

SHORT TAKES

Forest land scam: ED raids at 16 locations

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate on Tuesday raided multiple locations in Jharkhand and Bihar as part of an alleged Bokaro forest land scam linked to a money laundering investigation. Officials said that about 16 locations in the two neighbouring states were searched on Tuesday. The alleged scam involves the “fraudulent” acquisition and illegal sale of 103 acres of protected forestland at Mauja Tetulia in Bokaro. These raids were conducted under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act and the agency’s sleuths also searched the hideouts of some businessmen located at Lalpur in Ranchi. Apart from Ranchi, the agency also conducted raids at Bokaro and Ramgarh and a few places in Bihar.

SC dismisses plea over HC’s powers

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed a plea which sought the power of the top court under Article 142 of the Constitution to be granted to the high courts, saying the petition was completely misconceived. The extraordinary jurisdiction under Article 142 empowers the top court to pass “any decree or order necessary for doing complete justice in any case or matter pending before it” within the country. A bench of Justices Abhay S. Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan wondered how it could allow such a plea and said: “How can we grant such prayer? It requires an amendment to the Constitution. You go to Parliament. Prayer made in this petition is completely misconceived. Power conferred under Article 142 of the Constitution is only on this court and not the high courts. Therefore, we cannot allow the high court to exercise power of this court under Article 142.”

Pegasus row: SC to hear pleas April 29

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday fixed next week to hear a clutch of pleas seeking a probe into the alleged unauthorised use of Pegasus spyware for the surveillance of journalists among others. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N. Kotiswar Singh posted the hearing on April 29 for want of time. Senior advocate Shyam Divan, appearing for some petitioners, said the top court earlier directed for supply of reports of a technical panel but no such report was shared. “This court will have to pass some directions because we have not received the reports. Kindly hear it urgently,” Mr Divan said. The bench directed for listing the matter next week. On March 7, the top court fixed April 22 for hearing the pleas.

SC TO HEAR PLEA AGAINST BJP MP DUBEY NEXT WEEK

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

The Supreme Court on Tuesday agreed to hear next week a plea which flagged recent disparaging remarks by BJP MP Nishikant Dubey against the top court and Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, and sought removal of derogatory videos from social media platforms. The matter was mentioned for urgent listing before a bench of Justices B.R. Gavai and Augustine George Masih. The counsel quoted Mr Dubey as saying that the CJI was responsible for “civil wars” in the country and after the video of his remarks went viral, derogatory phrases were being used on social media for the top court. “This is a very serious issue,” the lawyer said. “What (do) you want to file? You want to file a contempt petition?” Justice Gavai asked. Contending that he has already filed a petition in the matter in the apex court, the counsel said the government was not taking action against the MP. He said one of his colleagues wrote to attorney general R Venkataramani seeking his consent to initiate contempt proceedings against Mr Dubey but there was no outcome. “The issue is, at least give directions today to the social media platforms to remove these videos,” he said.

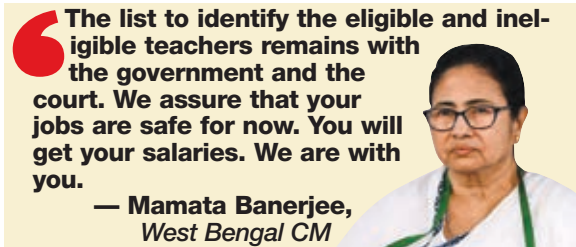
‘Will file review petition in SC for those who have lost jobs’
SSC office siege continues; Didi asks teachers to return to work

RAJIB CHOWDHURI
KOLKATA, APRIL 22

As the siege by hundreds of thousands of jobless school teachers of West Bengal continues at the School Service Commission (SSC) office in Salt Lake over the release of “eligible” candidates list, chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday appealed to them to return to their workplace.

She also assured them of providing salaries and saving their jobs legally by fighting the verdict of the Supreme Court that recently cancelled their appointments, totalling 25,753, in a 2016 recruitment scam.

The CM further informed that she would visit Murshidabad next month



The list to identify the eligible and ineligible teachers remains with the government and the court. We assure that your jobs are safe for now. You will get your salaries. We are with you.

— Mamata Banerjee, West Bengal CM

in wake of the communal riots during the anti-Waqf Act agitation at Jangipur.

Ms Banerjee said at an event in Goaltore of West Midnapore, “You don’t need to worry about who is eligible and who is not. You only need to worry about whether you have your job and whether you are getting your salaries on time.”

“The list to identify the eligible and ineligible teachers remains with the

government and the court,” she added.

“We assure that your jobs are safe for now. You will get your salaries. Please return to your schools and resume classes. We are with you. I called our people in Kolkata at least 10 times since last evening. If I were there, I could have solved the issue in a second,” the CM asserted.

“I had talks over the phone till midnight. What I understand is that some people are still adamant for a list to mark who is ‘eligible’ and who is ‘ineligible’. Don’t believe those who snatched your jobs. Trust me. I don’t want to see any unemployed person in my state. They have filed another case on primary teachers’ recruitment,” the CM said.

She asserted that a review petition for the Group-C and Group-D employees, who lost their jobs, would be filed at the SC.

Referring to “similar developments in Uttar Pradesh and Tripura”, the West Bengal chief minister said, “People have lost jobs in those states in huge numbers and never got them back. Don’t let that happen here.”

The Election Commission officials on Tuesday rubbished the claims made by Congress MP and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi with regard to discrepancies in voter data in Maharashtra state Assembly elections last year. The EC officials said all Indian elections are held as per law, and the scale and accuracy with which elections are held in India are widely acclaimed across the world. They termed Mr Gandhi’s statement as “unsubstantiated allegations” that are “an affront to the rule of law”.

Sources said the voting progressed in front of 27,000 booth-level agents

EC rejects Rahul’s claims on electoral rolls in Maha

‘Spreading misinformation sign of disrespect towards law’

VINEETA PANDEY
NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

The Election Commission officials on Tuesday rubbished the claims made by Congress MP and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi with regard to discrepancies in voter data in Maharashtra state Assembly elections last year. The EC officials said all Indian elections are held as per law, and the scale and accuracy with which elections are held in India are widely acclaimed across the world. They termed Mr Gandhi’s statement as “unsubstantiated allegations” that are “an affront to the rule of law”.

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Rahul Gandhi

of the Congress, but they raised not a single complaint both during and after elections. “You (Congress) had your agents on the ground. No one noticed any abnormality or sudden spike in voter turnout. So all such allegations fall flat,” sources in EC said.

“The entire nation is aware that each election process, including the preparation of electoral rolls, polling, counting,

etc., is all held by government staff and that too in the presence of authorised representatives formally appointed by political parties/candidates from polling stations up to constituency level. Any misinformation being spread, by anyone, is not only a sign of disrespect towards law but also brings disrepute to the thousands of representatives appointed by their own political party. Such a statement demotivates lakhs of election staff who work untiringly and transparently during elections. After any unfavourable verdict by the voters, trying to defame the Election Commission by saying that it is compromised is completely absurd,” sources said.

ONOE: JPC to start visit to states May 17

Bansuri brings ‘National Herald’s loot’ bag to meet on polls

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

The Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) examining one nation, one election (ONOE) held its meeting on Tuesday, during which it heard the views and presentations of legal experts. BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj attended the meeting holding a bag with “National Herald ki loot” written on it to hit on the Congress MPs, particularly Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, who is part of the JPC.

However, instead of getting instigated, Mrs Vadra said she liked the bag. “*Mujhe toh mazedaar laga* (I found it interesting)... I asked her (Bansuri Swaraj) about the bag, which had ‘National Herald ki loot’ written on it. She just smiled,” Ms Vadra said.



BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj carrying a bag with “National Herald Ki Loot” printed on it arrives to attend a meeting of the JPC on one nation, one election in New Delhi on Tuesday. — PTI

As for the meeting, among those who made presentations before the committee on Tuesday were former judge of the Supreme Court Justice Hemant Gupta; Justice S.N. Jha, former Chief Justice of the Jammu and Kashmir high court; Dr

Justice B.S. Chauhan, former Supreme Court judge and Chairman of the 21st Law Commission of India; and prominent lawyer and Rajya Sabha MP Dr Abhishek Manu Singhvi. The JPC will now begin visits to different states to gather opinion on ONOE

starting from Maharashtra on May 17, followed by Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir, Chandigarh and Punjab. Besides, the JPC will also seek public opinion through emails.

“The committee believes that it should visit all states and hear their opinions, which is why the tour is being organised. Maharashtra will be covered first on May 17-18, then Uttarakhand between May 19 and 21. Jammu and Kashmir, Chandigarh (Punjab and Haryana) will be covered in June, according to different categories. Everyone will be heard, whether a celebrity, a sports person or anyone else, to know the thoughts of the people, and will this be beneficial for the country,” said P.P. Chaudhary, the BJP MP, who heads the committee.

‘Neither Parl nor Executive, Constitution is supreme’

Sibal, V-P engage in war of words over judiciary tirade

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

A war of words once again ensued between vice-president Jagdeep Dhankhar and Rajya Sabha MP and Supreme Court Bar Association president Kapil Sibal. Addressing a Delhi University event, Mr Dhankhar, who is also the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, said every word spoken by a constitutional functionary is guided by the supreme sublime interest of the nation. Once again taking on Mr Dhankhar, Mr Sibal said neither Parliament nor the Executive but the Constitution is supreme. “I find it conceivably intriguing that some have

recently reflected that constitutional offices can be ceremonial, ornamental. Nothing can be far distanced from a wrong understanding of the role of everyone in this country — constitutional functionary or a citizen,” Mr Dhankhar said.

Mr Sibal’s remarks in posts on X came soon after Mr Dhankhar said that every word spoken by a constitutional authority was guided by the supreme national interest.

In a post on X, Mr Sibal said, “Supreme Court: Parliament has the plenary power to pass laws. The Supreme Court has the obligation to interpret the Constitution and do complete justice (Article 142).” “Everything the court

said is consistent with our constitutional values and guided by national interest,” the Rajya Sabha MP said.

In another post, Mr Sibal said, “The law: Neither Parliament nor the Executive is supreme; the Constitution is supreme. The provisions of the Constitution are interpreted by the Supreme Court. That’s how this country has understood the law so far!”

Mr Sibal had slammed Mr Dhankhar last Friday for questioning the judiciary over the timeline set for the President to take decisions, saying that he never saw any Rajya Sabha Chairman make “political statements” of such nature.

Uddhav ‘very positive’: Raut on Sena-UBT, MNS patch-up

Mumbai, April 22: Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut on Tuesday said his party chief Uddhav Thackeray is “very positive” about rapprochement with estranged cousin and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) president Raj Thackeray. Talking to reporters here, Mr Raut claimed after the reunion buzz even people and parties associated with the Ambedkarite movement are in touch with him and have shown interest to be a part of the new political alignment that is taking shape.

The Rajya Sabha MP recalled chief Constitution framer B R Ambedkar had also taken lead in the Samyukta Maharashtra movement and made efforts for unity of “*Marathi manoo*” (Marathi-speaking people).

“There is no need for anyone to be in the discussion between the two (Uddhav and Raj). Uddhav is very positive. His stand is very positive for the betterment of Maharashtra,” Mr Raut insisted. — PTI

Maha rolls back order on Hindi must in schools

Raj Thackeray welcomes decision

BHAGWAN PARAB and SONU SHRIVASTAVA
MUMBAI, APRIL 22

Faced with a huge backlash in the state, the Maharashtra government on Tuesday finally withdrew its decision to make Hindi mandatory as a third language for students of Classes 1 to 5 in Marathi and English-medium schools. x made it clear that the state government has stayed its order to make Hindi compulsory in primary schools.

“Hindi language will not be made compulsory. We are withdrawing the word ‘mandatory’ Hindi language (from the government resolution) and a fresh GR would be issued in this matter. The third language in Marathi and English medium schools will be optional,” he said.

The move comes days after the Maharashtra government’s language consultation committee

STATE EDUCATION minister Dada Bhuse Bhuse clarified that those who are interested in Hindi will be given the option of Hindi

urged chief minister Devendra Fadnavis to revoke the decision. Committee chairperson Laxmikant Deshmukh had written a letter to Mr Fadnavis urging the government to scrap the move.

Mr Bhuse clarified that those who are interested in Hindi will be given the option of Hindi. “We had taken Hindi only because it is compatible with Marathi and has the Devanagari script. The next revised government decision in this regard will be issued soon,” he added.

MNS chief Raj Thackeray welcomed the decision saying the government should have acted much earlier on the issue.

‘Youth should become active stakeholders’

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Tuesday said that the youth must become active stakeholders in building a strong and self-reliant India.

Mr Birla called upon the youth to engage themselves proactively in nation building, innovation, and global leadership.

The Lok Sabha Speaker also called upon the youth to contribute meaningfully to India’s growth story by participating in democracy, research, law-making, and technological advancement.

Modi to open WAVES with mega stars May 1

SHASHI BHUSHAN
NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

Top-notch stars of the tinsel world, Chiranjeevi, Nagarjuna Akkineni, Rajinikanth, Amitabh Bachchan, Amir Khan and Mohanlal, besides top guns of global tech giants, including Netflix, Instagram and YouTube, will grace the inaugural edition of the World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES) slated to be inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi on May 1.

The four-day event will bring together a kaleidoscope of global giants and innovative minds, celebrating the dynamic

essence of India’s creative landscape.

Other notable personalities like A.R. Rahman, Hema Malini, Deepika Padukone, Mithun Chakraborty, Anupam Kher, Anil Kapoor and Ranbir Kapoor, among others, will be attending the WAVES.

Film producers Bhushan Kumar of T-Series and Ekta Kapoor of Balaji Films will also participate in the inaugural session of WAVES. Kavita Vinod Khanna, founder of the Kavita and Vinod Khanna Foundation, is also scheduled to witness the event.

On the occasion of Autism Awareness / Acceptance Month

All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi

Child Neurology Division, Department of Pediatrics

Presents

PUBLIC LECTURE & PANEL DISCUSSION ON

Neurodiversity for Sustainability:

Different Minds, One Future

Welcome & Introduction

Dr. (Prof.) M. Srinivas, Director, AIIMS, New Delhi

Dr. (Prof.) Pankaj Hari, HoD, Pediatrics, AIIMS, New Delhi

Moderator

Dr. (Prof.) Sheffali Gulati, Faculty I/C, Child Neurology Division

Department of Pediatrics, AIIMS, New Delhi

Speakers & Panelists

Sh. Yutaro Setoya (WHO), Dr. Vivek Virendra Singh (UNICEF, India)

Sh. Paras Arora (Neurodivergent Researcher, Stanford University)

Dr. Biswaroop Chakrabarty, Dr. Prashant Jauhari, Dr. Gagan Hans

Dr. Gautam Kamila, Dr. Sakshi Ojha, Dr. Sanjeeda

▪ Special Invitees

▪ Self and Parent Advocates

▪ Autistic Marvels

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Venue : J.L.N. Auditorium, New Delhi

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Scan for Live Streaming

SHORT TAKES

8 of family die after SUV falls off bridge

Bhopal: Eight members of a family, including four women and two children, were on Tuesday killed when the SUV in which they were travelling fell off a bridge onto a dry river bed in Damoh district, police said. The incident took place near Simri village under the Nohata police station at around 11 am. According to Damoh district superintendent of police (SP) Shrut Kirti Somvanshi, the driver of the vehicle lost control over the steering, leading it to veer off a bridge and fall into the dry bed of the river Sunar. Eight passengers died and six others injured in the incident, the police officer said. The injured were admitted to the district hospital at Damoh. The victims, all residents of Bhita Fuller village in Jabalpur district in Madhya Pradesh, were returning home in the ill-fated SUV from a pilgrimage to Jatashankar Dham.

SC orders inspection of industries near Taj

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday directed the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute to conduct an assessment of the glass industries impacting the iconic Taj Mahal in Uttar Pradesh. A bench of Justices Abhay S. Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan directed Neeri to file an affidavit indicating the timeline for the completion of the assessment. The SC said, “We want to know the extent of pollution caused by these industries. If we find that these industries are causing pollution, we won’t hesitate to order shifting of these units. Some examination has to be made about the extent of pollution.” “After completing study of five industries, the pollution control board shall submit the interim report so that appropriate directions can be issued,” it said. The SC said all government agencies should assist Neeri in the exercise.

ED summons Mahesh Babu in fraud case

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has summoned Telugu actor Mahesh Babu for questioning in a money laundering case linked to an alleged real estate fraud case perpetrated by some local groups. He has been asked to depose on April 28 at the Central probe agency’s office at Hyderabad and get his statement recorded under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the official sources said. This case pertains to Sai Surya Developers, a prominent real estate firm based in Vengal Rao Nagar, the Surana Group and some others. The ED had conducted searches in the case on April 16 at premises located in Secunderabad, Jubilee Hills and Bowenpally. The actor is not being probed as an accused at present.

■ Minister briefed by J&K DGP, likely to visit Pahalgam today

Shah rushes to Srinagar, says perpetrators won’t be spared

AMRESH SRIVASTAVA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

Union home minister Amit Shah arrived in Srinagar to review the security situation in Kashmir following a deadly terror attack in Pahalgam in which 28 people were killed, officials said. Hours after the attack on tourists, Mr Shah rushed to Srinagar and drove straight to the Raj Bhavan from the airport.

Director-general of Jammu and Kashmir police Nalin Prabbat briefed the home minister upon his arrival. Lieutenant-governor Manoj Sinha, chief minister Omar Abdullah, Union home secretary Govind Mohan and director of Intelligence Bureau Tapan Deka were present



Members of the Bajrang Dal stage a demonstration after the terrorist attack in Pahalgam on Tuesday. — PTI

at the time of the briefing. The officials had earlier said Mr Shah was scheduled to chair a high-level meeting of security officials.

The home minister is likely to visit Pahalgam on Wednesday, they added. Mr Shah vowed to come

down heavily on the perpetrators of the terror attack on tourists.

He posted on X: “Anguished by the terror attack on tourists in Pahalgam. My thoughts are with the family members of the deceased. Those involved in this das-

tardly act of terror will not be spared, and we will come down heavily on the perpetrators with the harshest consequences. Briefed PM Shri @narendramodi Ji about the incident and held a meeting with the concerned officials via video conferencing. Will shortly leave for Srinagar to hold an urgent security review meeting with all the agencies.”

Soon after the attack took place around 3 pm, the home minister held a virtual meeting with J&K CM Omar Abdullah and L-G Manoj Sinha. During the meeting, the Union home secretary, J&K DGP and Intelligence Bureau chief were present.

The incident comes when Kashmir is witnessing a surge in tourist arrivals after facing terrorism for decades.



Commuters undergo security checks after the terrorist attack in Pahalgam. — PTI

US, Israel condemn attack, Putin writes to Prez, Modi

Trump says US stands strong with India, may dial PM

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

The deadly terror attack targeting tourists in J&K on Tuesday drew strong condemnation from several countries, including the US, Israel, Russia and Ukraine.

US President Donald Trump said his country stands with India against terrorism. “Deeply disturbing news out of Kashmir... We pray for the souls of those lost, and for the recovery of the injured. Prime Minister Modi and the incredible people of India have our full support and deepest sympathies. Our hearts are with you all,” Mr Trump said. There were also reports that Mr Trump may speak to Mr Modi in the wake of the horrific attack. MEA spokesperson Randhir

Jaiswal also confirmed in Jeddah that several world leaders had sent condolence messages to India.

“Usha and I extend our condolences to the victims of the devastating terrorist attack... Our thoughts and prayers are with them as they mourn this horrific attack,” US vice-president J.D. Vance posted on social media platform X. Israeli ambassador to India Reuven Azar said that he was sad and appalled following the terrorist attack.

Russian President Vladimir Putin condemned the attack and wrote to President Droupadi Murmu and Mr Modi to express his condolences. The Russian President also said the perpetrators of the heinous crime should be brought to book. President Putin wrote,

“Kindly accept the sincere condolences over the tragic consequences of the terrorist attack in Pahalgam whose victims were civilians — citizens of various countries. This brutal crime has no justification whatsoever. We expect that its organisers and perpetrators will face a deserved punishment. I would like to reiterate our commitment to further increasing cooperation with Indian partners in fighting terrorism.”

Ukraine also expressed “deep concern” over the attack and demanded that the “perpetrators should be held accountable”. The Ukrainian embassy said, “Ukraine is deeply concerned over the attack on tourists... We endure the loss of life from terrorism daily and firmly condemn terrorism in all its forms.”

Recent ruling didn’t cover it: Centre counsel SC to examine if TN verdict on bills covers Kerala issues

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

The Supreme Court on Tuesday said it would examine on May 6 whether the recent apex court judgment on a plea of Tamil Nadu, fixing timelines for the grant of assent to bills passed by state Assemblies, covers similar issues raised by the Kerala government in its petitions.

A bench comprising Justices P.S. Narasimha and Joymalya Bagchi agreed to hear the pleas of the Kerala government against the governor over the delay in approving bills passed by the State Assembly. “We will look into that judgment and see whether issues raised here are covered,” the bench said, when attorney-general R. Venkataramani and solicitor-general Tushar Mehta,

■ KERALA GOVERNMENT seeks similar directions in its case. Kerala government counsel K.K. Venugopal said the pleas of the state were covered by the SC’s recent judgment

appearing for the Centre and the governor’s office, said the recent verdict delivered by a bench headed by Justice J.B. Pardiwala did not cover the issues raised by the Kerala government.

On April 8, a bench comprising Justices Pardiwala and R. Mahadevan delivered a landmark verdict on the plea of Tamil Nadu government and set aside the reservation of the 10 bills for President’s consideration in the second round, holding it as illegal and erroneous in law. In a first, the Justice Pardiwala-led bench also

prescribed that the President should decide on the bills reserved for his/her consideration by the governor within a period of three months from the date on which such reference is received. The SC had also exercised its plenary jurisdiction under Article 142 of the Constitution to make the bill re-presented to the TN governor, as deemed to have been passed.

The Kerala government seeks similar directions in its case. On Tuesday, Kerala government’s counsel K.K. Venugopal said the pleas of the state were covered by the recent judgment and urged the bench to allow the pleas of the state government in terms of the Tamil Nadu judgment.

The solicitor-general, however, said the case of Kerala was not covered by the TN judgement.

FIR against IAF officer in B’luru road rage incident

M.B. GIRISH
with agency inputs
BENGALURU, APRIL 22

An FIR has been registered against a 40-year-old IAF officer on charges of attempt to murder, criminal intimidation and voluntarily causing hurt based on a counter-complaint by a food delivery agent, who was previously arrested on the officer’s complaint in a road rage incident, the police said. Vikas Kumar (26), who was released on station bail, said in a video statement on Tuesday that he will not let go of the case. He also expressed concerns about losing his job because of the incident.

Mr Kumar has alleged that Wg Cdr Shiladitya Bose (35) assaulted him and tried to strangle him during an altercation in Bengaluru city Monday.

On Monday, Wg Cdr Bose made an allegation in a video he shared that he was attacked and verbally abused by a group of Kannada-speaking individuals who chased him on a bike. Terming it a case of road rage, the police arrested Vikas.

Both parties attacked each other and some purported videos showed the IAF officer roughing up Vikas, creating a scene for the onlookers.

Taking note of the incident, CM Siddaramaiah Tuesday said he has instructed Bengaluru commissioner of police B. Dayanand to initiate action as per the law.

Cheetah brothers make 1st kill in new MP home ‘Felines feed fully on adult deer’

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY
BHOVAL, APRIL 22

Around 36 hours after they were relocated to the Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary in Mandasaur district in Madhya Pradesh from Kuno National Park in the state, the two male cheetahs — Pavak and Prabhas — made the first kill in their new home early Tuesday morning.

The two South African cheetahs, a coalition, chased an adult spotted deer for around one and half km before successfully hunting it, a forest officer said.

The cheetah-duo fed on their prey fully. “Pavak and Prabhas hunted and killed an adult spotted deer early on Tuesday morning. This was their first kill in their new

home”, Sanjay Raikher, divisional forest officer (DFO) of Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary, told this newspaper.

The cheetah pair was relocated to the Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary from the KNP at around 5:30 pm on April 20.

The two big cats were released in a special enclosure spanning around 50 sq km after they were shifted to the Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary, chosen as the second home of cheetahs after the Kuno National Park.

“The two cheetahs explored the entire enclosure within 12 hours of their arrival in the sanctuary”, Mr Raikher said.

According to him, the two cats were doing well and appeared to be adapting to the new environment.

‘You spoil atmosphere of court’: SC fines lawyer ₹5L

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

Irked over the nature of averments in a plea, the Supreme Court on Tuesday imposed ₹5 lakh costs on a lawyer for filing the petition as a petitioner and said he “spoiled the atmosphere of the court”.

A bench comprising Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta asked advocate Sandeep Todi to deposit the amount within four weeks in the accounts of the National Legal Services Authority. “You have spoiled the

atmosphere of this court, as no prudent lawyer will file such a frivolous petition under Article 32 of the Constitution,” Justice Nath said.

Article 32 of the Constitution guarantees the right to constitutional remedies, ensuring individuals can approach the SC to enforce their fundamental rights if they are violated. “If we allow the simpliciter withdrawal of the petition then it will send the wrong message,” the bench said, imposing the cost on the lawyer and allowing him to withdraw the plea.

Vance pitches for US oil, weapons

■ Continued from Page 1
be marked by the relationship between the two countries, which could make it the greatest-ever century. He tough warned of a dark time globally if the bilateral ties faltered. “If we fail to keep pace, consequences for the Indo-Pacific region will be dire,” he said.

Terming India as a “major defence partner”, the US vice-president also urged India to buy more state of the art military equipment from the United States that he said was the best globally, pointing out that US F-35 (stealth aircraft) can help the Indian Air Force to protect Indian skies and “deter foreign aggressors”, a comment seen as a veiled reference to China.

The US vice-president also mentioned the close bilateral defence ties including the Javelin missiles and the Stryker infantry combat vehicles and plans for co-production of munitions by the two nations. He also flagged the launch of the “Joint Autonomous Systems Alliance” between both nations which he said will “develop state of the art maritime systems” and that the (Indo-Pacific) “region must remain safe from hostile powers that seek to dominate”.

The US also wants to sell

more energy (oil) to India. Mr Vance said, pointing out that strides in advanced fields such as artificial intelligence (AI) are based on energy security. He also spoke about how ethanol from the finest corn produced by American farmers could also boost energy security for India.

The US vice-president also welcomed the Modi Government’s move to amend the nuclear liabilities law and said the existing law had been a barrier to US companies exporting small nuclear reactors and building larger ones in India. He spoke about the bilateral ties benefitting sectors such as pharma, under-sea cables and other critical goods.

Mr Vance pointed to the American advancements in AI hardware and India’s corresponding advancements in its start-up infrastructure.

Describing the Modi government as arguably the most popular in the democratic world (after 11 years of being in power continuously), Mr Vance hailed the PM as a “serious leader” and a “tough negotiator who drives a hard bargain” to protect India’s interests. “I don’t blame Mr Modi, but I blame American leaders in the past who failed to protect American workers,” he said, also remark-

ing in jest that he is “jealous” of Mr Modi’s domestic approval ratings.

The US vice-president also mentioned how the two nations are working together as part of the four-nation Quad mechanism and indicated that the Quad Summit will be held in autumn this year (in India, which Mr Trump is expected to attend).

Mr Vance said a stronger India-US relationship will lead to greater stability in the Indo-Pacific. He also slammed the attitude of previous US governments towards India and other countries, which he said was “preachy”, adding that Mr Trump “rejects failed ideas” and wants both nations to grow together.

“Our partners need not look exactly like us (America). America has a friend in India,” Mr Vance said but added that there have to be certain shared objectives for both sides.

On a lighter note, as his Indian-origin wife Usha was seated in the audience, the US vice-president mentioned “two leaders” globally liked by his three children and said Mr Trump and Mr Modi are these two leaders. He also thanked the Prime Minister for the hospitality during the visit. The Vance family will visit Agra to see the Taj Mahal on Wednesday.

28 killed as terrorists open fire on tourists

■ Continued from Page 1

The police sources and witnesses said that the holiday-makers — mostly from Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Odisha — were enjoying horse-riding or engaged in other recreational activities in the meadow situated at a height of 2,400 meters (7,874 feet) and dotted with dense pine forests and surrounded by snowcapped mountains when a group of terrorists targeted them with automatic firearms. According to reports, around 2,000 tourists were present in the meadow when the attack took place. After committing the terror act, the gunmen fled back into the woods, the witnesses told the police.

A purported video of the attack site emerged showing many people bleeding and lying motionless on the ground while women tourists were waiting and looking for their near and dear ones. Some of the witnesses said that the assailants were dressed in military fatigues and that they entered the meadow from the surrounding woods and opened fire without warning.

The authorities pressed a chopper into service for the evacuation of the injured persons, the officials said, adding some of the injured were brought down from

the meadows by local people on their ponies.

J&K chief minister Omar Abdullah, in a post on X, said that the death toll is still being ascertained. He, however, also said, “Needless to say this attack is much larger than anything we’ve seen directed at civilians in recent years.”

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack, but the police officials suspect that either LeT or JeM or one of their shadow groups could be involved. However, a section of local media late on Tuesday reported that The Resistance Front (TRF), a shadow group of proscribed LeT, claimed responsibility.

These reports quoting unnamed officials also said that possibly the group of terrorists involved in the attack could have crossed over from Kishtwar in Jammu and reached Baisaran through Kokernag in south Kashmir.

The officials said that columns of the Army and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), including the CRPF, joined J&K’s police’s counterinsurgency Special Operations Group (SOG) to launch a hunt for the attackers while the wounded were rushed to hospitals.

The Union home minister, who reached Srinagar from

New Delhi late Tuesday evening to hold an emergency security review meeting with the top-ranking security and civil administration officials at Raj Bhavan and oversee the response to the terror attack, said that he had been directed by the Prime Minister to ensure swift and decisive action to address the incident.

Northern Army Commander Lt. Gen. M.V. Suchendra Kumar, who was in New Delhi for a military conference, is rushing to Srinagar to oversee the security forces’ operation against the terrorists involved in the attack, the defence sources here said, adding that he will be briefed by senior local commanders at the headquarters of the Army 15 Corps, also called Chinar Corps, at Srinagar’s Badami Bagh Cantonment before leaving for Pahalgam early Wednesday morning.

The bloody incident has shaken the nation, with the PM, who had reached Jeddah earlier during the day on an official visit to Saudi Arabia, strongly condemning it and vowing to bring the perpetrators to justice.

“I strongly condemn the terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. Condolences to those who

have lost their loved ones. I pray that the injured recover at the earliest,” Mr Modi posted on X.

The PM added: “All possible assistance is being provided to those affected. Those behind this heinous act will be brought to justice...they will not be spared! Their evil agenda will never succeed. Our resolve to fight terrorism is unshakable and it will get even stronger.”

J&K lieutenant-governor Manoj Sinha expressed deep sorrow, offering condolences to the victims’ families and stating, “The targeting of innocent tourists is an unforgivable crime. We will ensure that those responsible face justice swiftly.”

Condemning the attack, Mr Abdullah said that he was shocked beyond belief. He said, “This attack on our visitors is an abomination. The perpetrators of this attack are animals, inhuman and worthy of contempt. No words of condemnation are enough. I send my sympathies to the families of the deceased.”

The J&K CM further stated that he has been in constant touch with senior officials and has spoken to the minister of health Sakina Itoo, who immediately rushed to the hospital to oversee treatment and sup-

port arrangements for the injured.

Earlier, Mr Shah had spoken to Mr Abdullah over the phone about the “tragic incident”, the official sources said.

Pahalgam, about 90 km southeast of J&K capital Srinagar, is a basecamp of the annual Amarnath yatra, which is scheduled to begin on July 3 simultaneously from both traditional Pahalgam and shorter Baltal routes. The terror attack has taken place at a time when the scenic Kashmir Valley is witnessing a surge in tourist arrivals.

Citizens of J&K took out candle marches across the UT and a bandh has been called on Wednesday. The shutdown call has been given by Chambers of Commerce and Industries Kashmir, JK Hoteliers Club, civil society groups, etc.

Meanwhile, multiple emergency control rooms have been established in Pahalgam, Anantnag and Srinagar to assist tourists. In a post on X, J&K’s department of information and public relations said these include: Emergency control room — Srinagar 0194-2457543, 0194-2483651 Adil Fareed, ADC Srinagar — 7006058623 helpline “for the assistance on Pahalgam terror incident.

THE ASIAN AGE

23 APRIL 2025

World in flux: India must see bigger trade picture

Trade deals are the flavour of the season as Donald Trump’s tariffs play ducks and drakes with the global players of the world economy. As nations bend in their avidity to sign deals to get off the tariff merry-go-round, a miffed China is holding out threats to those who are keen to sign deals with the US at the expense of its interests.

It is against this background of trade deals to thwart Trumpian tariffs that the visit of his deputy J.D. Vance to India with his Indian American wife Usha and children with Hindu and Christian names assumed a greater significance. The voice of Trump’s deputy must also count with his boss who has myriad other advisers, of whom one is the richest man in the world.

The optics of the meeting with Mr Vance and his family could not have been more congenial as the Prime Minister Narendra Modi took delight in interacting with their young kids too and projecting a softer image in the process. And the Vance family will also be having a run of picture post-card-like Indian tourist destinations.

In most recent times, India has sought to make its ties with the United States a pillar of its foreign policy strategy just as the USA looked to India to counterbalance China. The strength of those ties is reckoned to be as important as the \$41.18 billion trade surplus that India enjoyed with the United States last year and because of which it was one of the countries targeted with reciprocal tariffs that have been put on hold for 90 days to July.

The importance of pleasing Trump to avoid altogether or soften the proposed tariffs at 26 per cent or higher can never be stressed too much. And the India-US trade deal, titled BTA, is taking aim at being mutually beneficial while focusing on the welfare of the people of the two countries.

Considering the interests of Indian traders and the country’s countless farmers, the cost of computing the sacrifices, including a big cut in tariffs on high-end motorcycles like the Harley Davidson, and bourbon whisky, might be a slippery slope. Even then India is bent upon delivering an interim trade deal before the threatened tariffs kick in. Only time will tell what the real costs will be, especially on dairy farmers if the dairy sector were to be thrown open to the US.

The one thing that Indians cannot lose sight of is the price of concentrating hugely on pleasing Trump with a trade deal and through that attempting to preserve the strategic ties that have developed so well. While a favourable surplus in India-US trade seems such a tricky issue to be addressed now, imagine the problem of a huge trade deficit, as in trade with China that, at \$9.2 billion, is nearly \$100 bn and rising.

It is vital that India looks at the bigger picture and considers responding to overtures from China’s envoy regarding his country being willing to look at the burgeoning trade surplus and do something about it, like buying higher quality Indian goods. When the world is in turmoil with the Trump tariff threats, India would be doing itself a favour if it looks at containing the China surplus. After all, this is the time of the big reset in global trade and India must look at world trade in a comprehensive way.

Gold prices: Stability needed

Congratulations to Indian women, whose native ingenuity in financial management has once again been demonstrated to the world. Gold has long been an object of envy and has triggered many battles over millennia. But in the last few decades, investment gurus have derided it as a dead investment. However, Indian women continued their bets on gold, which have now paid off, with the price of the yellow metal crossing ₹1,00,000 per 10 grams.

The gold price remained largely stable until 2020 at ₹40,000. From ₹10,000 in 2006 to ₹40,000 in 2020, the price rose by 10.41 per cent annually. However, since the onset of the Covid pandemic in 2020, gold has outperformed almost every other asset class. It took five years — from January 2020 to January 2025 — to add another ₹40,000. This period was marked by global conflicts, such as the Russia-Ukraine war and the West Asian crisis. The election of Donald Trump as the US President and his actions have created unprecedented uncertainty in the world, making gold almost the only safe haven.

The rise in the gold price, nevertheless, has been mainly driven by fear and, therefore, may not be sustainable. The latest available production cost for gold is \$1,456 per ounce (28.35 grams), or ₹43,748.40 per 10 grams. However, it is currently selling at a 128 per cent premium to its cost at ₹1,00,000, which is unsustainable in the long run.

Gold is merely an investment avenue for the superrich investors in the West, who are parking billions of dollars in gold, driving its price up to the stratosphere. For Indians, however, it is an invariable part of their lives, from birth to death, and such a high price is unsettling. For the greater good of the world, and Indians, therefore, let us hope that peace returns and makes the yellow metal relatively more affordable.

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KAUSHIK MITTER

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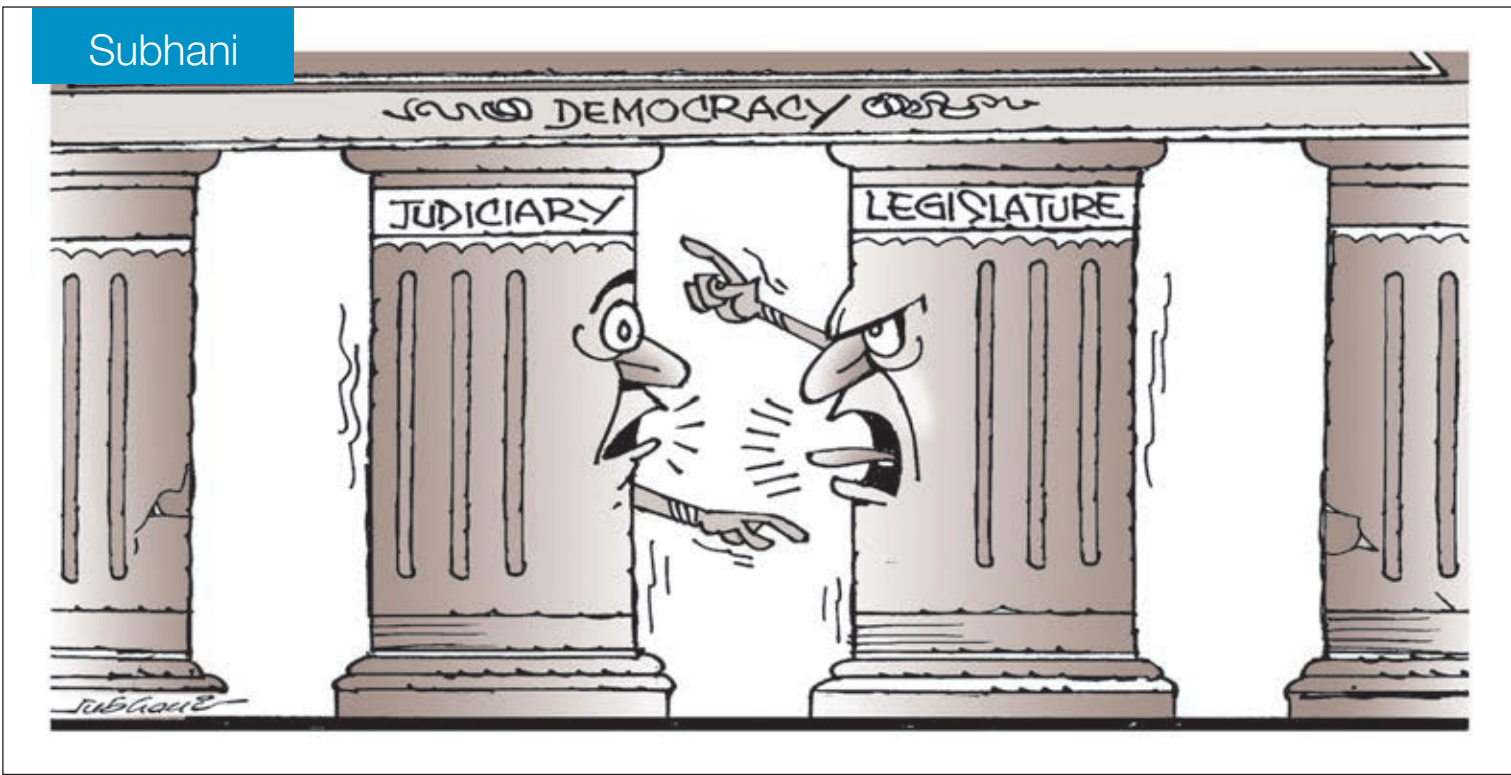
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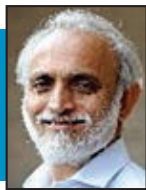
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Subhani



Will new pontiff continue Pope Francis’ glasnost?



Parsa Venkateshwar Rao Jr

As the world mourns the death of Pope Francis, the first Latin American head of the Roman Catholic Church, who died on April 21, Easter Monday, at the age of 88, the Catholic Church’s top prelates in the Vatican will be busy in the next few weeks with the election of the new Pope. The Church has its time-honoured bureaucratic procedures of electing the successor to Pope Francis through the members of the College of Cardinals below the age of 80. Interestingly, Pope Francis has created 30 cardinals from Asia and Africa, making the important assembly of cardinals even more representative. So, the speculation about the successor of Francis is whether it would be another outsider like him — an Argentine though his Italian grandparents had migrated to Argentina after the First World War to seek a better life compared to the straitened economic status in Turin.

He was also the first Jesuit to become the Pope. This has its own symbolism. The Jesuits, known as the Society of Jesus, had spearheaded the Counter-Reformation in the face of German Augustan monk Martin Luther’s Protestant rebellion. The Jesuits have been known to be the defenders of the Roman Catholic Church, reputed for their shrewdness and cunning. Pope Francis was shrewd in many ways but in a benign sense. His liberal views on the issue of gay priests — his famous riposte “Who am I to judge” — and his attempt to reach out to the Islamic world at the time of rising Islamophobia — have their element of cunning too. But he made

these issues more than a matter of policy and strategy.

The openness he displayed was rooted in his moral commitment. And here comes the interesting complication of his worldview. Even as he adopted the name of Francis after St Francis of Assisi, he showed his commitment to the Franciscan vows of poverty, compassion. Pope Francis cared for the poor, and one of his declared commitments on becoming the Pope was to keep the Church poor and to care for the poor. This awareness of the poor can be traced back to his own growing-up years in Buenos Aires in a neighbourhood of immigrants. And he was also drawn to the famous Liberation Theology movement of the Roman Catholic priests in Latin America. He recalls in his autobiography, Hope, that he grew up among people of other faiths, who included Jews and Muslims. This is a dimension that shaped his views about religions and how the church should approach the issue.

The general view of Pope Francis has been that he has been a liberal and progressive pontiff, and the Roman Catholic Church was in need of a man like him after the pronounced conservatism of his predecessor Pope Benedict XV and of Pope John Paul II, who was hailed as the man who contributed to the downfall of Communism starting with his native Poland. That was a formidable legacy. John Paul II was the Pope from 1978 to 2005, and Benedict XVI from 2005 to 2013. So, Pope Francis’ papal term of 12 years seems to have just opened the windows to winds of change if they are to be called that.

The conservatives in the

Pope Francis reached out to create saints from outside the Western realm — Kolkata’s St Teresa in 2016, Cardinal John Henry Newman, the 19th century English Catholic priest, and also from Argentina and Brazil

Roman Catholic Church remain entrenched, and Pope Francis had to brush them aside. He did not always consult the College of Cardinals, and formed his own small, select committee of nine cardinals to advise him. He appointed many women to key positions in the Roman Curia, the administrative setup of the Vatican.

The other revolutionary and conservative — yes, this is indeed the mix of irreconcilable features — aspect of Francis’ papacy has been his canonisation policy. He has reached out to create saints through the well-laid out process of the Roman Catholic Church from outside the Western realm — Kolkata’s St Teresa (of the Missionaries of Charity) in 2016, Cardinal John Henry Newman, the 19th century English Catholic priest who is known for his famous essay *The Idea of a University*. And also from Argentina and Brazil. The little noticed canonisation was that of 800 Catholics who had been massacred by the Turks in 1480 and known as the Italian martyrs of Otranto. The total number of those canonised by Francis rises to a phenomenal 912. Among those canonised were three of his predecessors, Pope John XXIII, Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II. Canonisation is a way of strengthening the Roman Catholic Church. It can be rationalised as a way of remembering the people who have done much for the faithful. And he would have most likely defended it as such.

Pope Francis had adopted a nuanced stance of

being rooted in religion and the traditions of the Church even as he reached out to the poor people of all faiths across the world. And he derived his compassion and concern from his own religious beliefs. To remain rooted in religion and faith in a time of both existential and political uncertainties is a matter of both integrity and courage. It is in this act of commitment that Pope Francis becomes an ideal, and it is not surprising that people across the world and across faiths admire him.

So, can the papal conclave elect a man to succeed Pope Francis who can combine the many gifts, talents and commitment that Francis had brought to his high office? There is little doubt that the Roman Catholic Church is mired in controversy — moral and financial — and there is need for a man with a clear moral vision to be at the helm. It is not an easy task for members of the conclave. The eyes of 1.3 billion Roman Catholics will be focused on the Vatican even as they mourn the passing of a charismatic Pope Francis.

There are millions who are disgusted with the workings of the Roman Catholic Church, and they are mainly from among the Roman Catholics. But they also realise the importance of preserving the historical edifice with its centuries-old traditions because it offers hope and sustenance of its own. It might be easy to dismiss the Roman Catholic Church as a humongous superstition. But to millions it is an edifice of solace. And it is from the many who are dedicated to the Church that men like Pope Francis emerge. Around the world, political leaders have turned out to be more than shallow and diabolical. It is in this vacuum that the importance of individuals like Pope Francis in a position of leadership seems so necessary.

The writer is a Delhi-based commentator and analyst

LETTERS

INDIA UNLUCKY

Not many Popes in history have had the courage of conviction on a host of tricky issues, castigating the developed West for their treatment of immigrants to concern for the LGBT+ and condemnation of Israel over the Gaza attacks. Born Jorge Bergoglio, he was elected Pope on March 13, 2013, and died on the day after Easter in 2025 after a prolonged illness. Pope Francis carried the concerns of the people all through his papal tenure. Even when in physical pain he never lost his cheerful demeanour. It is a sad day for not just the Catholics of the world but to all who cherish Christian values. The fond hopes of the Catholics of India that he would visit us have remained unfulfilled.

Anthony Henriques
Mumbai

JAIL RAMDEV NOW

THE DELHI high court on Tuesday came down heavily on Patanjali founder and yoga guru Ramdev for his controversial “Sharbat Jihad” comments allegedly aimed at Hamdard’s popular drink Rooh Afza, calling the comment “indefensible” and something that “shocks the conscience of the court”. This is a case of creating communal divide, akin to hate speech. He must be awarded a jail sentence.

Sankar Paul
Chakdaha, West Bengal

READ PRINTED BOOKS

ON APRIL 23, World Book Day, we should wake up from our indifference to the demise of libraries. Library books remain in sleep mode and over-dependence on digital books coupled with the AI onslaught has marred true research and the pleasure of reading. This trend must reverse. Though he was a mathematician, Dr S.R. Ranganathan, known as the father of library science in India, gave us Five Laws of Library Science: “Books are for use”, “Every book its user”, “Every user his book”, “Save time of the reader” and “Library is a growing organism” 100 years back. Tagore, too, donated a good part of his Nobel Prize money to establish libraries on Kolkata’s outskirts.

Brij Bhushan Goyal
Ludhiana

Pradeep S. Mehta



India’s ‘circular economy’: It’s an old concept for a new world

In India, the circular economy is not a borrowed idea — it is a cultural legacy. Woven into our traditions, values, and daily practices, circularity has long been a way of life rather than a policy. Long before terms like “circular economy” or “sustainable consumption” entered the global discourse, Indian households have lived these values without fanfare, but with conviction.

Sustainability wasn’t strategy, it is a way of life. It was *sanskara* (culture) — part of how we were raised to think and act.

Old saris became quilts. Oil tins turned into storage boxes. Clothes were mended by neighbourhood tailors, often shared across siblings, and rarely wasted. Leaving behind uneaten food in the plate was blasphemous. These weren’t acts of altruism but acts of reverence. Our ancestors practiced what the world now preaches — respect for resources, minimisation of waste, and living in harmony with nature. Circularity ran through our festivals, rituals and rural economies, echoing philosophy rooted in regeneration and restraint.

What looked like thrift was a deep ecological worldview. While industrial economies raced ahead with the linear “take-make-dispose” model, India retained its cultural ethic of renewal.

But even we haven’t been immune to the pull of hyper-consumerism. Aspirations have shifted. Global supply chains have shortened product life cycles, advertising has redefined needs as wants, and durability has given way to disposability. Even those striving to make responsible choices find themselves caught in a dilemma, as sustainable alternatives,

when available, are often expensive.

From Cultural Memory to Climate Mission: In this landscape, where conscious choices are difficult and traditional wisdom is fading, India needs a new path — one that reconnects with its roots while aligning with global climate goals.

It is in this context that Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment), launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in October 2022 alongside UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, becomes highly relevant. Framed as a global mass movement, Mission LiFE calls for shifting from wasteful consumption to mindful, purpose driven living. It identifies individual behaviour as the core of climate action, urging people to make small, impactful changes in daily life.

We have had Ecomark, the environmental labelling scheme, in India since 1991, but it has hardly been successful because of lack of political will. Very few products qualified under that which were also not marketed with the environmental attributes. A few years ago, Mr Modi reviewed the scheme and suggested that it should be revived and to begin with, products made from waste be promoted under the Ecomark scheme. This step would have pushed our circular economy in a big way. Alas, there was little traction then and even today. However, many such products are being promoted by businesses.

The transformative potential here is vast. Even without Ecomark, campaigns now promote energy efficient appliances, electric mobility, and responsible e-waste disposal. A working paper by the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister

estimates that a circular economy path could reduce India’s greenhouse gas emissions by 23 per cent in 2030 and by 44 per cent in 2050 compared to current trajectory.

Making Sustainability Default, Not the Privilege: But real transformation demands more than individual resolve. The burden of sustainability cannot rest solely on consumers, especially when eco-friendly choices remain a luxury. If organic food, renewable energy and ethically produced goods are costlier and less accessible than their polluting counterparts, sustainability risks becoming an elite pursuit. The challenge, therefore, is systemic — how do we make sustainable consumption the default — affordable, aspirational, and available to all? This is where policy and industry must lead. Green innovation needs investment. Circular businesses must be incentivised. Sustainable goods must enter mainstream supply chains. Urban planning must support zero waste models, shared mobility and walkable cities. Subsidies must move from fossil fuels to renewables and regenerative agriculture.

India is already making bold moves. The Green Credit Programme, launched in 2023, aims to create a market where eco-positive actions earn tradable credits, offering economic incentives for sustainability. Still, much remains to be done.

Recent reports indicate that several leading electronics companies are resisting India’s e-waste rules under EPR, calling them overly strict, expensive and hard to comply with. Sustainability cannot be optional, especially by those who have long profited from a linear, extractive economy driven by planned obso-

lescence and unchecked consumption.

To overcome resistance, we need not just regulate, but affirm circularity as the way ahead. A contemporary reflection of this ethos lies in the global second-hand trade. In many regions, markets for pre-owned garments and used cars support livelihoods, offer affordability, and slow the production waste cycle. Yet, these markets are unfairly stigmatised as symbols of underdevelopment rather than tools of sustainability. Instead of discouraging them, policy must dignify and strengthen such markets.

Religious traditions can play a transformative role. Research from the UK finds that Hindus in India exhibit the highest concern about the environmental impact of their consumption. This cultural capital, rooted in values of restraint and interdependence, can become a powerful lever for change, if activated with care and inclusivity.

India stands at a unique juncture. It has the policy momentum, the cultural heritage and the demographic energy to lead a truly transformative circular economy model. Success will depend on how well we bridge past and future, tradition and innovation. In doing so, India can offer the world not just climate solutions, but civilisational wisdom — reminding us that the circular economy isn’t just about managing materials but about reimagining our relationship with the planet.

The writer is the secretary-general of CUTS International, a 40-year-old leading global public policy research and advocacy group. He is also a founder member of the GoI’s Ecomark scheme.

SHORT TAKES

VAN PLUNGES INTO RAVINE IN PAK, 16 KILLED

Karachi, April 22: A speeding van fell into a ravine in southern Pakistan, killing at least 16 people, including women and children, and injuring 30 others, authorities said.

The accident took place in Jamshoro district in the Sindh province on Monday.

According to details, the accident took place in the hilly region when the driver of the van lost control of the vehicle due to over speeding and the van fell into a ditch, killing 16 persons on the spot and injuring 30 others, *Dunya News* reported.

EVACUATIONS AS PLANE CATCHES FIRE AT AIRPORT

Orlando, April 22: A Delta Air Lines airplane caught fire on Monday before it was supposed to take off at a central Florida airport, forcing the evacuation of passengers, airport officials said.

There were no reports of any injuries during the fire on the plane at Orlando International Airport, Delta said. A recent spate of aviation disasters and close calls in the US has stoked fears about air travel, though flying remains a safe way to travel. On-the-ground accidents included a plane that crashed and flipped over upon landing in Toronto.

RUSSIA HACKERS TARGET DUTCH PUBLIC FACILITY

The Hague, April 22: Russian hackers targeted a Dutch public facility last year in the first such an attack on the lowlands country's infrastructure, its military intelligence services said on Monday.

The Netherlands remained an "interesting target country" for Moscow due to its ongoing support for Ukraine, its Hague-based international organisations, high-tech industries, and harbours such as Rotterdam, the Military Intelligence and Security Service (MIVD) said.

Last year, the MIVD "saw a Russian hacker group carry out a cyber attack."

12 CHILDREN DIE IN I. COAST BOAT CAPSIZE: MIN.

Abidjan, April 22: A boat overturned during a church outing for Easter on a lagoon near the city of Abidjan in Ivory Coast, killing 12 children and teenagers, a government minister told *AFP* on Tuesday.

"Twelve bodies have been recovered and are being taken to the morgue," said sports minister Adje Silas Metch, who went during the night to the site of the accident.

The bodies are "of children and adolescents", he added, saying one was a youngster who was not from the church but had joined the boat crossing.

COALITION RIFT: THAI PM SAYS NO CABINET SHAKEUP

Bangkok, April 22: Thailand's Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra has ruled out an imminent Cabinet shakeup amid reports of a growing rift between her ruling party and its biggest coalition partner.

Paetongtarn, who became Thailand's youngest leader in September last year, while talking to reporters on Tuesday said that she was happy with the performance of her first Cabinet so far.

There was no plan to oust Bhumjaithai Party led by Deputy Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul from the ruling coalition, she said.

UN AGENCY HALTS FOOD AID FOR 6.5L ETHIOPIANS

Addis Ababa, April 22: The World Food Programme said Tuesday that it was suspending aid for 6,50,000 malnourished women and children in Ethiopia because of a lack of funding.

The United Nations agency warned that they were among 3.6 million people in Ethiopia who would no longer have access to food aid in the coming weeks without urgent new funding.

"WFP is being forced to halt treatment for 650,000 malnourished women and children in May due to insufficient funding," it said in a statement.

PNG's first saint was Pope's unfulfilled wish

Sydney, April 22: In one of his final acts, Pope Francis cleared the way for Papua New Guinea to get its first saint — an anti-polygamy preacher who died in prison during Japan's World War II occupation.

The late pontiff confided to religious leaders in the Pacific nation that he wanted to personally oversee the canonisation of "martyr" Peter To Rot.

Now, that honour will fall to his successor.

"He told me that he wanted to canonise Peter To Rot himself," said Tomas Ravaoli, an Argentine missionary in Papua New Guinea who met with the Pope when he visited in September last year.

"He said that To Rot is the kind of saint that people need in this moment. You know, he's not a priest or a bishop — he's a normal man," Ravaoli told *AFP*.

"It's very sad for us because we were expecting him to canonise Peter To Rot." To Rot was formally cleared for sainthood on March 31 when the Vatican issued decrees for the "causes of saints". His canonisation will take place during a mass in the Vatican at a time yet to be decided, at the discretion of Francis's successor. "We don't know who is going to do it," Ravaoli said.

"And of course, we love the next Pope without knowing him yet. But it will not be the same." To Rot's supporters travelled the country for decades collecting evidence to convince the Vatican of his eligibility for sainthood.

"He's a layman. He was 33 years old. He was a married man with three children," said Ravaoli, who has worked for To Rot's elevation for years. "He was not a superhero, but he was a normal man of a village," he said.

To Rot, born in 1912 in Rakunai — 800 km (500 miles) from Port Moresby — was a spiritual guide for Catholics in the area during World War II, the Vatican says.

He fought against polygamy and practised even as religious leaders were detained by Japanese occupiers.

To Rot was imprisoned by Japanese authorities and died of poisoning in July 1945, according to the Vatican.

Pope John Paul II beatified To Rot in 1995, setting him on the path to sainthood. The final step is canonisation.

Ravaoli said he hoped sainthood for the local preacher would rekindle the "flame of faith" in the devoutly Christian country. But Papua New Guinea also suffers from poverty, rampant domestic abuse, witch hunts and tribal violence in which thousands have been killed and tens of thousands displaced.

For many in Papua New Guinea, the church is synonymous with healthcare, education and welfare that the state does not provide.

An estimated 98 per cent of Papua New Guineans are Christian and about 25 per cent are Catholic. — *AFP*

ISRAELI STRIKES KILL 26; CAIRO SET FOR TALKS

Gaza City, Palestinian Territories, April 22: A Hamas delegation departed for Cairo to discuss "new ideas" aimed at securing a ceasefire in Gaza, an official from the group said, as Israeli air strikes killed 26 people across the territory on Tuesday.

The renewed effort follows Hamas's rejection last week of Israel's latest proposal to secure the release of hostages still held in Gaza.

Talks have so far failed to produce any breakthrough since Israel resumed its air and ground assault on Gaza from March 18. "The delegation will meet with Egyptian officials to discuss new ideas." — *AFP*



Souvenirs with images of Pope Francis are displayed next to St. Peter's Square at the Vatican. — *AP*

GLOSSARY IN PAPAL TRANSITION

VATICAN CAMERLENGO: The cardinal in charge of formally verifying the Pope's death. The current one is the Irish-born American Cardinal Kevin Farrell.



COLLEGE OF CARDINALS: There are 252 cardinals worldwide, and as a body, they are in charge of the Holy See's affairs in-between Popes, albeit with limits.

CARDINAL ELECTORS: 135 in number, who will be gathering in the Vatican to choose the new Pope.

THE CONCLAVE: This is the closed-door meeting of the cardinal electors to choose the new Pope.



THE DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF CARDINALS: The current dean is Italian Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, who is the head of the College of Cardinals.

DOMUS SANTA MARTA: This Vatican guesthouse specifically houses cardinals during a conclave.



WHY IS THE POPE'S RING CALLED THE FISHERMAN'S RING? It bears this name because Jesus told St. Peter, the first Pope, that he would be a fisher of men.

GENERAL CONGREGATIONS: This is the name given to the gathering of all members of the College of Cardinals after the Pope's death and before the start of the conclave to discuss major church affairs.



THE REVISERS: These are the three cardinals, chosen by random drawing from the electors, who are charged with reviewing the ballots during the conclave.

A ROGITO: This is the document, or deed, listing key details of the Pope's life and papacy that is placed in his coffin.

THE SCRUTINEERS: These are the three cardinals, chosen by random drawing from the electors, who are charged with reviewing each ballot and announcing it to the assembled conclave.



'HIGHLY UNLIKELY' TO BE NEXT POPE, SWEDISH CARDINAL SAYS

Stockholm, April 22: A Swedish cardinal considered to be among the potential favourites to succeed Pope Francis said on Tuesday that he did not expect to be elected at the conclave.

"It would be fun to have a Swedish pope but I think it's pretty unlikely. Highly unlikely," Anders Arborelius, 75, said.

Arborelius, the first Swedish Catholic bishop since the Protestant Reformation more than 500 years ago, was appointed as the Scandinavian country's first cardinal in 2017.

He converted to Catholicism at the age of 20 in the overwhelmingly Protestant country but also home to one of the world's most secularised societies.

Arborelius confirmed he would take part in the conclave to elect the next pope but told SVT that he had asked Francis to release him from his duties as cardinal, because he wants to return to live in his monastery in Sweden.

He said the pope had approved his request but no date had been set for the end of his tenure. — *AFP*

POLL | POURRI

Technology companies are struggling to keep up with AI's online disruption

AI floods Amazon with strange political books

Toronto, April 22: Canada has seen a boom in political books created with generative artificial intelligence, adding to concerns about how new technologies are affecting the information voters receive during the election campaign. Prime Minister Mark Carney was the subject of at least 16 books published in March and listed on Amazon.com, according to a review of the site on April 16. Five of those were published on a single day.

In total, some 30 titles were published about Carney this year and made available on Amazon — but most were taken down from the site after inquiries from *Bloomberg News*.

One author, James A. Powell, put his name to at least three books about the former central banker, who's now leading the Liberal Party and is narrowly favored to win the election.

Among the titles that Amazon removed: "Carney's Code: Climate Capitalism, Digital Currencies, and the Technocratic Takeover of the Global Economy — Inside Mark Carney's Blueprint for the Post-Democratic World."

Another book by Powell called 'Mark Carney: The Unelected Power Broker of the 21st Century,' which is still available, begins with an error, falsely claiming Carney graduated from Queen's University in Kin-



Prime Minister Mark Carney was the subject of at least 16 books published in March and listed on Amazon.com, according to a review of the site on April 16. — *AP*

gston, Ontario.

Others veer into the surreal: One sports the title 'Mark Carney Biography: The Rise Of The Tin Man Who Deserve Respect For Building A Better World For All' and an image of a man who isn't the leader.

The episode underscores that even the world's biggest technology companies are struggling to keep up with how AI is accelerating disruption of media

and public affairs online. Canadian election officials have been worried about the potential for foreign interference and the impacts of fake and manipulated news articles, social media posts and other materials ahead of the April 28 vote.

Facebook and X have hosted scam advertisements that are made to look like political news stories. — *Bloomberg*

Harvard sues US admin over \$2bn grant freeze

As controversies pile up, Trump allies turn on one another

Boston, April 22: Harvard University announced Monday that it has filed suit to halt a federal freeze on more than \$2.2 billion in grants after the institution said it would defy the Trump administration's demands to limit activism on campus.

In an April 11 letter to Harvard, the Trump administration had called for broad government and leadership reforms at the university and changes to its admissions policies. It also demanded the university audit views of diversity on campus and stop recognising some student clubs. Harvard President Alan Garber said the university would not bend to the demands.

Hours later, the government froze billions of dollars in federal funding. "The Government has not — and cannot — identify any rational connection between antisemitism concerns and the medical, scientific, technological, and other research it has frozen that aims to save American lives, foster American success, preserve American security, and maintain America's position as a global leader in innovation," said the lawsuit, filed in Boston federal court.

"Nor has the government acknowledged the significant consequences that the indefinite freeze of billions of dollars in federal research funding will have on Harvard's research programmes, the beneficiaries of that research, and the national interest in furthering American innovation and progress," it added.

Harvard's suit called the funding freeze "arbitrary and capricious," saying it violated its First Amend-



President Donald Trump stands with the Easter bunny as he participates in the White House Easter Egg Roll on the South Lawn of the White House, on Monday. — *AP*

Trump endorsement for next Arizona Gov

Phoenix (US), April 22: President Donald Trump added another endorsement in next year's Republican primary for Arizona governor, saying on Monday that he was backing US Rep. Andy Biggs in addition to his previously announced endorsement of housing developer Karrin Taylor Robson.

Trump's endorsement of Robson late last year angered some of his biggest allies in the state, who are suspicious of her longstanding ties to the Republican business establishment and preferred a candidate with deep roots in Trump's "Make America Great

Again" movement.

A former chair of the US House's hard-right Freedom Caucus and former state Senate president, Biggs has long been a close ally to Trump and supported his false claims about the 2020 presidential election being stolen.

Biggs represents a deep red district including cities like Queen Creek and Gilbert, and has ties to the party's grassroots.

Biggs has had no problem with defying party leadership — such as when he and seven other House Republicans helped oust Kevin McCarthy as House Speaker in 2023. — *AP*

ment rights and the statutory provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Within hours, the White House lashed back. "The gravy train of federal assistance to institutions like Harvard,

which enrich their grossly overpaid bureaucrats with tax dollars from struggling American families is coming to an end," White House spokesman Harrison Fields said in an email. — *AP*

US envoy to visit Moscow as US pushes for ceasefire

Moscow, Kyiv, April 22: US envoy Steve Witkoff is expected to visit Russia this week, a Kremlin aide said Tuesday, as US President Donald Trump seeks a speedy deal to end the three-year Ukraine conflict as Russian drones battered the Ukrainian port city of Odesa in a nighttime attack, local authorities said on Tuesday, less than 24 hours after a purported Easter ceasefire unilaterally declared by Moscow ended and just over a day before Ukrainian, British, French and US officials are due to meet in London to discuss the war.

Anticipation is building over whether diplomatic efforts can stop more than three years of fighting since Russia's full-scale invasion of its neighbour as Russia is ready to consider a proposal by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy for a halt to attacks by both sides on each other's civilian infrastructure, the Kremlin said on Tuesday.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said it was a complex topic that President Vladimir Putin was ready to discuss. But he also told reporters there were no concrete plans at the moment for talks between Russia and Ukraine. — *Agencies*



A car burns near a residential building damaged by a Russian strike in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, on Tuesday. — *AP*

Russian court cuts jail term for US man

Moscow, April 22: A Russian court on Tuesday ordered that the jail sentence of a US citizen convicted of drug trafficking be reduced to 9-1/2 years from 12-1/2, the man's lawyer told *Reuters*.

Robert Woodland was found guilty in July 2024 of attempting to sell drugs after he was arrested while transporting about 50 grams of mephedrone, a stimulant drug in the same class

as amphetamine, to a safe cache in Moscow, prosecutors said. His lawyer, Stanislav Kshevitsky, previously told *Reuters* that Woodland had partially admitted guilt. It was not immediately clear why his sentence was lowered.

Born in Russia in 1991 and adopted as a toddler by US parents, Woodland returned to his birth country as an adult to meet his biological mother. — *Reuters*

Australians start voting in elections

Melbourne, April 22: Australians began voting Tuesday in general elections as the death of Pope Francis led to a cancellation of campaign events.

Polling stations opened to voters who, for a variety of reasons, will be unable to vote on May 3.

Around half the votes are expected to be cast before then. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and opposition leader Peter Dutton cancelled events out of respec-

ct for the late pontiff. Flags were flown at half-staff at government buildings across the country, where a 2021 census found 20% of the population was Catholic. Albanese, who has described himself as a "flawed Catholic," attended Mass in honour of the pope in Melbourne's St. Patrick's Cathedral. "I try not to talk about my faith in public," he said. "At times like this, I think what people do is, they draw on who they are." — *AP*

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	79,595.59	0.24
Nifty 50	24,167.25	0.17
S&P 500*	5,258.28	0.97
Dollar (₹)	85.20	1.04
Pound Sterling (₹)	113.91	-0.15
Euro (₹)	97.89	-0.41
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	1,01,600▲1,800	1.65
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	66.90	0.97
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.326	0.006
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	4.401	-0.004

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Airtel to acquire spectrum from Adani Data

Bharti Airtel said the company along with its subsidiary Bharti Hexacom will acquire rights to use entire 400 megahertz (MHz) spectrum of Adani Data Networks. Adani arm had acquired 400 Mhz spectrum in 26 gigahertz band for about ₹212 crore in 2022. "The spectrum are in Gujarat (100 MHz), Mumbai (100 MHz), Andhra Pradesh (50 MHz), Rajasthan (50 MHz), Karnataka (50 MHz) and Tamil Nadu (50 MHz)," it said.



Flipkart to shift domicile to India from Singapore

Walmart group e-commerce firm Flipkart on Tuesday said it will shift its domicile to India from Singapore- a move that can be seen as a step towards a potential public listing in the country. At present, Flipkart is headquartered in Singapore. "As a company born and nurtured in India, this transition will further enhance our focus and agility in serving our customers, sellers, partners," the company said.

Devyani Int'l has plans to acquire Biryani by Kilo

Devyani International, which operates quick service restaurant chains such as KFC, Pizza Hut through franchise agreements, has announced its plan to acquire homegrown chain 'Biryani by Kilo'. Though it has not disclosed the number of shares or the acquisition price, the company stated that its board is scheduled to meet and approve the proposal on April 24. Started in 2015, BBK has over 70 dine-in outlets.

Rabi Sankar's term extended till May 2026

The government has extended the term of RBI deputy governor T. Rabi Sankar for another one year till May 2026, according to sources. This is the second one-year extension granted to him. The appointments committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the re-appointment of Rao for a period of one year with effect from May 3, or until further orders, sources said quoting a government order dated April 21.

SAFE HAVEN GOLD PRICE HITS ₹1.01L

LATEST RALLY IN YELLOW METAL STARTED IN 2022 WHEN ECONOMY WAS IN BAD SHAPE AFTER COVID

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, APRIL 22

Gold prices in the Indian spot market moved into six-digit numbers after crossing ₹1 lakh per 10 gm on Tuesday - 20 years after it entered the five-digit territory.

Since 2005, gold has appreciated by 1,200 per cent and seen the highest yearly gain of 33 per cent so far in 2025, the highest gain since the 1980s.

In the Delhi bullion market, gold opened at ₹1,01,600 per 10 gm after falling short by ₹50 to get to the six-digit level on Monday. In the MCX, prices touched a high of ₹99,358 and in the international market prices made a high of \$3,498 per troy ounce.

Gold was priced ₹10,000 in May 2006. It took 14 years for gold to climb ₹50,000-level by 2020. The latest bull-run that started in 2022 saw gold rising 80.5 per cent from ₹55,000 to over ₹1 lakh in three years.

Compared to other asset classes, gold has given the highest return since 2005. While gold has appreciated 1,200 per cent from ₹7,638 per 10 gm on MCX, compared to 814 per cent gain in Sensex and 648 per cent return in silver.

"Similar to other asset classes gold also has seen corrections but has not seen any free-fall till now," said Ajay Kedia, managing director, Kedia Commodities.

Gold has gained 33 per cent so far in 2025, the biggest rally since 1980s. The second biggest yearly gain was witnessed in 2007 - 31 per cent, followed by 29 per cent in 2010 and 27 per cent in 2024. Years like 2002, 2006, and 2009 delivered 24 per cent returns, highlighting a mini bull era during that decade. "The latest rally started in 2022 when the economy was in bad shape. Apart from the Russia-Ukraine war, de-dollarisation, gold-buying by central banks, buying by gold-backed ETFs and interest rate cuts supported gold," said Kedia.



THE PERFORMANCE OF GOLD OVER time highlights that the Indian housewife is the smartest fund manager in the world. Governments, central banks, economists, who support pump priming, high deficit funding, may need to take a leaf from India, a net importer of store of value forever!

— UDAY KOTAK, Founder and director, Kotak Mahindra Bank

Homemakers get math right, amass 25,900 tonne gold worth ₹256L-cr

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, APRIL 22

Around 25,900 tonnes of household gold stocks in India have seen their value going up to a whopping ₹250 lakh crore with the yellow metal prices rising beyond ₹1 lakh per 10 gm. Further, the value of 31 tonnes of yellow metal deposited under the Gold Monetisation scheme has gone up to over ₹30,700 crore.

As per World Gold Council, the household gold stock could be 23,925 tonnes to 25,925 tonnes. With prices crossing ₹1 lakh per 10 gm, the value of these stocks would range from ₹236 lakh crore to ₹256 lakh crore.

According to WGC and Metal Focus, which have come out with the estimate of the gold stocks,

the primary component has been imports since the 1990s when the Gold Control Act was repealed. Imports have remained around 700-800 tonnes in the past two decades.

It also includes part of the gold lying idle with the temples, religious trusts and other organisations, which could come around 4,000 tonnes.

There are around 700 temples which own gold, including ones like Sri Padmanabha Temple in Thiruvananthapuram, Tirumala, Vaishno Devi and Siddhi Vinayak temples," finds Metal Focus.

As per reports, Sri Padmanabhaswamy temple owns around 1,300 tonnes of gold and Tirumala 10.3 tonnes.

However, a large majority of the gold stocks is owned by Indian households. The legacy gold

lying with them prior to 1990s and for centuries have under-caratage issues. A large part of them would have come out into the market as recycled gold. Besides, the RBI holds over 850 tonnes of gold as reserves.

However, the real stocks of gold could be even higher as prior to the repeal of the Gold Control Act, gold was smuggled into the country. Smuggling was rampant during the periods with high import duties.

The Gold Monetisation Scheme was introduced in 2015 to cut the gold imports by paying interest for the gold deposited under the scheme. The scheme has received 31,164 tonnes of gold deposits till November 2024. The value of this may have gone up to ₹30,763 crore with the prices moving up, finds WGC.

Sensex, Nifty continue to rise

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, APRIL 22

Tracking global market worries emanating from the overnight US market fall after Trump's rate cut jibe against US Fed chief Powell, domestic markets traded with caution. The Nifty-50 closed 0.17 per cent or 41.70 per cent up at 24,167.25 while the Sensex gained 0.24 per cent or 187.09 points to close at 79,595.59.

Indian equities managed to close in the green despite cautious cues from the global

markets, backed by continued buying interest and supportive RBI policy, said Siddhartha Khemka, head - Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

"Banking stocks saw strong buying interest following the RBI's release of the liquidity coverage ratio (LCR) guidelines. The new norms are expected to boost LCR by 600 basis points at the sector level," said Bajaj Broking Research.

Nifty bank index made a

new all time high of 55,961.20 and closed at 55647.20 up 0.62 per cent. IT stocks fell in line with overnight fall of US technology stocks and weak Q\$ performance so far.

Sensex and Nifty-50 closed higher for the sixth consecutive session led by gains in safe haven sector stocks like FMCG, realty, healthcare and consumer durables.

Foreign investors were net buyers of equities worth ₹1290.43 cr. Domestic insti-

GOLD AT NEW HIGH

GOLD WAS PRICED ₹10,000 IN MAY 2006. IT TOOK 14 YEARS FOR YELLOW METAL TO CLIMB ₹50,000 LEVEL BY 2020.

GOLD WAS PRICED ₹55,000 in 2022 and it has now moved to over ₹1lakh in just three years.

COMPARED to other asset classes, gold has given the highest return since 2005.

HEAVY DEBT on US economy has diminished trust on US treasury bonds and the dollar.

TARIFF WAR, which triggers inflation risk and consequent recessionary concerns, are currently fueling sky-rocketing of gold prices.

THE LEGACY gold lying with them prior to 1990s and for centuries have under-caratage issues.

VALUE OF GOLD held by households range from ₹236 lakh cr to ₹256 lakh cr.

IN MCX, prices touch high of ₹99,358. In international market, prices high of \$3,498 per troy ounce.

SIMILAR TO OTHER asset classes gold also has seen corrections in between, but the prices have not witnessed any free-fall till now, which makes the yellow metal a reliable asset class.

- AJAY KEDIA, MD, Kedia Commodities

SGB REDEMPTION TO COST ₹6,100 CR

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, APRIL 22

After the redemption of 2.2 tonnes of sovereign gold bonds so far this year, another 6.19 tonnes are up for redemption this calendar year. This would cost around ₹6,100 crore to the government at the current gold prices.

SGB investors waiting for redemption could see a return of 270 per cent on their investments. Bonds issued in 2017 under 14 tranches are up for redemption this year after completing the tenure of eight years. Bonds of 8.41

tutions were net sellers by ₹885.6 cr as market seems to have entered an over bought zone. "Markets had a volatile start following sharp overnight losses in the US markets. Benchmarks soon regained momentum and extended gains, supported by strong gains in the bank stocks after RBI further eased norms helping liquidity," said Satish Chandra Aluri, analyst, Lemon Markets Desk.

tonnes of gold will be redeemed this year, as per the data of the World Gold Council.

Of this, 2.2 tonnes of gold have been already redeemed. The remaining 6.19 tonnes will be redeemed this year. At the current gold rates, the redemption cost of these bonds could be ₹6,141.5 crore.

Recently for the SGB Series III 2017-18, the RBI had announced the pre-mature redemption price of ₹9,221 per bond. The issue price of the bond was ₹2,964. The absolute return on the bonds was 211 per cent.

However, with the gold prices going up, the redemption price of the subsequent series would be higher.

INDIA, U.S. FINALISE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR BILATERAL PACT

FC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

India and the US have finalised the terms of reference (ToR), outlining the roadmap for negotiations of proposed bilateral trade agreement (BTA). India and the US said that they made significant progress in negotiations for a mutually beneficial bilateral trade pact.

US Trade Representative Greer said that these ongoing talks will help achieve balance and reciprocity by opening new markets for American goods and addressing unfair practices that harm US workers.

EoDB priority for govt, says Nirmala

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO NEW DELHI, APRIL 22

Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said that over the last decade India has undertaken several structural reforms, rationalising over 20,000 compliances, decriminalising business laws and digitising public services to reduce friction.

"Our experience with implementing the business reform action plan by different state governments has demonstrated that deregulation is a powerful catalyst for industrial growth. The objective is to strengthen trust-based economic governance and take transformational measures to enhance ease of doing business," she said, while addressing Hoover Institute in California.

Over the past decade, Sitharaman also highlighted several achievements of the government, saying that a significant thrust on infrastructure development has also created a strong foundation for manufacturing-led growth by bolstering investor confidence. "This has been enabled by a more than fourfold increase in the Union government's capital expenditure between 2017-18 and the 2025-26 Budget," the finance minister said.

On small and medium businesses, she also said that a vibrant and thriving network of small and



medium enterprises is essential for domestic manufacturing to grow. "The government has undertaken numerous initiatives to support Msme, from easing access to credit, redefining size thresholds, facilitating prompt payments from large buyers and simplifying compliance burdens," the finance minister said.

"The open network for digital commerce (ONDC) launched in April 2022, has successfully onboarded more than 764 thousand vendors across 616 cities. Our next focus is reducing regulatory frictions, digitising approvals, and integrating Msme into global value chains. Special support to women-led and rural enterprises will help enhance economic opportunities and ensure inclusive growth," Sitharaman added.

On digital public infrastructure (DPI), the finance minister also boasted of the government's achievement, saying that some of the works done in India stand out and one such example is that of DPI and its success.

MONEY MATTERS

Add layers of global investments to portfolio



VAIBHAV SHAH

In today's fast-changing world, growing wealth while keeping risks in check is a key goal for investors. One way to achieve this is by adding global investments to portfolio. By investing beyond home country, can tap into new opportunities, spread risk, and aim for steady returns. Here's why global investments deserve a

spot in financial plan.

GLOBAL INVESTMENTS?

Global investments, like international mutual funds (MFs), Gift city AIF Funds, let diversify across the countries, sectors, and currencies. This reduces dependence on just one market. For example, if India's economy slows down, markets in the U.S. or Asia might still do well, balancing out losses. Plus, holding assets in different currencies - like the U.S. dollar - can protect you when the rupee weakens,

offering a cushion against local setbacks. Emerging markets like China often grow faster than developed ones, promising higher returns. Mix of opportunities can boost portfolio's potential.

WHO CAN INVEST?

Global investments suit anyone looking to diversify and grow wealth over time. They're especially best for beginners or cautious investors who want exposure to international

markets. Before choosing, check fund's long-term performance and manager's track record across market cycles.

RISKS TO WATCH

While global investments offer benefits, they're not risk-free. Political unrest or economic dips in one region can hit returns. Currency swings can also work against if rupee strengthens. And many global markets are mature, their growth might not match

smaller, emerging firms at home. Weigh these factors and align your choices with your goals and risk comfort - or chat with a financial advisor.

A SMART MOVE

Adding global investments is practical way to strengthen portfolio. With diversification, growth potential, and expert-managed funds, it is a step towards long-term success.

(The author is head of products, Mirae Asset Investment Managers)

ORANGE	PURPLE
Sudarshan Sai, GT	Prasidh Krishna, GT
417	16
Nicholas Pooran, LSG	Kuldeep Yadav, DC
377	12
Jos Buttler, GT	Noor Ahmad, CSK
356	12

short takes

Shivam to provide ₹70k to 10 athletes

In a heart-warming gesture, India all-rounder Shivam Dube on Tuesday promised to provide ₹70,000 each to 10 budding athletes from Tamil Nadu. Dube, who plays for Chennai Super Kings, made the touching decision during the Tamil Nadu Sports Journalists' Association's awards and scholarships function here. Dube's reward was in addition to the scholarship of ₹30,000 given by the TNSJA. "When I was travelling from the team hotel to this venue, Dr Baba (TNCA secretary), told me that it was an effort to help some of the youngsters over here. So, this is truly encouraging for all the young athletes," said Dube during the function which was also attended by CSK CEO Kasi Viswanathan. The cricketer, who was part of India's T20 World Cup 2024 winning squad, said such awards, however small in nature, will work as an inspiration for young athletes to bring laurels to the country.

Eoin says KKR failed to overcome failures

Defending champions Kolkata Knight Riders have struggled with batting issues throughout this IPL season and the changes made for the home game against Gujarat Titans were not effective, feels former captain Eoin Morgan. KKR's loss to Titans by 39 runs on Monday was their second consecutive defeat in the tournament, third in the last five matches and overall fifth in eight games. It has also been a season of struggle at home for KKR who have also lost three of the four matches at the Eden Gardens. "Kolkata Knight Riders has simply not bounced back as well as we would have liked them to. It's always a good sign for a strong team with a lot of character around, but they had the same failures that they've shown throughout the tournament," said JioStar expert Morgan. "They made a couple of changes (against GT), mainly to try and gain some impetus in their batting line-up, and it didn't necessarily come off. Were the changes worth it? They'll sit back and say no." Morgan said KKR failed to forge partnerships in chase of 199 as they finished at an ordinary 159/8. "There was no rhythm, no substantial partnerships — almost the polar opposite of what Titans displayed," he added.

INDIA ARE THIRD AT SHOOTING WORLDS

Lima (Peru), April 22: Indian shooters finished third at the ISSF World Cup after the pair of Prithviraj Tondaiman and Pragati Dubey failed to reach the medals round in the trap mixed team event, here on the final day. Simranpreet Kaur Brar fetched India's final medal in the 25m pistol event on Monday, taking the country's tally to seven, including two gold, four silver and a bronze. While the USA also ended with seven medals, they edged ahead of India to take second place, courtesy of a higher gold-medal count. China finished on top of the standings with four gold, three silver and six bronze medals. The standout performer for India was 18-year-old Suruchi Inder Singh, who claimed both of the country's gold medals. She bagged the 10m air pistol title before securing gold in the mixed team event. —PTI

CLAPITALS!

Rahul knock leads charge, Delhi back to winning ways

Lucknow, April 22: Delhi Capitals slowly but surely inched closer towards play-off qualification, annihilating Lucknow Super Giants by eight wickets in an IPL match here on Tuesday. The win was powered by a near-perfect performance from their pace unit, aided by inexplicable tactics from rival captain Rishabh Pant. The trio of Mukesh Kumar (4/33), Mitchell Starc (1/25) and Dushmantha Chameera (1/25 in 3 overs) used slower deliveries smartly as LSG could only manage a below-par 159/6 after being 87/1 at the halfway mark. In the back-10, LSG could manage only 72 runs recording their lowest team total of the tournament so far. It made matters only worse that Pant, with his bandaged right palm, came in at No. 7 and was dismissed for a two ball duck, while Abdul Samad wasted deliveries like a millionaire up the order. The match as a contest was over at half-time only. Young opener Abhishek Porel (51 off 36) set the tone before K. L. Rahul (57 not out off 42) and Axar Patel (34 not out off 20) saw DC home with 13 balls to spare, sealing their sixth win in eight games. With Sanjiv Goenka in the stands, it couldn't have been sweeter for Rahul, whose third fifty of the season, was a nice little statement with willow, having endured the LSG owner's public wrath during a game last season. Pant's bowling changes were unimaginative and persisted with Ravi Bishnoi, who has become a one-trick pony with only googly as his wicket-taking delivery isn't helping his cause either. A couple of more wins in the next six games will take DC to 16 points, considered magic figure for play-off qualifications. The wicket didn't have any demons but LSG, in terms of strategy, execution and intent, had their worst game of the season and skipper Pant, the record Rs 27-crore, recruit didn't seem to be there. There were misfields, sitters being dropped with Lucknow and its skipper cutting a sorry picture. At the toss, he said his injury isn't really serious but sending Samad and Ayush Badoni before himself left everyone perplexed whether he is playing at a fitness level below 100 per cent. —PTI



Delhi Capitals player Mukesh Kumar (second from right) celebrates taking the wicket of Lucknow Super Giants batter Abdul Samad with teammates during the Indian Premier League match in Lucknow on Tuesday. — PTI

SCOREBOARD

Lucknow Super Giants: Aiden Markram c Stubbs b Chameera 52, Mitchell Marsh b Mukesh Kumar 45, Nicholas Pooran b Starc 9, Abdul Samad c&b Mukesh Kumar 2, David Miller not out 14, Ayush Badoni b Mukesh Kumar 36, Rishabh Pant b Mukesh Kumar 0. Extras (w-1) 1. Total (For 6 wickets in 20 Overs) 159. Fall of wickets: 1-87, 2-99, 3-107, 4-110, 5-159, 6-159. Bowling: Axar Patel 4-0-29-0, Mitchell Starc 4-0-25-1, Mukesh Kumar 4-0-33-4, Dushmantha Chameera 3-0-25-1, Vipraj Nigam 1-0-14-0, Kuldeep Yadav 4-0-33-0. Delhi Capitals: Abhishek Porel c Miller b Markram 51, Karun Nair b Markram 15, KL Rahul not out 57, Axar Patel not out 34. Extras (lb-1, w-3) 4. Total (For 2 wickets in 17.5 overs) 161. Fall of wickets: 1-36, 2-105. Bowling: Shardul Thakur 2-0-28-0, Digvesh Rathi 4-0-24-0, Prince Yadav 2.5-0-23-0, Aiden Markram 3-0-30-2, Avesh Khan 3-0-19-0, Ravi Bishnoi 3-0-36-0. ● Young opener Abhishek Porel (51 off 36) set the tone before K. L. Rahul (57 not out off 42) and Axar Patel (34 not out off 20) saw DC home with 13 balls to spare, sealing their sixth win in eight games.

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Points	Net RR
GT	8	6	2	0	12	+1.104
DC	8	6	2	0	12	+0.657
RCB	8	5	3	0	10	+0.472
PBKS	8	5	3	0	10	+0.177
LSG	9	5	4	0	10	-0.054
MI	8	4	4	0	8	+0.483
KKR	8	3	5	0	6	+0.212
RR	8	2	6	0	4	-0.633
SRH	7	2	5	0	4	-1.217
CSK	8	2	6	0	4	-1.392

Mumbai look for place in the Sun

MOSES KONDETY
HYDERABAD, APRIL 22

It's a bottom half affair but there'll be plenty of upward glances when marauding Mumbai meet struggling Sunrisers at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium here on Wednesday night. Mumbai come into the match on the back of three consecutive victories — against Delhi, Hyderabad and Chennai. One more win will take them into the top four on the points table — a coveted spot that places teams in contention for the Playoffs. Their recent triumph, a crushing nine-wicket one against Chennai Super Kings, should boost the Blues' confidence and thrust wind under their newfound wings. Sun would take solace from the fact that the game will be played on a belter, the same track on which their batting biggies had blasted IPL's second highest total of 288, against Rajasthan Royals in the season opener, and then made a mockery of Punjab Kings to chase down 245 with eight wickets in hand and an over-and-a-half to spare. Abhishek Sharma, Travis Head, Heinrich Klaasen, Ishan Kishan and Nitish Reddy would be licking their lips in anticipation as would Mumbai's Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Hardik Pandya and Hyderabad's very own Tilak Varma in the opposite camp. It will be a tough ask for the bowlers, who will have to toil on a docile deck to keep the scoreboard in check. The runs-hungry fans should have a ball of a time.

IPL 2025 Match: 41	
April 23, 7:30 pm	
Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, Hyderabad	
Sunrisers Hyderabad	Mumbai Indians
Overall in IPL	
189 Played	269
90 Won	148
99 Lost	121
287/3 Highest Total 247/9	
Head-to-Head in IPL	
Matches Played: 24	
SRH won: 10	MI won: 14



Mumbai Indians player Tilak Varma of Hyderabad trains during a team practice session at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium on Tuesday, eve of their match against Sunrisers Hyderabad. — P. SURENDRA

KKR skipper laments top order woes

KNIGHT RIDERS ARE RUNNING LOW ON CONFIDENCE: BRAVO

Kolkata, April 22: Kolkata Knight Riders batsmen are "low on confidence" right now, the team's mentor Dwayne Bravo conceded after the franchise slumped to its fifth loss in eight IPL matches this season but refused to blame the much-talked about Eden Gardens pitch for the side's woes. "IPL is a tough tournament, and when you don't start well, you know, batsmen go into a period where they lose confidence," Bravo said at the post-match media interaction, summing up the mood in the dressing room. "That's what's happening at the moment. So like I said, we just have to keep backing them, and hopefully they come good...our batters, low in confidence and normally runs bring confidence. "Form brings confidence. And we, at the moment, to be honest, don't have that confidence," he explained. —PTI

210 or 200 would be good. We need to bat better, especially in the middle overs. We need better opening starts, no complaints from our bowlers. Every game they're improving." Fielding too let KKR down against GT. "Fielding is something in our control, if you can save 15-20 runs that's

always better. It's all about attitude, but the guys are working hard. This format is about being brave as a batter, you can't think too much about the past, just learn from the mistakes and take your chances, have a positive mindset," Rahane said. Meanwhile, Gujarat captain Shubman Gill was "very pleased" with his team's effort, which saw them consolidate their top spot on the table. Gill led from the front with a scintillating 90 off 55 balls. "We spoke about these two matches (DC and KKR) that they're going to decide where we stand on the table," Gill said. "We were ahead in the game, but it's important to close the game. Good teams close the game very well. In this format it's very difficult to have a perfect game," he added. —PTI

Forest see off Spurs to boost CL hopes

London, April 22: Nottingham Forest beat struggling Tottenham 2-1 on Monday, bouncing back from two defeats to strengthen their push for a Champions League spot and heaping the pressure on Spurs boss Ange Postecoglou. Forest came into the game at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in sixth spot in the table after losses to Aston Villa and Everton. But early goals from Elliot Anderson and top-scorer Chris Wood settled their nerves and they held on tenaciously despite a late goal from Richarlison to climb to third in the table. Leaders Liverpool have one hand on the Premier League title and Arsenal are likely to finish second.



Nottingham Forest players celebrate after Elliot Anderson (right) scored during the English Premier League match against Tottenham in London on Monday. — AP

But behind them the competition is fierce for the top five places that will guarantee qualification for the Champions League next season. Just three points separate Forest from Aston Villa in seventh spot, with five games remaining for all the contenders. Nuno Espirito Santo's visitors took the lead in the fifth minute following a corner when Anderson's deflected shot beat Guglielmo Vicario. —AFP

Ex-cricketer Slater gets jail term for domestic violence

Sydney, April 22: Australian cricketer-turned-commentator Michael Slater was on Tuesday sentenced to four years in prison after pleading guilty to multiple charges, including domestic violence, but will be allowed to walk free immediately after having served over a year in custody. According to a report in ABC Sport, his sentence was "partly suspended" due to the time served. The 55-year-old was charged with more than a

dozen offences including domestic violence, unlawful stalking or intimidation, breaking into a dwelling with intent at night, common assault, assault occasioning bodily harm and choking or suffocation. The prosecution told the Maroochydore District Court, that alcohol "was a repeating feature with his offending as his behaviour becomes more erratic" "The court heard Slater made threats of self-harm as he warned the victim

not to report harassment and she felt extremely fearful and exhausted by Slater's behaviour," the report read. The identity of the victim was not revealed in the report. She was being allegedly subjected to "assault, strangulation, burglary and stalking" since late 2023. Judge Glen Cash described Slater as an alcoholic and warned that his rehabilitation "will not be easy." —PTI