April 10, 2026 - Dinamani Newspaper - Tit bits

1. Russia's Supreme Court has declared 'Memorial'—the country's oldest human rights group and a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize—a terrorist organization.

(i) Following this ruling, all of the organization's activities within Russia were immediately banned. Specifically, providing funding to Memorial, sharing its content on social media, or collaborating with the organization will henceforth be considered a criminal offense.

(ii) In its verdict, the Supreme Court stated that the organization acts against Russia's sovereignty, as well as its cultural and moral values.

(iii) Notably, the organization was established in the 1980s with the specific aim of documenting political repression during the Soviet era and human rights violations committed under Stalin's regime.

(iv) Although key branches of the organization had already been banned in 2021—prior to the invasion of Ukraine—the entire movement has now been officially designated as a terrorist organization. It is worth recalling that the organization was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2022.

(v) Meanwhile, security forces also conducted a raid on the offices of "Novaya Gazetta", Russia's leading independent newspaper.

2. India's online retail market reached a new peak in 2025, touching approximately $65–66 billion (₹6 lakh crore).

(i) This data was revealed in a research report published by Bain & Company in collaboration with Flipkart. The sector recorded a growth of 21 percent compared to the previous year, 2024.

(ii) Leading the Way in Quick Commerce:

- India has emerged as a global pioneer in "Quick Commerce"—the rapid delivery of groceries and essential goods within a matter of minutes.
- Quick commerce services currently account for 17 percent of India's total online sales. Notably, this figure is higher than that of developed nations such as China. In just the last two years, this sector has doubled in size, reaching a sales volume of $11 billion.

(iii) A Monumental Target by 2030:

- Given its current exponential growth, India's online retail market is projected to reach a colossal target of $180 billion by the year 2030.
- The report indicates that the sector is expected to sustain an average annual growth rate of 20 percent, driven by increased consumer spending power and the influx of new customers.

(iv) The 'Gen Z' Generation Takes the Lead:

- Young people—specifically the generation known as 'Gen Z'—comprise 45 percent of all users utilizing online retail platforms. Significantly, more than half of all new orders placed in 2025 were attributed to this demographic.
- Leveraging social media posts and instant credit facilities, they are demonstrating a keen interest in purchasing beauty products and electronic devices.

(v) Contribution of Tier-2 Cities:

- Moving beyond metropolitan centers, Tier-2 cities—and those in lower tiers—have emerged as the next growth hubs for e-commerce. These cities contributed 50 percent to the overall growth witnessed last year.
- Given that currently only 30 percent of internet users engage in online shopping, it is projected that even greater opportunities await within this sector in the years to come.

3. C.D. Gopinath (96), the oldest surviving former Indian Test cricketer, passed away in Chennai.

(i) It is noteworthy that Gopinath was the last surviving member of the Indian team that recorded the country's first-ever victory in Test cricket history. In that Test match, held at the Chepauk Stadium in 1952, India defeated England by an innings and 8 runs.

4. The Central Government has invited applications from eligible individuals to fill the vacancy for the post of Central Vigilance Commissioner. In an order issued in this regard, the Union Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions stated the following:

(i) Consequent upon the impending retirement of the incumbent Central Vigilance Commissioner—Mr. Praveen Kumar Srivastava, a 1988-batch IAS officer—the said post will fall vacant effective August 3rd.

(ii) To fill this vacancy, applications are invited from civil service officers possessing expertise and work experience in fields such as vigilance, Government administration, policy formulation, and public administration.

(iii) Officers with experience in Central or State Government Public Sector Undertakings—specifically in the sectors of insurance, finance, banking, law, vigilance, and investigation—are also eligible to apply for this post. Applicants must possess a minimum of 25 years of work experience along with relevant domain knowledge.

5. General Upendra Dwivedi has stated that structural reforms are currently being undertaken within the Indian Army. Speaking on this subject at the 'Ran Samvad' event held in Bengaluru, the capital of Karnataka, he observed the following:

(i) 'Operation Sindoor,' conducted against Pakistan last year, demonstrated the collaborative functioning of various branches of the Army. It is imperative that we integrate our forces—the Army, Air Force, and Navy—under a unified command structure.

(ii) Since 2024, the various branches of our military have been conducting joint training exercises. Similarly, in August 2025, they jointly released a unified doctrine. This marks a significant milestone in our military history, paving the way for the three services to operate in unison under a single strategic framework for the very first time.

(iii) Structural reforms are currently being implemented within the Indian Army; these initiatives include, among other measures, the integration of the operations of various military formations.

6. "Even amidst a global environment marked by disruptions in fuel supply, India remains in a strong position, bolstered by adequate protective buffers—including substantial foreign exchange reserves, fiscal autonomy, and low inflation. This will facilitate economic growth even in the face of global challenges," stated the World Bank.

(i) Sebastian Eckardt, the World Bank's Regional Director for South Asia, expressed this view during a Conference held to mark the release of the World Bank's "South Asia Economic Focus" report.

(ii) He further added, "India possesses robust policy frameworks, substantial foreign exchange reserves, and fiscal autonomy. Moreover, even in the current global climate characterized by disruptions in energy supply, the country is equipped with low inflation and strong protective buffers to help it achieve its economic targets. Factors such as the Free Trade Agreement with the European Union and new labor welfare initiatives are viewed as key drivers of this robust economic growth. Compared to other emerging markets globally, India and its surrounding region are expected to remain a consistently strong and high-performing economic zone."

(iii) Earlier, in its "South Asia Economic Focus" report, the World Bank estimated that India's economic growth—driven by strong domestic demand and the resilience of its export sector—is projected to rise from 7.1 percent in 2025 to 7.6 percent in the 2026 fiscal year. It is further estimated that this growth rate will moderate to 6.6 percent in the upcoming 2027 fiscal year. It is noteworthy that this current projection is slightly higher than the 6.5 percent growth rate estimated for India in the "Global Economic Prospects" report released last January.

(iv) Aurelien Kruse, the World Bank's Lead Economist for India, stated: "Even though India's exports face some of the highest tariffs in the world, India continues to stand out as the fastest-growing major economy globally in the 2026 fiscal year. The reductions in income tax and Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates implemented last year have boosted domestic consumption. Similarly, export- and investment-oriented sectors—which were expected to be adversely affected by tariffs—performed much better than anticipated. Through this, India has demonstrated strong performance and resilience."

7. Analysis of the mass layoffs in the Information Technology (IT) sector and the disruptive role of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

(i) Causes

- Technological Restructuring: Major IT firms are aggressively restructuring their operations to prioritize Artificial Intelligence (AI) over traditional software roles.
- Capital Diversion: Tech giants are shifting budgets from human capital to AI infrastructure; for example, Oracle is allocating $50 billion for data centres and plans to spend $150 billion on AI development in the coming years.
- Startup Mortality: In 2025 alone, approximately 11,000 startups closed due to a lack of contract renewals, funding issues, and voluntary exits.
- AI Uncertainty: There is currently no proof or guarantee that AI technology will create as many jobs as it is currently destroying.

(ii) Events (Layoff Facts 2025–2026)

- Daily Global Impact: In the last three months, global IT firms have cut 85,000 jobs, which averages to 1,000 employees losing their jobs every single day.
- Oracle Case Study: The company implemented a global reduction of 30,000 employees, with 12,000 of these being engineering graduates based in India (hubs include Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Mumbai).
- Amazon: Terminated 16,000 staff in January 2026 alone, contributing to a two-phase global reduction of 30,000 roles.

- IBM: Cut 9,000 positions recently.
- TCS: The company reduced its workforce by 20,000 roles, accounting for approximately 2% of its total staff.
- Indian Major Firms: Last year, Wipro, Infosys, and Tech Mahindra collectively cut 10,000 positions.
- Annual Totals: It is estimated that 50,000 to 60,000 IT professionals lost their jobs in the previous year, a trend predicted to worsen in 2026.

(iii) Consequences

- Financial Distress: Thousands of professional families are being pushed into debt traps as they struggle to repay loans following job losses.
- Macroeconomic Decline: The mass layoffs are leading to reduced consumer spending, which negatively impacts the broader economy.
- Government Revenue: The crisis is resulting in lower tax collection for the Government.
- Remittances: There has been a noticeable decline in foreign remittances from Indian professionals working abroad.

(iv) Remedies

- Human-Centric Strategy: Companies must stop prioritizing profit margins over the futures of qualified engineers.
- Technological Evaluation: There is a need for a realistic assessment of whether AI can truly replace the human workforce at the scale currently being projected.
- Accountability: Tech companies will not voluntarily protect employees; therefore, external intervention is necessary.

(v) Steps taken by Government:-

- Corporate Subsidies: Central and State Governments currently provide IT companies with significant tax exemptions, subsidized land, and priority access to electricity and water.
- Labor Laws: While the Government facilitates the industry, existing labour laws have not yet been effectively used to curb the current wave of mass terminations.
- Mandatory Intervention: It is the duty of the Government to urgently address the future of the tens of thousands of engineers losing their livelihoods, given the high level of state support these companies receive.

8. Historical and analytical look at the destructive nature of rumours, particularly during times of crisis :-

(i) Causes of Rumors

- Social media platforms allow information to be disseminated with extreme speed among the public.
- People often share unverified or sensational information out of excitement or concern without checking its authenticity.
- Rumours are frequently spread with the specific goal of creating caste or religious conflicts, resulting in social unrest, loss of life, and property damage.
- During wars, enemy nations use rumours as a strategic tool to instil fear and demoralize the civilian population of the opposing country.

(ii) Chronological and Historical Events: -

- World War II: A rumor spread that Japanese soldiers had landed in Kolkata via parachutes.
- 1940s Mass Migration: Terrified by the Kolkata rumor, thousands of people abandoned their homes and belongings to flee the city.
- Artificial Scarcity (War Era): Rumors of impending food shortages led to widespread hoarding, creating artificial famine conditions in several nations.
- Jayaprakash Narayan (1979): While the leader was being treated in a Mumbai hospital, a rumor of his death reached the Prime Minister, who announced it in Parliament; the House was adjourned before it was discovered he was still alive.
- The West Asian Crisis (March–April 2026): Rumors of a massive spike in petrol, diesel, and cooking gas prices caused chaotic crowds to swarm fuel stations and gas agencies.

(iii) Consequences:-

- Social Scars: Rumors create long-lasting hatred and "scars of animosity" between different social groups.
- Economic Disruption: Panic buying and hoarding lead to the creation of artificial shortages and price hikes.
- Global Supply Chain Failure: Rumors regarding the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz have caused a global crisis in the supply of fuel and life-saving medicines.
- Unnecessary Panic: Rumors often force citizens to take drastic and unnecessary actions, such as fleeing cities or spending excessive amounts on hoarded goods.

(iv) Remedies and Personal Responsibility

- Verification: Individuals must be urged to follow the wisdom of Thirukkural: "To discern the truth in everything, by whomsoever spoken, is wisdom".
- Rumor Clinics: Adopting the model used by the USA and UK during the world wars, where "Rumor Clinics" were established to provide the public with verified facts to counter misinformation.
- Strict Scrutiny: Citizens are advised to strictly verify the reliability of any health-related or geopolitical news before believing or sharing it.

(v) Steps taken by the Government

- ESMA Implementation: To counter the artificial fuel crisis caused by rumors, the Central Government has implemented the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA) to ensure the steady supply of petrol, diesel, and gas.
- Official Denials: Public sector oil companies like Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum have issued official statements to clarify that there is no shortage and citizens should not panic.
- Association Clarifications: The All-India LPG Distributors' Federation has formally clarified that rumors of a nationwide cooking gas shortage are false.
- Legal Punishment: Under Section 505 of the Indian Penal Code (BNS), spreading rumors that cause public alarm or mischief is a criminal offense punishable by up to 3 years of imprisonment, a fine, or both.