Kangpokpi, and Tengnoupal remain inaccessible due to enforced no-free-movement zones. To ensure that students from these areas were not excluded, the

incentive program was conducted in a hybrid format, allowing 11 awardees from these districts to participate virtually."

The Chief Secretary acknowledged the resilience of these students who, despite adversity, managed to excel academically. He praised the dedication and perseverance of the 58 awardees, particularly the 45 students from schools under the School Fagathansi Mission, a government initiative aimed at enhancing public education. He emphasized that their achievements reflect the progress being

made in government schools and demonstrate that students from all backgrounds are striving for academic excellence. He also commended teachers and education officials for their guidance and commitment to shaping future leaders. Encouraging students to cultivate curiosity by asking "how" and "why," he assured that the government remains committed to improving the education system and elevating government schools to the level of private institutions."

Shri N. Praveen Singh, IAS, Secretary (Education/ S), Government of Manipur, reiterated that the cash

incentive scheme was launched in 2018 to support academically outstanding students from government schools. With the introduction of a grading system in the High School Leaving Certificate Examination (HSLCE) from 2024, the incentive will now be awarded exclusively to Class 12 students. Recognizing that most government school students come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, he emphasized that the scheme aims to provide financial assistance and encourage academic excellence.

Shri Ng. Bhogendra Meitei, MCS, Director of Education (S), Manipur, addressed the challenges faced by government schools, noting that out of 1,921 schools, only 51.96% of the required teaching staff is in place. He highlighted that 382 schools operate with a single teacher, despite having enrollments of 10 to 20 students.

Of these, 316 fall under the Education (Schools) Department, 26 under Tribal Affairs & Hills, and 40 are government-aided institutions. He also acknowledged the role of the Samagra Shiksha initiative in supporting 2,902 schools across the state.

CJI highlights India's Constitutional connection with Ireland

New Delhi, April 2 (UNI) : Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna on Wednesday welcomed Supreme Court of Ireland Judge Justice Gerard Hogan to the Indian judiciary, acknowledging his esteemed contributions to legal scholarship.

"I have the pleasure to announce that a judge of the Supreme Court of Ireland, Justice Gerard Hogan, is with us. Earlier, he was with the Court of Appeals and was also the Advocate General for the European Court of Appeals.

He has authored judgments on the Right to Life and Safe Harbour principles," said the CJI during the court proceedings.

Highlighting the deep-rooted legal connections between India and Ireland, CJI Khanna remarked, "Ireland and India share a historical connection over Directive Principles of State Policy.

Additionally, the principle that India is a union of states was derived from the Irish Constitution. Article 3 of the Indian Constitution bears similarities to Article 5 of the Irish Constitution."

UN rejects Israel's claim Gaza has 'enough food' as ridiculous

United Nations, April 2 (UNI) : The United Nations on Tuesday dismissed Israel's claim that Gaza has a sufficient amount of food, stocked during the now-ended ceasefire.

COGAT, the Israeli military agency in charged of aid deliveries to Gaza, said earlier in the day that "there is enough food for a long period of time, if Hamas lets the civilians have it."

"Ridiculous. We are at the tail end of our supplies," UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric told reporters, when asked about the UN's reaction.

Dujarric added the bakeries have not been closed "for fun," as the core items are missing.

On April 1, the World Food Programme announced that it had run out of flour in its warehouses, and its bakeries can no longer operate unless Israel reopens the crossings and allows supplies in.

Gas leak causes Uzbekistan's mosque blast: prosecutor's office

Tashkent, April 2 (UNI) : The prosecutor's office of Uzbekistan's Andijan region said gas leak is the cause of an explosion at a local mosque earlier this week, local media reported Tuesday.

The blast was caused by a natural gas leak in the basement of the mosque, and a short circuit occurred when the electricity was turned on.

Three people were killed and 10 others injured in the mosque blast in Andijan region in eastern Uzbekistan on Monday, according to the country's Ministry of Emergency Situations.

Mongolia's measles cases surpass 200

Ulan Bator, April 2 (UNI) : The total number of measles cases in Mongolia has increased to 220, the country's National Center for Communicable Diseases (NCCD) said Wednesday.

The majority of new measles infections were among school-age children who have had only one shot of the measles vaccine, the NCCD said in a statement.

The NCCD advised parents to protect their children from a potentially severe disease by getting them two doses of the measles vaccine.

Measles is a highly contagious viral disease transmitted by respiratory droplets and direct contact.

Common complications include fever, dry cough, runny nose, sore throat and inflamed eyes. The disease can be prevented by immunization.

US tourist arrested after bringing gun into Japan

Tokyo, April 2 (UNI) : The Japanese police have arrested a tourist from the United States after he reported that he had accidentally brought a handgun into the country, local media said Wednesday.

The 73-year-old man entered Japan through Kansai Airport in the western Japanese city of Osaka on March 22 after departing the U.S. state of Hawaii and told cruise ship staff that he had a gun in his baggage after boarding a vessel at Kobe Port on March 23, public broadcaster NHK reported.The police arrested the tourist after finding a revolver in his suitcase, citing violation of Japan's firearms control law, the report said.

According to the police, the man told investigators that the gun was for self-defense and he had packed it into his suitcase by mistake and he realized it while staying at a hotel in Osaka.

The man also explained that he threw away bullets at a Kobe Port terminal because he thought possessing both a gun and ammunition would lead to more serious charges, the report said.The police said three bullets were found in a trash can in a restroom at the terminal.

The police believe the man passed through security checks at both the Hawaiian airport and Kansai Airport with the handgun in his suitcase.

Israeli defense minister announces expanded Gaza offensive

Jerusalem, April 2 (UNI) : Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz on Wednesday announced a major expansion of the military offensive in Gaza, saying troops would seize additional areas in the strip to establish buffer zones.The expansion includes a "broad evacuation of the Gazan population from combat zones," said Katz in a statement.

Israel ended a two-month ceasefire on March 18 and resumed deadly air and ground assaults on the Palestinian enclave. The renewed Israeli attacks have so far killed 1,042 Palestinians and injured 2,542 others, Gaza health authorities said Tuesday, adding the death toll in the enclave since the war began in October 2023 has risen to 50,399, with 114,583 injured.

Refugees from Mt. Lewotobi eruption discover WWII grenades, bullets in Indonesia

Jakarta, April 2 (UNI) : Refugees from the eruption of Mount Lewotobi Laki-laki in East Flores regency, East Nusa Tenggara province, Indonesia, discovered 393 bullets and 16 active grenades, believed to be relics from World War II (WWII), while digging a septic tank on Tuesday.Authorities swiftly responded to the discovery, confirming that the grenades remain active. Iptu Anwar Sanusi, head of Public Relations of the East Flores Police, on Wednesday said that the grenades were temporarily stored in a safe location, away from residential areas.

The explosive materials remain under tight security as authorities await the arrival of a bomb disposal team from the provincial police in Kupang.

Myanmar to allocate some 240 mln USD for earthquake relief



Yangon, April 2 (UNI) : Myanmar's government will allocate 500 billion kyats (about 238.09 million U.S. dollars) for earthquake relief and rehabilitation efforts, State Administration Council (SAC) Chairman Min Aung Hlaing said.

The Myanmar leader made the statement at a cash donation ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday, where well-wishers donated 104.44 billion kyats (49.71 million dollars) in

cash and non-cash items worth 12.4 billion kyats (5.9 million dollars), state-owned daily The Global New Light of Myanmar reported.

The contributions were received by the chairman of the national disaster management committee, the SAC vice chairman, council members, and other relevant officials, it added.

Following a 7.9-magnitude earthquake that struck Myanmar Friday, Min Aung Hlaing called for

international assistance. In response, rescue teams, medics and nurses from 16 countries and regions have arrived in Myanmar with humanitarian aid and medical supplies as of March 31, it said.

Among the 18 powerful earthquakes that have struck Myanmar, the 7.9-magnitude quake was the second strongest, following an 8.0-magnitude earthquake that hit the country in 1912, according to the local daily Myanma Alinn.

SKorea's parliament reports impeachment motion against ex-acting president

Seoul, April 2 (UNI) : South Korea's parliament on Wednesday reported an impeachment motion against former acting President Choi Sang-mok, deputy prime minister for economic affairs, over his refusal to appoint a justice of the constitutional court during his acting presidency.

The motion to impeach Choi was reported during the National Assembly's plenary session after the main opposition Democratic Party and four other minor parties submitted it on March 21.

Following the More than 6,800 literacy courses launched in Afghanistan

Kabul, April 2 (UNI) : The Afghan interim government's Ministry of Education has launched over 6,800 literacy courses throughout the country over the past year, a local media outlet reported Wednesday."A total of 6,819 literacy courses have been created, benefiting 145,305 individuals, and more than 122,000 participants have graduated from these courses," Tolonews quoted the director of illiteracy at the Ministry of Education as saying.

According to the official, 7,200 literacy classes are set to be created, with the aim of educating 180,000 people in the Persian calendar year of 1404.Millions of Afghans have been deprived of education due to poverty and decades of conflicts, particularly in remote and mountainous regions. Meanwhile, due to restrictions set by the Afghan interim government, girls are not allowed to attend classes above grade six, and females are prohibited from attending universities until further notice.

impeachment of both President Yoon Suk-yeol and Prime Minister Han Duck-soo last December, Choi had served as acting president for about three months until March 24 after Han was reinstated as prime minister and acting president.

The impeachment motion against Choi was submitted for four reasons, including Choi's alleged involvement in the impeached President Yoon's botched martial law imposition and his refusal to appoint a constitutional court justice.

The nine-member

constitutional court currently has eight justices as one has yet to be appointed by the acting president.

The constitutional court planned to decide whether to remove Yoon from office on Friday.

Yoon declared an emergency martial law on the night of Dec. 3 last year, but it was revoked by the opposition-led National Assembly hours later.

The motion to impeach Yoon was passed in the parliament on Dec. 14, and the constitutional court held 11 hearings on Yoon's impeachment until Feb. 25.

Brazilian govt supports Senate's tariff reciprocity bill over US tariffs

Rio De Janeiro, April 2 (UNI) : The Brazilian government on Tuesday welcomed the Senate's push to advance the "Reciprocity Bill," which would authorize tariff countermeasures against the United States, but emphasized that its preferred path remains dialogue and economic cooperation.

Speaking to reporters, Brazilian Vice President Geraldo Alckmin, who also serves as the country's minister of development, industry, commerce and services, applauded the Senate's effort to provide a legal framework for trade defense.

"Brazil wants to grow its commerce through reciprocity grounded in competitiveness," he said.

"But I must stress that the way forward is dialogue and economic complementarity. We could even expand into new partnerships," said the vice president.

The Senate's Economic Affairs Committee approved the bill earlier Tuesday with 16 votes in favor and none against. The legislation would allow Brazil to apply reciprocal tariffs and environmental standards in response to foreign trade restrictions. Unless a senator requests a full floor vote, the bill will now proceed directly to the Chamber of Deputies under fast-track consideration.

The committee's approval came just one day before U.S. President Donald Trump is expected to announce a new tariff package that could impact Brazilian exports.

US health department begins mass layoffs, raising concerns about public health

Washington, Apr 2 (UNI) : The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on Tuesday began its mass layoffs, dismissing thousands of employees across various agencies, US media reported.Significant budget cuts to divisions of the HHS, such as the Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Institutes of Health, among others, have raised serious concerns about public health and scientific research.

"The Trump administration laid off thousands of federal health workers on Tuesday in a purge that included senior leaders and top scientists charged with regulating food and drugs, protecting Americans from disease and researching new treatments and cures," The New York Times reported.

The report quoted workers as saying that layoff notices began arriving at 5:00 a.m. local time (1000 GMT), affecting offices responsible for everything from global health to food safety.Staff

had to present their badges at the building entrance and those who had been fired were given a ticket and "told to return home," USA Today reported.

"Infectious disease experts, including those addressing HIV, argued the latest HHS cuts will make the country less safe from infectious and chronic diseases," the report said.

"The FDA as we've known it is finished, with most of the leaders with institutional knowledge and a deep understanding of product development and safety no longer employed," wrote Robert Califf, former two-term commissioner at the Food and Drug Administration, in a post on LinkedIn.

"I believe that history will see this a huge mistake," said Califf.

The HHS announced Thursday its plan to cut about 10,000 full-time employees as part of its "restructuring" effort.Including early retirements and the government's buyout program, the department's full-time workforce will be reduced from 82,000 to 62,000.

Man rescued in Myanmar's Nay Pyi Taw 5 days after earthquake

Yangon, April 2 (UNI) : A 26-year-old hotel staff member was rescued from the rubble of a collapsed hotel building in Myanmar's Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday, five days after the 7.9-magnitude earthquake struck the country, according to the State Administration Council's information team.

Two people were trapped under the debris, and rescue teams from the Myanmar Fire Services Department and Turkey successfully pulled one survivor to safety, the information team said.

The operation at the hotel began at around 3:00 p.m. local time on Tuesday, and the man was rescued by approximately 00:30 a.m. local time on Wednesday, it said.Efforts are ongoing to locate and rescue the remaining trapped individuals, it added.

Bangladesh Chief Advisor Mohd Yunus, PM Modi to meet in Bangkok on April 4: Report

Dhaka, April 2 (UNI) : Bangladesh Interim Government's Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi

will hold a bilateral meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, on April 4, on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC Summit, officials in Dhaka said on Wednesday.

"I can tell you that the meeting will take place," a senior official in Dhaka told UNB without elaborating further.

Meanwhile, New Delhi

also hinted positively about the meeting. "It is expected that they'll meet," a source in New Delhi told UNB.

The interim government said there is a high possibility that the two leaders will hold a meeting on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC Summit.

"We have requested for the meeting officially. We have reasonable grounds to remain hopeful. There is a high possibility to see the meeting," High Representative to the

Chief Advisor Khalilur Rahman told reporters at the Foreign Service Academy.Chief Advisor's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam and Deputy Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad Majumder were also present at the media briefing.This will be their first in-person meeting since the formation of the army-backed interim government led by Yunus on August 8 last year, after the downfall of the Sheikh Hasina regime. The Chief Advisor is scheduled to leave for

Bangkok on April 3 to attend the Summit. The Chief Adviser will also hold bilateral meetings with other BIMSTEC leaders on the sidelines.Earlier, Bangladesh approached India through the diplomatic channel to arrange a meeting between Yunus and Prime Minister Modi on the sidelines of the Summit. Foreign Secretary Md Jashim Uddin recently said the strain in the relations between Bangladesh and India

could be overcome if the meeting is held between Yunus and Modi.

Prime Minister Modi greeted Chief Advisor Yunus and wished the people of Bangladesh on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, seeking stronger friendship between the two countries.

"May the bonds of friendship among our countries grow stronger," PM Modi said in his message shared by chief advisor's press wing on Monday night, UNB reported.

Afghan interim govt to commence design work of 4 major dams

Kabul, April 2 (UNI) :The Afghan interim government's Ministry of Energy and Water has decided to start the survey and design work of four major dams in the year 1404 in the Persian calendar, starting from March 21, as part of efforts to manage water resources and increase electricity generation in the country.

The proposed dams would be constructed in the northern Takhar, eastern Ghazni, and western Herat and Badghis provinces to develop agricultural fields and increase energy production, the private media outlet Tolonews reported Tuesday.

"The budget for these dams has also

been allocated to the Ministry of Energy and Water, and their practical survey and design will begin this year," Tolonews quoted Matiullah Abid, spokesman for the Ministry of Energy and Water, as saying.

Some 80 percent of the country's 35 million population largely relies on agriculture and has also been facing power shortages and potable water.To overcome the challenges, the interim government, in addition to investing in the energy sector and launching small- and medium-scale projects to manage water resources, also imports power from neighboring Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Iran.

Health

10 herbs to battle Diabetes

Studies have revealed that herbs and supplements have shown promise in lowering blood sugar, boosting insulin sensitivity and reducing high blood pressure and cholesterol.



Along with Dr. Jaishree Bhattacharjee, Ayurvedic consultant with Satvikshop we give you a list of easily available herbs that will help you battle diabetes. But with any herbal treatments, it is also important to continue to closely monitor blood sugar and other results with your doctor.

Saptrangi

Regulates kapha dosha (stability and structure) due to its astringent, heating and dry nature which is the primary cause of diabetes. It also have good effect on functioning of liver and pancreas
Direction of use: Root powder: 1-2 gms, decoction: 10 ml-20 ml

Gurmar



Assist in the regeneration of insulin and producing Beta Cells. It contains Gymnemic Acid whose molecular arrangement is similar to glucose molecules. Gymnemic Acid molecules fill the receptor locations on the taste buds thereby preventing activation of taste buds by sugar molecules present in the food, thus, curbing the sugar craving.
Direction of use: Powder of dried leaves 3-6gms, decoction of roots 50 - 100 ml

Neem

Apart from regulating kapha dosha it also regulates metabolism due to shot potency. Neem enhances insulin receptor sensitivity and are also helpful in reducing the need for hypo-glycaemic drugs.
Direction of use: Dried leaves powder- 3-6 gm

Jamun

Due to its kashay (astringent) taste and absorptive quality it balances kapha and helps control the frequency of urine and lowering the urine and blood sugar level
Direction of use: Powder of dried seeds 3 - 6gms

Vijaysaar

Due to its kashay (astringent) taste and light and drying nature It balances kapha and regulate glucose level and due to katu vipak, balance metabolism in the body. Works also well for diabetic complications
Direction of use: Heart wood as decoction 50- 100 ml and 3-6 gm as powder.

Bilva

Bilva is kaphashamak by ruksha, laghu, Kashaya and bitter properties. These properties makes it effective to regulate the blood sugar and combat diabetic complications.

Direction of use: Powder of dried unripe fruit 3-6 gm.

Methi (fenugreek)

Tikta ras (bitter taste) and ushna virya of methi makes it kapha shamak, which fights the root cause of diabetes

Direction of use: Seed and whole plant, Powder - 2 to 6 gm

Haridra

Because of Katu, tikta, ushna properties Haridra balances kapha which is the primary dosha involved in diabetes. Antiseptic properties of haridra makes it useful in curbing the infections in diabetic patients. It also is beneficial in Boils of skin and urinary tract infections which are very common in diabetics

Direction of use: Powder of dried Haridra - 2-4 gm , juice of fresh Haridra rhizome is 10-20 ml.

Karela (Bittergourd)

Tikta, laghu, ruksha gunas of karelapacify aggravation of kapha. It stimulates pancreas, liver and spleen and regulates blood sugar level. Ruksha guna and katu vipak improves absorption of food and better metabolism.

While the sweltering summer heat might prove too much to continue with those intense workouts, this might be a good time to start with yoga for mental peace and physical fitness. With some simple tips in mind, beginners can indulge themselves in yoga, this summer.

While a fit body and increased flexibility are add-ons, the primary goal of yoga is peace of mind, so before starting with it, mental peace is very important. Yoga is an activity that can be pursued at any age without any concern for the level of fitness. However self awareness is very important since yoga



is not simple gymnastics, it is a thousand year old system which aims to enhance self-awareness and well-being. An important tip is to be sensitive and focus should be on feeling a posture rather than the look of it.

Also, one should be able to accept mistakes, the more mistakes the better, since that would mean that you are learning. Approach yoga with an inherent sense of joy and fun and always smile at the teacher and fellow students, it acts as a good boost of energy. Since yoga is not a competitive sport, always be helpful towards others. Ensure that once started, yoga is continued on a regular basis and be adventurous, trying out different styles until you find one that fits your needs. Learning anything new takes time, so patience is needed. Remember nothing can be achieved overnight. Always pay attention to the

Summer tips for Yoga

right way of breathing since it is an essential part of yoga. Keep these simple tips on mind and make your summer time yoga workout a hit!

Mental illness myths decoded

The underlying truth about mental illnesses in India is that, one per cent of the total population suffers from serious bouts of mental disorders and five to ten per cent suffer from moderate mental disorders.

According to government statistics, 20 per cent of Indians may have used psychiatrist counselling at some point in their lives. Developing countries have known to neglect mental illnesses due to a number of prejudices and stereotypes associated with it. People often misunderstand mental illness for plain insanity. This gives rise to numerous myths about it that may not be true. In this article, we highlight these myths and decode the truth behind them.

People with mental illness are violent

People suffering from a mental illness are perceived to be violent. Most people tend to fear for their safety around these people because they are afraid that those people could get violent and hurt them. But research states that there are less than three per cent of patients who can get violent and only if they neglect to take their medication.

People with mental illness should be kept in hospital

A lot of research shows that letting the mentally ill reside and integrate with society could prove to be a better environment for their healing than keeping them locked away in a psychiatry hospital.

People with mental illness can never be healed

It is important to understand that there are many kinds of mental illnesses. Depression, anxiety and OCD are a few that are less serious. In such cases efficient therapies and

medication can heal them. But there are a few chronic illnesses, which are lifelong but can be controlled if not healed, through medication, therapy and patience.

People with mental illness are retarded

This is the most common and offensive stereotype about people with mental disorders. Mental retardation is an actual learning disability and is caused by significant



impairment of cognitive functions and deficits in two or more adaptive behaviours. Mental retardation appears in kids before they reach adulthood, whereas a mental illness can strike anybody. It is not related to an intellectual disability and therefore, a person suffering from a mental illness is not mentally retarded.

People with mental illness cannot work

This is another myth; the truth is that such people could benefit from working. They can use their focus and energy on something else rather than worry about their disorder. At work, they can be just as productive as other employees. In fact employers who hire them say that they have good attendance and are punctual. Working can help boost their self esteem and also help them support themselves.

Healthy snacks for the office

We often overlook it, but office canteens are high-calorie, high-fat, unhealthy food zones that attack our healthy living resolutions one vadapav at a time.

If it's not the cheese-filled toast, it's the fried medhuvada, and if it isn't the rice-heavy lunch, it's the greasy frankies. How can you stay away from these traps of fatty, salty food, you ask? Simple - by carrying your very own box full of healthy snacks for the office. Today we're telling you what to carry with you to beat those mid-noon snack cravings. Read on...

First, the easy stuff:

Nuts, dry fruits, fruits and homemade juices. A small box of just these four essentials goes a long way in keeping you satiated well beyond the breakfast hour. Try 7 almonds, 2 whole walnuts, 6 raisins, 1 apple, 1 banana and 1 500ml bottle of homemade lemon juice for starters. Apart from being far more productive (you'll save all that extra pantry time!), you'll find that your hunger is easily solved by these healthy energy power-houses.

Next, preparation-based:

1 sandwich for that late evening attack. Late evenings are when our diets let loose and chaos breaks out. Carry an emergency cold sandwich for exactly such situations. A few hours after lunch, your body craves some carbs and fat to keep its energy levels up. So apart from keeping yourself well-hydrated, invest in a loaf of whole grain bread, a low-calorie and low-fat sandwich spread (you can even make your own fresh salad relish or chutney once a week) and some groceries like cucumbers and tomatoes.

A simple snack sandwich recipe:

2 brown bread slices, a layer of green chutney, 1 sliced cucumber, 1 sliced tomato, (optional) 1 slice of cold ham.

Energy snacks for late nights or work travel. A true



Hay's unbeaten 99 powers NZ to victory against Pak

Hamilton, April 2 (UNI) : Wicketkeeper-batsman Mitchell Hay played a scintillating unbeaten knock of 99 off 78 balls as New Zealand secured a commanding 84-run victory over Pakistan in the second One Day International (ODI) of the ongoing series at Seddon Park here Wednesday.

Hay, who fell just short of a maiden international century, anchored the innings with an array of attacking strokes. His innings was laced with seven sixes and as many fours, including a maximum off Mohammad Wasim to reach his half-century and a faint edge past the keeper for his final boundary in the last over. Supported by Muhammad Abbas (41), Henry Nicholls (22), and Michael Bracewell (17), New Zealand posted a formidable 292 for 8 in their allotted 50 overs.

Pakistan's bowlers struggled for control, with Wasim (2/78) and Haris Rauf (1/75) proving expensive despite picking up key wickets. Faheem Ashraf (1/46) and Sufiyan Muqeem (2/33) bowled with more discipline, with Muqeem dismissing Abbas after luring him into a mistimed pull straight to deep mid-wicket.

Chasing 293, Pakistan faltered early and were bundled out for 208 in 41.2

overs. The visitors lost quick wickets, slumping to 32 for 5, with Babar Azam falling for just 1, edging Jacob Duffy to Henry Nicholls at slip. Faheem Ashraf fought back with a resilient 73, reaching his fifty with a six off Ben Sears, while Tayyab Tahir added 13, including a powerful square cut off Nathan Smith. Naseem Shah, coming in as a concussion substitute, played a spirited knock, bringing up his maiden ODI fifty with a four off Nathan Smith before eventually falling for 51.

Ben Sears was the chief architect of Pakistan's collapse, claiming a five-wicket haul (5/59), including a key breakthrough when he had Mohammad Rizwan caught behind in the 12th over. Jacob Duffy (3/35) and Nathan Smith (1/53) provided crucial support, with Smith dismissing Tahir with a well-directed short ball. Pakistan also suffered a crucial run-out in the final overs, with Rizwan's direct hit catching Ben Sears short of his crease while attempting a single. The innings ended when Naseem Shah was caught at long-off, sealing a comprehensive victory for the hosts.

With this victory, New Zealand take a 2-0 lead in the series. The final ODI will be played on April 5 at Bay Oval in Mount Maunganui.

Hockey India announces 40-member core probable group for Women National Coaching Camp

Bengaluru, April 2 (UNI) : Hockey India on Wednesday announced a 40-member core group for the ongoing Senior Women's National Coaching Camp at SAI, here.

The camp, which began on March 23, initially featured 65 probables. Based on their performances over the past two weeks, the group has now been trimmed to 40 players.

While 28 players from the existing core group have retained their spots, 12 new players have been selected from outside the core group in recognition of their impressive performances in the 15th Senior Women's National Championship and their efforts in the initial national training camp.

The goalkeeping department sees four familiar names in Savita, Bichu Devi Kharibam, Bansari Solanki, and Madhuri Kindo, who have retained their places in the core group. They are joined by Samiksha Saxena from Assam Hockey, who has been rewarded for her strong performances in the national championships.

In defense, eight players from the existing core group—Mahima Chaudhary, Nikki Pradhan, Sushila Chanu Pukhrambam, Udita, Ishika Chaudhary, Jyoti Chhattri, Jyoti, and Akshata Abaso Dhekale—have been retained. Meanwhile, Anjna Dungdung from Hockey Bengal and Suman Devi Thoudam from Manipur Hockey have been included in the squad. The midfield unit continues to feature experienced names such as Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke, Neha, Salima Tete, Manisha Chauhan, Ajmina Kujur, Sunelita Toppo, Lalremsiami, Sharmila Devi, and Baljeet Kaur. Additionally, four new players—Sujata Kujur from Hockey Bengal, Mahima Tete and Albela Rani Toppo from Hockey Jharkhand, and Pooja Yadav from UP Hockey—have earned their place in the camp following standout performances. Among the forwards, the team retains Deepika Soreng, Navneet Kaur, Sangita Kumari, Deepika, Rutuja Dadaso Pisal, Beauty Dungdung, and Mumtaz Khan, who have consistently delivered strong performances. They will be joined by five new attacking talents—Dipimonika Toppo from Odisha, Hritika Singh from Hockey Madhya Pradesh, Annu and Chandana Jagadish from Hockey Karnataka, and Kajal Sadashiv Atpadkar from Hockey Maharashtra. Speaking about the selection, Indian Women's Hockey Team Chief Coach Harendra Singh said, “We have had some really grand sessions and testing. The selectors and the team have done a good job shortlisting the best 40 players available. After watching the National Championships, we believe we have identified some good talent and I'm sure they are going to serve the country well over the long-term. I am really excited to see how these young girls are going to perform now in the camp and take one big step for their future.”

Duffy grabs top spot in ICC Men's T20I Bowling Rankings

Dubai, April 2 (UNI) : New Zealand seam bowler Jacob Duffy has grabbed the top spot in the ICC

Men's T20I Bowling Rankings after playing a useful part in his team's comprehensive victory in the last match against Pakistan in Wellington for a 4-1 series verdict.

Duffy continued his ascent to displace West Indies spinner Akeal Hosein from the top spot. Duffy gained seven spots last week to be ranked joint-fifth with Adam Zampa and this week overtook Wanindu Hasaranga, Adil Rashid and Varun Chakravarthi apart from Hosein, with a haul of two for 18 that comprised the dismissals of opener Hasan Nawaz and number three bat Omaid Yousuf.

Ben Sears has also moved up 21 spots to 46th position among bowlers while Tim Seifert has achieved a career-best-equaling eighth position among batters after smashing an unbeaten 97 off 38 balls with six fours and 10 sixes. His opening partner Finn Allen has pushed up one spot to 15th.

Pakistan's left-arm spinner Sufiyan Muqeem has progressed 25 places to 86th position after grabbing two for six off two overs in the latest weekly rankings update that also includes the first ODI between New Zealand and Pakistan in Napier that the home side won by 73 runs.

Mark Chapman's match-winning 132 off 111 deliveries with 13 fours and six sixes has helped him advance 24 places to 78th position while Pakistan batter Salman Agha has moved up six places to 37th after a knock of 58.

In the ODI bowling rankings, Pakistan speedster Haris Rauf has moved back towards the top 10, progressing nine slots to 16th position after taking two for 38 while Naseem Shah is up one place to 42nd.

Mohun Bagan look to bank on strong away form in semi-final first leg clash against Jamshedpur

Jamshedpur, April 2 (UNI) : Jamshedpur FC are set to host Mohun Bagan Super Giant (MBSG) in the first leg of their Indian Super League (ISL) 2024-25 semi-final fixture on Thursday, at 7:30 pm IST.

This will be the first time that these two sides meet in the playoffs, with MBSG reaching the last-four courtesy of winning the ISL League Shield, whereas the Red Miners defeated NorthEast United FC 2-0 in the one-legged eliminator.

Jamshedpur FC have not secured a victory in their previous six matches against Mohun Bagan

Super Giant in the ISL, losing on four instances. Another failure to bag a triumph here will make it their longest winless run in front of any opponent in the competition.

Meanwhile, MBSG have been unbeaten on the road in the previous six games, winning thrice and scoring 13 goals in expense of

500 days to go until next FIH Hockey World Cup

Lausanne (Switzerland), April 2 (UNI) : In exactly 500 days, the very first match of the 2026 FIH Hockey World Cup will open the show for FIH's most prestigious global hockey event.

This edition, that will combine the Women's and the Men's World Cups, will be co-hosted by Belgium and the Netherlands.

In addition to the host countries, the teams of Germany (women) and Australia (men) won their ticket to the World Cup via the FIH Hockey Pro League last season. It is also thanks to the Pro League that the next two teams will qualify (a women's team and a men's team). The five Continental Championships – which will take place between July and September – will enable 5 other teams per gender to qualify. The remaining 7 participating teams – from 16 in total per gender - will come from the World Cup Qualifiers which will take place next year, currently scheduled from February 28 to March 8, 2026.

The draw to determine

Top seeds survive scare, Jaisinghani stuns 4th seed

Bengaluru, April 2 (UNI) : Top two seeds Jay Clarke and Oliver Crawford overcame stiff challenges, while India's Raghav Jaisinghani stunned fourth seed Alexandr Binda to storm into the second round of the SM Krishna Memorial Open at the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium here on Wednesday.

Jaisinghani, who advanced through the qualifying rounds, scripted a remarkable comeback against Italy's Binda. After losing the opening set, he reeled off five consecutive games, including two crucial breaks, to claim the second set 6-3. The Indian maintained his momentum in the decider, breaking serve in the first and fifth games to seal a 2-6, 6-3, 6-4 victory.

Reflecting on his triumph, Jaisinghani said, "I started well, but he dominated the first set. I had a clear plan and stuck to it, and gradually, I began



the 4 pools per gender for the group stage of the World Cup will happen shortly after these Qualifiers. FIH President Tayyab Ikram said: “The FIH Hockey World Cup is the most prestigious of our events. This is where legends are made. A fantastic window for our top athletes to showcase their amazing skills, for the greatest delight of all hockey fans around the world. We look forward to a fantastic edition in Belgium and the Netherlands, two of the greatest hockey

powerhouses, that will involve the world's most talented female and male hockey players.”

"On this symbolic day, the World Cup becomes more real than ever. With further teams qualifying soon, it really is taking shape, and I already invite all hockey fans to pencil the tournament dates in their agendas and plan a trip to Belgium and the Netherlands in 500 days," he said.

Within the two host countries, preparations are intensifying, especially in terms of the arenas that will

next round.

Joining Jaisinghani in the second round were fellow Indians Karan Singh, Abhinav Sanjeev Shanmugam, Manish Sureshkumar, Prajwal Dev, and Ishaque Eqbal. Singh, the fifth seed, dispatched the in-form Adil Kalyanpur in straight sets. Shanmugam outlasted Suraj R Prabodh in three sets, while Sureshkumar registered a 6-2, 7-6 (2) win over Yuwan Nandal. Eqbal enjoyed a comfortable 6-2, 6-1 victory over Maan Kesharwani. Aryan Shah battled past Nitin Kumar Sinha 6-2, 3-6, 6-3, while SD Prajwal Dev overcame Krish Tyagi 6-4, 6-4. In the doubles category, the Italian duo of Binda and Nikita Ianin eased past Manish Ganesh and Suraj R Prabodh 6-1, 6-4. Meanwhile, Digvijay Pratap Singh and Jagmeet Singh staged a comeback to defeat Jaisinghani and Bharat Nishok Kumaran 5-7, 6-2, [10-7].

host the event. In the Netherlands, the capacity of the famous Wagener Stadium, located in Amstelveen, near Amsterdam, will be temporarily increased to 10,000 seats. In Belgium, one of the major legacies of the World Cup will be the delivery of a completely renovated stadium, dedicated exclusively to hockey and located in Wavre, south-east of the capital, Brussels. Erik Gerritsen, CEO of the Dutch Hockey Association said, "The plans to make this World Cup wonderful are

Yuva Kabaddi series helped me land a PKL contract: Mukilan Shanmugam

Haridwar (Uttarakhand), April 2 (UNI) : Mukilan Shanmugam, who hails from Karur, began playing kabaddi at the age of 14. He played kabaddi in school and often participated in matches in his village. Initially, his family didn't support him, but they didn't stop him from playing the sport. However, once he started competing in tournaments regularly and showcasing his skills on larger platforms, his family began to support him. The 22-year-old made his Yuva Kabaddi Series debut with Palani Tuskers during the Winter Edition 2022. He had a fabulous season, earning 59 points from 26 matches with the Tuskers. Soon after his YKS debut, Mukilan was called by Pro Kabaddi League club U Mumba for trials. A happy Mukilan shared his story as he was quoted saying: "Following my participation in the All India University Games, I gave a trial with the Palani Tuskers and was selected to represent the team in the Yuva Kabaddi Winter Edition 2022 in Pondicherry.

We had a great season and finished as the runners-up. After seeing my performance, U Mumba management called me for the trials in Mumbai." The Tamil Nadu-born athlete travelled to Mumbai for trials with U Mumba and was among the 10 shortlisted players who had the chance to secure their dream opportunity.

coming together more and more each day! The collaboration is intensifying, and it's shaping up to be an international hockey celebration in both the Netherlands and Belgium. We're building on the successes of past editions in The Netherlands in 1998, 2014, and 2022, while also exploring exciting new possibilities for this tournament. We are excited for what's to come."

His Belgian counterpart, CEO Serge Pilet added: "I am convinced that our collaboration with the Dutch federation in this joint organisation will result in a spectacular and unforgettable double-gender Hockey World Cup. For the Belgian part, this event will be held in our brand new hockey stadium in Wavre. The building of this state-of-the-art hockey arena should be completed by the end of this year. This is thrilling news for Belgian hockey."

The 2026 FIH Hockey World Cup will be played from August 15 to 30, 2026.

When asked about the trials, Mukilan said: "The trials took place over two days, with around 250 players from across the country showcasing their skills. I gave my best and was selected as one of the 10 players finalised by the coaches. They informed us that they would call the selected players, and a few days later, I received a call from the management asking me to sign a contract with the club." Shanmugam admires former U Mumba players Jeeva Kumar and Fazel Atrachali for their style of play. He got the opportunity to play for U Mumba in PKL Seasons 10 and 11 and speaks positively about the role of the Yuva Kabaddi Series in shaping his career.

"Yuva Kabaddi Series helped me land a PKL contract. YKS is similar to the PKL and the league gave me the much-needed confidence to play in the Pro Kabaddi League. I had no fear when playing in the PKL, having already played in front of lights and camera," he said. He is playing for Yuva Mumba in the ongoing edition of the Yuva All Stars Championship in Haridwar. The young player has earned 20 tackle points from 12 matches and looks to get back into the Pro Kabaddi League. "I've returned to the Yuva Kabaddi Series and I am looking to get back into the PKL by giving my best performance in Haridwar for Yuva Mumba," he concluded by saying.

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**Editor: Mohammed Shafi
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**Cell : 9849881368, Tel : 040 - 23232705
Email : standardposthyd@gmail.com**

WR Marching ahead creating milestones and setting benchmark



(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 2 : Western Railway, having the distinction of being pioneer in many aspects over Indian Railways, has once again proved its excellence by achieving best ever performances in various fields during the concluded financial year 2024 - 25. Western Railway was able to achieve these impressive performances in the fields of Freight Loading & Freight Revenue, Passenger Revenue, Infrastructural upgradation and augmentation, Safety Works, Passenger Amenities, etc. These achievements have been possible under the dynamic leadership & valuable guidance of Shri Ashok Kumar Misra - General Manager of Western Railway.

Infrastructural Developments

During the financial year 2024-25, 346 km of New Lines, Gauge Conversion & Doubling work has been completed. This is the highest by any Railway zone during the financial year 2024 - 25.

197 Route Kilometers (RKM) Electrification work completed against the target of 191 RKM. With this, 100 % of Western Railway is now electrified.

Western Railway completed installation of the latest version of KAVACH (Ver. 4.0) safety technology. In financial year 2024-25, KAVACH technology installed on 644 RKM and train trials will commence on 205 RKM.

140 ROB/RUBs constructed over WR in 2024-2, which is the highest over Indian Railways.

WR has laid the highest length of W-beam fencing on IR, with 561 km laid during 2024 - 25. This has led to a major reduction in cattle runovers, leading to higher punctuality and safety.

WR is best amongst all zones of Indian Railways as far as elimination of Level Crossing Gates is concerned. 108 manned Level Crossing Gates have been eliminated in FY 2024-25.

WR has laid 410 Weldable Cast Manganese Steel (WCMS) Crossings, which is the best over Indian Railways. This will enhance riding comfort & passenger safety.

Utilization of Track Machines like Dynamic Tampers, Ballast Cleaning Machines, has been the best on Indian Railways in FY 2024 - 25. This underscores the priority that WR gives to asset maintenance & safety.

WR's Mumbai central division offers appointment leeters



(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 2 : In a gesture of empathy and support, Western Railway provided appointment letters on compassionate grounds to eligible dependents of six deceased railway employees. The appointment letters were handed over to the beneficiaries by Shri Pankaj Singh, Divisional Railway Manager of Mumbai Central Division.

According to a press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer of

Western Railway, Mr Vineet Abhishek, Western Railway has prioritized & safeguarded the economic well-being of its staff and their families with the highest level of responsibility. It has ensured providing appointments on compassionate grounds to the eligible dependent of the deceased railway employee, in the shortest possible time.

Last year, demonstrating its dedication to supporting employees in need,

Mumbai Central Division of WR had provided over 100 compassionate ground appointment letters.

Also, during last year, record number of employees were granted promotions, taking into account their career progression and related perks as well as benefits.

Mumbai Central Division is steadfast in its commitment to employee welfare, always giving importance to the well-being of its employees and their families.

Signal failure incidents reduced by 20% as compared to last year.

Western Railway tops over entire Indian Railways with 95% punctuality in Mail/Express trains.

WR introduced Formation Treatment of Turnouts for the 1st time ever on IR. Total 61 turnouts formation treatment has been done during the working of Ballast Cleaning Machines. This will significantly improve riding comfort, enhance safety & reduce maintenance requirements.

Hungry for Cargo



WR has entered the 100 million tonnes club for the third consecutive year by achieving the freight loading of 102 million tonnes in 2024-25. Western Railway is the only non- coal belt Zonal Railway to achieve this feat with a diverse freight basket and only 8% share of Coal.

Western Railway has shown growth in loading in Container, POL (Petroleum, Oil & Lubricants) & Fertilizers in the current year as compared to last year. It is 1st amongst all zonal railways over IR -

Container - WR's contribution is 32.33 MT (37% share of IR)

Fertilizer - WR's contribution is 16.09 MT (27% share of IR)

POL - WR's contribution is 13.01 MT (24% share of IR)

Boost to Revenue

Passenger Revenue of more than Rs. 7840 cr which is 7% higher than previous year.

Freight Revenue of Rs. 13790 cr achieved in the FY 2024 - 25.

Ticket Checking revenue collection of over Rs. 150 cr.

WR stands second highest on Indian Railways under Non - Fare Revenue achieving Rs. 110.47 cr, which is 10% higher than previous year.

Western Railway crossed the milestone of Rs. 500 crore and achieved Rs. 564 crore from scrap sale which is 41% higher than the target set by Railway Board and second highest over Indian Railways.

Highest ever AC EMU revenue for month achieved in March 2025: Rs 19.95 crore, surpassing previous record of Rs 19.20 Cr in May 2024.

Number of passengers travelling by AC EMU hit a record high of 0.44 Cr in March 2025 surpassing the previous high of 0.40 Cr in January 2025.

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 2 : Dharam Veer Meena, General Manager, Central Railway felicitated 11 Central Railway staff i.e. 3 from Mumbai Division, 4 from Bhusaval Division, 2 from Nagpur Division and 1 each from Pune Division & Solapur Division with Safety Award in a function held at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus Mumbai on 02.04.2025.

The Safety awards were presented in recognition of the respective employee's alertness during duty, their contribution in averting untoward incidents and ensuring safety in train operations during the previous months. Each award consists of a medal, commendation certificate, a citation of exemplary safety work and cash prize of Rs 2000/-

Details of the Awardees

Mumbai Division

1. Shri Pritam Kumar Yadav, Loco Pilot, Kurla, Mumbai division, during training session at Dadar yard on 08.3.2025, noticed smoke coming out from an empty coach of a stationary rake due to fire. He immediately informed the on duty Station Master and RPF. The fire was put out with the help of Pointsman and RPF who rushed to the spot. His alertness has helped avert a potential mishap and save loss of railway property

2. Shri Rohit Yashwant Koli, Train Manager, Panvel, Mumbai division, while on duty on Goods train on 23.2.2025, noticed an iron rod lying on the

BJP policies and intentions

"flawed" :

Akhilesh on Waqf Amendment Bill

New Delhi, April 2 (UNI) : Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav strongly criticised the BJP in the Lok Sabha over the Waqf Amendment Bill, accusing the ruling party of having neither the right policies nor the right intentions.

Speaking in Lok Sabha over the Bill, Yadav said, "BJP's policies and intentions are flawed. This is a conspiracy to snatch homes and shops from crores of people in the country."

Yadav slammed the government and said that the contentious Waqf Amendment Bill has been made to hide the failures of the current regime.

"Whenever the BJP introduces a new bill, they are hiding their failure," he said.

Taking a jibe at the BJP's leadership election process, he said, "A party that claims to be the biggest political party in the world has still not been able to elect its own national president."

Responding to Yadav's jibe, Home Minister Amit Shah said, "Parties like yours have to pick a president from just five members. There's never a delay. I say this to you—you will remain president for the next 25 years."

Earlier, BJP MP from Bihar Ravi Shankar Prasad while speaking during a discussion in Lok Sabha said Waqf is not a religious body but a statutory body.

General Manager, Dharam Veer Meena presents Safety Award to 11 Staff of Central Railway



adjacent track at Kms 47-07 on the Dativali-Dombivali section. He immediately stopped the Bhusaval-Panvel train arriving on the affected track by showing danger hand signal. The iron rod was removed and the Bhusaval-Panvel train departed safely. Shri Rohit's alertness helped avert a potential mishap.

3. Shri Kunal Pariskar, Pointsman, Lonavala, Mumbai division, while on duty on 18.2.2025, during exchange of signals with Train no 22731 Hyderabad-Mumbai Superfast express, noticed smoke coming out from Coach no A3. He immediately informed the Station Master. The coach was isolated and the train departed safely. His alertness has helped avert a potential mishap.

Bhusaval Division

4. Shri Narendra S Gaonshinde, Junior Engineer (C&W), Satma, Bhusaval division, while on duty on 18.02.2025, during rolling in examination, upon close observation, noticed the grease seal of a goods wagon in loose condition which is not usually visible in a routine examination. He informed all concerned and

helped avert a potential mishap with his alertness.

5. Shri Lokesh Ramchandra Sejkar, Technician (C&W), Satma, Bhusaval division, while on duty on 14.02.2025, during maintenance work, upon close observation, noticed the centre seal of a goods wagon in broken condition which is not usually visible in a routine examination. He informed all concerned and helped avert a potential mishap with his alertness.

6. Shri Amrendra Kumar, Technician (C&W), Bhusaval division, while on duty on 09.03.2025, during rolling in examination, upon close observation, noticed the CBC front follower of a goods wagon and CBC yoke of another goods wagon in broken condition. This is not usually visible in a routine examination. He informed all concerned and helped avert a potential mishap with his alertness.

7. Shri Anil Kumar Varma, Pointsman, Lasalgaon. Bhusaval division, while on duty on 17.03.2025, working as Gateman noticed a part hanging from the 5th & 6th wagon of a passing goods train. He immediately

informed the Station Master and the Train Manager, thus averted a potential mishap with his alertness.

Nagpur Division

8. Shri Sanjeev Kumar, Train Manager, Nagpur division, while on duty on 15.03.2025, during routine check of Stable load before departure at Wardha station, noticed the CTRB cup of a wagon in broken condition. He informed all concerned, the wagon was isolated and the train proceeded safely. His alertness has helped avert a potential mishap.

9. Smt. Manisha Pardhe, Technician (C&W), Amla, Nagpur division, while on duty on 06.02.2025, during routine examination of arrived goods train, noticed the CBC of a wagon in broken condition. She informed all concerned, the wagon was isolated and the train proceeded safely. Her alertness has helped avert a potential mishap.

Pune Division

10. Shri Mukesh Ravindra, Junior Engineer PWI, Miraj, Pune division, while on duty on 12.03.2025, during track inspection noticed the

sender pipe of a passing Loco dragging along the tracks. He immediately showed red hand signal and stopped the train. The matter was put right and his alertness averted a potential mishap.

Solapur Division

11. Shri Samadhan Prabhu, ESM, Kurduwadi, Solapur division, while on duty on 07.03.2025, during track inspection on Down line, noticed a weld fracture. He informed all concerned and helped avert a potential mishap with his alertness.

Congratulating the awardees and complimenting them for their alertness and dedication towards their duties, the General Manager said that such acts of alertness and dedication will motivate others to sincerely work towards the safety of passengers and avert loss of life, freight and railway property.

Shri Prateek Goswami, Additional General Manager, Shri Chandra Kishore Prasad, Principal Chief Safety Officer, Other Principal Head of Departments and Senior Officers of Central Railway were present on the occasion.

"Nagar Satkar" of eminent litterateurs of Nagpur honoured by Maharashtra State Hindi Sahitya Academy



Vice President of the Maharashtra Rajya Hindi Sahitya Academy, Mrs. Priyanka Shakti Thakur felicitating senior litterateur Ramakrishna Sahastrabudhe, in a dignified ceremony organised at Saket auditorium of Vidarbha Hindi Sahitya Sammelan to felicitate eminent litterateurs of Nagpur, who were honoured at the Maharashtra State Hindi Sahitya Academy award ceremony organised in Mumbai.

(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, April 2 : The dignified ceremony of Nagar Satkar of eminent litterateurs of Nagpur, who were honoured in the year 2024-25 award ceremony of Maharashtra State Hindi Sahitya Academy in Mumbai, was held in the Saket Auditorium of Vidarbha Hindi Sahitya Sammelan under the chairmanship of Vice President of the Academy and Nagpur representative Mrs. Priyanka Shakti Thakur.

In this ceremony, after Saraswati Vandana by Ms. Meera Joglekar, Vice President of the Academy Mrs. Priyanka Thakur was welcomed by Ruby Das 'Aru'. While conducting the program, in the introduction, litterateur Avinash Bagde described the reactions of such persons who were awarded by the Academy and those who could not get the honour this year, as a natural human tendency. In the main program, senior writers of Nagpur, Indira Kislay, Krishna Nagpal, Prabha Lalit Singh, Satyendra Prasad Singh, Madhuri Mishra and Santosh Badal felicitated the three award receivers conferred by the Academy. Thereafter, all three expressed their views.

Mrs. Abha Singh said in her speech that no wordsmith writes with the aim of award or honour. It is the truth inherent in the creation that brings him respect.

The work of the writer is to write with full devotion and if his writing is excellent, then the readers will surely give him credit. Dr. Manoj Pandey's natural statement was that

every person likes respect and true respect gives new energy. He said that respect should be given only to those who deserve it.

Whatever we have received by destiny, we should try to make it even better.

Senior writer Ramkrishna Sahastrabudhe explained that respect is a symbol of creativity. He stated that the first reader of my creation was my father.

He said that awards inspire and also present a challenge to give direction to the society. Therefore, the significance of words lies in the fact that they move the reader. If we are worshippers of words, then we should be cautious about their use. If we live up to the role of ideological change, then this is the true contribution of literature.

In her presidential address, the Vice President of the Academy, Mrs. Priyanka Thakur said that it is very difficult to maintain the dignity of the post. She said that this celebration of honour is very pleasant for the writers of Nagpur.

Especially, it is more proud for the women writers to get the honour, because they handle the challenging responsibility of writing along with home, job and business. She said that Nagpur is gradually registering its important contribution in the field of literature.

She told that I am working on "Swamim Saal RSS" - and want this work to reach the readers. Tikaram Sahu Azad said that honour encourages everyone.