

May 3, 2026 – Dinamani Newspaper – Tit bits

1.The China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a project undertaken by China in Pakistan to strengthen bilateral economic ties, has recently faced a setback.

(i) Under this project, a Chinese company named “Hangeng,” which had been operating at Pakistan’s Gwadar Port, has announced the complete suspension of its operations in both Pakistan and China.

(ii) The company stated that policy uncertainty and operational bottlenecks were the primary reasons behind this decision.

(iii) Despite complying with international food safety standards and meeting the regulations of Chinese customs authorities, export permissions for the company’s products have reportedly been consistently withheld.

(iv) The company highlighted that over the past three months, it has suffered significant financial losses due to electricity costs, labor wages, and delay penalties, while its operations remained stalled due to lack of approvals.

(v) Although the Pakistan Government extended support, it has been noted that ground-level challenges and regulatory hurdles have disrupted the investment-friendly environment in the country.

(vi) Commenting on this issue, Indian intelligence sources stated that security threats in the Balochistan region and inconsistent policy decisions have eroded the confidence of international investors. They added that this development reinforces India’s long-standing position that projects implemented without considering local realities are unlikely to sustain in the long term.

2.The well-known American budget airline Spirit Airlines has officially ceased operations from Saturday, unable to continue its services after about 34 years due to financial distress.

(i) As a result, hundreds of flights operating worldwide have been cancelled. Although passengers have been told they can apply for ticket refunds, the company has stated that it cannot arrange alternative flights.

(ii) Known for its distinctive yellow aircraft and ultra-low fares, the airline had once revolutionized air travel but is now facing unprecedented losses.

(iii) Continuous financial setbacks following the COVID-19 pandemic, along with a surge in aviation fuel prices triggered by the Iran conflict, pushed the company into this situation.

(iv) Since 2020, the airline has incurred losses of around \$2.5 billion and had already filed for bankruptcy twice.

(v) Currently burdened with approximately \$8.1 billion in debt, the company stated that shutting down operations was the only option left.

(vi) A proposal by the Trump administration to nationalize the airline, which employed around 17,000 people, was not accepted by the company’s management. With insufficient financial backing, even Government bailout efforts failed, leading to its closure.



(vii) Notably, throughout its 34 years of service, the airline maintained a strong safety record, having never experienced a fatal accident.

3. The military operations against Iran that began on February 28 have already come to an end following a ceasefire, Donald Trump officially informed the United States Congress.

(i) Under the War Powers Resolution of 1973, a U.S. President can conduct military operations for only 60 days without congressional approval. As this 60-day deadline expired on Friday, Trump was required either to end the war or seek an extension.

(ii) However, in a letter to congressional leaders, Trump declared that “the war has ended,” thereby attempting to establish that there is no need to seek Congress’s approval to continue military engagement.

(iii) In his letter, Trump pointed out that there have been no direct attacks between Iran and the United States in recent days. He also criticized the 1973 law as unconstitutional, arguing that it restricts his authority as Commander-in-Chief.

(iv) Opposition members from the Democratic Party have strongly criticized this announcement. They argue that the ceasefire cannot be legally accepted and claim that the continued interception of Iranian vessels by U.S. forces indicates that the conflict is still ongoing.

(vi) With the upcoming Parliamentary elections in November in the United States, the conflict has also turned into a political issue. According to opinion polls, there is growing public dissatisfaction among Americans regarding these military actions.

(vii) Although expected progress in negotiations has not been achieved, the conflict between the two sides has currently been limited to a naval blockade.

(viii) Meanwhile, Trump rejected a new compromise proposal put forward by Iran, which included reopening the Strait of Hormuz and lifting the U.S. naval blockade, stating that it was “not satisfactory.”

(ix) This is because Iran had also requested postponing talks related to its nuclear program in the proposal. Trump stated that even though the war has been declared over, Iran still remains a significant threat. If conflict erupts again, the White House is reportedly planning to resume military operations under a new 60-day window.

4. Considering the ongoing tensions involving Iran, the United States Department of State has announced plans to sell weapons worth about \$8.6 billion to Middle Eastern countries including Israel, Qatar, Kuwait, and United Arab Emirates.

(i) Under this deal, Qatar will receive the Patriot missile defense system, Kuwait will be provided with an integrated battle command system, while Israel and the UAE will receive advanced missiles.

(ii) Although such military sales typically require review and approval by the United States Congress, Secretary of State Marco Rubio has invoked an “emergency situation” to bypass these requirements.

5. Following criticism of the U.S. war strategy regarding Iran by German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, the United States Department of Defense has ordered the withdrawal of around 5,000 American troops from Germany within the next 6 to 12 months.



(i) In response, Germany has emphasized that European nations must take greater responsibility for the continent's security. However, opposition leaders in the U.S. argue that this move could weaken NATO and potentially benefit Russia.

6. The Government of India has appointed Rohit Jain as the new Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India.

(i) He replaces T. Rabi Sankar, whose tenure ended on Saturday.

(ii) Rohit Jain, who was serving as an Executive Director at the RBI, will hold the new position for a term of three years.

(iii) As per the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, the RBI is required to have four Deputy Governors. The other three currently serving are J. Swaminathan, Poonam Gupta, and S. C. Murmu.

7. Google has begun setting up a massive AI data center in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, with an investment of around ₹1.42 lakh crore, in partnership with Adani Group and Bharti Airtel. This is considered one of the largest investments in India's digital infrastructure.

8. Ukrainian tennis player Marta Kostyuk won the women's singles title at the Madrid Open. This marks her first title at a WTA 1000 event.

9. In Karnataka, 44 peacocks have died due to Avian Influenza H5N1 (bird flu).

(i) The incident occurred in the Tumakuru district, where the sudden deaths initially raised uncertainty. The carcasses were sent to the National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases in Bhopal for analysis. According to the test report, all 44 peacocks died due to H5N1 infection, as confirmed by Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre.

10. India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has departed on a nine-day official visit to the Caribbean nations of Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

(i) According to the Ministry of External Affairs, the visit is scheduled from May 2 to May 10.

(ii) India shares special ties with these nations due to the presence of large Indian-origin communities. The visit continues India's long-standing diplomatic relations and its commitment to South-South cooperation.

(iii) During the trip, Jaishankar will meet the leaders of Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago to strengthen bilateral relations, along with discussions on regional and global issues.

(iv) He is also expected to interact with members of the Indian diaspora and business communities in these countries.

(v) Historically, during British colonial rule in India, many Indians were sent as indentured laborers to plantations in regions such as South Africa, Fiji, Mauritius, and the Caribbean. Many of their descendants have since risen to prominent positions after independence.

11. India's Chief Economic Adviser Anantha Nageswaran has stated that the rise of Artificial Intelligence is creating a new challenge for employment in the country. Speaking at a seminar organized by Ashoka

University in Delhi, he highlighted the following points:

(i) Due to the West Asian conflict, India is facing more pressure from rising prices of crude oil rather than supply disruptions. To handle such crises, India must build large-scale strategic reserves—not just for crude oil, but also for gas and key imported resources like nickel and copper.

(ii) AI is posing a serious challenge to employment. Therefore, India's IT sector must evolve to compete with AI, ensuring that jobs are not lost. At the same time, new employment opportunities must be created by integrating AI into IT and other service sectors.

(iii) The West Asian conflict has significantly increased global prices of fertilizers and petroleum products, making it harder to achieve the current account deficit target of 4.3% for this financial year.

(iv) Additionally, weak monsoon conditions and rising energy prices are expected to further increase inflation.

12. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has appointed noted lyricist and writer Prasoon Joshi as the new Chairman of Prasar Bharati, which oversees All India Radio and Doordarshan.

(i) Prasoon Joshi is known for his extensive contributions to literature, advertising, cinema, and mass communication. He is widely recognized for his creative excellence and cultural depth.

(ii) He has played a key role in shaping modern Indian media, with works that resonate strongly with social themes. His film lyrics and advertising campaigns have connected with diverse audiences.

(iii) Before this appointment, he served as Chairman of the Central Board of Film Certification since August 2017 in Mumbai. Earlier, he held leadership roles at McCann Worldgroup, including CEO for India and head of Asia Pacific operations.

(iv) Since 2016, he has also been a trustee of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts. Writing Hindi film lyrics since 2001, he is also an accomplished screenwriter.

13. Foreign companies that have up to 10% shareholding from investors based in China or Hong Kong are now allowed to invest directly in India without prior approval from the Central Government or the Reserve Bank of India, effective from May 1.

(i) This change has come into force following official notification by the Ministry of Finance regarding amendments to the rules under the Foreign Exchange Management Act.

(ii) Earlier, if a foreign company had even a single share held by investors from countries sharing a land border with India, it was mandatory to obtain prior approval from the Central Government or the Reserve Bank of India before investing in any sector in India.

(iii) Under the revised rules, foreign companies with up to 10% shareholding from China or Hong Kong-based investors can now invest directly in India without such prior approval.

(iv) However, this relaxation does not apply to companies that are registered in China, Hong Kong, or other countries sharing land borders with India. Only foreign companies not registered in these countries are eligible to invest without prior approval.

(v) Countries that share land borders with India include China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, and Afghanistan.

14. India and Ecuador are actively working towards finalizing a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) to strengthen economic cooperation.

(i) Ecuador's Foreign Minister, Gabriela Sommerfeld Rosero, visited India on April 29 and 30 and held discussions with India's External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar.

(ii) According to a press release by the Ministry of External Affairs, both sides agreed to further strengthen bilateral relations across sectors such as trade and investment, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, education, agriculture, and digital technology.

(iii) During the meeting, the Ecuadorian Foreign Minister handed over official letters expressing Ecuador's intent to join the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA).

(iv) The two sides also signed a Memorandum of Understanding to implement Quick Impact Projects (QIPs). Under this initiative, India will provide ₹12 crore over the next five years to support socio-economic development projects in Ecuador.

(v) As part of her visit, Gabriela Sommerfeld Rosero also met Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, where discussions were held on finalizing the Preferential Trade Agreement to boost economic cooperation between the two countries.

(vi) She also met Health Minister J.P. Nadda, and discussions were held regarding signing an MoU to enhance cooperation in the healthcare sector between India and Ecuador.

15. The Ministry of Finance has issued an official notification allowing investors to make up to 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the insurance sector without prior approval from the Central Government or the Reserve Bank of India.

(i) At the same time, under the Foreign Exchange Management (Second Amendment) Rules, 2026, although 100% FDI is permitted in insurance companies without prior approval, FDI in the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) is capped at only 20%.

(ii) Earlier, up to 74% FDI was allowed in the insurance sector without prior approval from the Central Government or the Reserve Bank of India. However, in December last year, Parliament passed the "Sabka Bima Sabki Raksha" (Insurance Laws Amendment) Bill, which increased the FDI limit to 100%. Following the President's assent, the bill became law.

16. Nails have been completely removed from prisons across Tamil Nadu, and installing new nails on walls has also been banned. This step has been taken by the prison administration to prevent suicides among inmates.

Prison Suicides Data

Year	India	Tamil Nadu
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2016	102	9
2017	109	9
2018	129	10
2019	116	4
2020	156	8
2021	150	4
2022	119	5
2023	96	4

(i) Tamil Nadu prisons are among the top eight in India in terms of the number of suicides. Across the country, 977 inmates died by suicide in prisons between 2016 and 2023, of which 53 cases occurred in Tamil Nadu alone.

(ii) About 80% of inmate deaths in prisons nationwide are due to suicide. Around two-thirds of prisoners suffer from anxiety, hopelessness, frustration, pain, and loneliness. Studies indicate that nearly 12% of inmates experience depression, and the prevalence of mental illness among prisoners exceeds 25%. These factors contribute to continued suicide attempts in prisons.

(iii) High incidence in Tamil Nadu:

- Across Tamil Nadu, 141 prisons (including 9 central prisons) have the capacity to house 24,513 inmates, while around 16,000 inmates are currently lodged. Before 2018, Tamil Nadu was among the top five states in terms of suicide attempts by prisoners.
- After 2018, suicides reduced to some extent due to the appointment of psychologists and mental health professionals, along with facilities like education, vocational training, libraries, and self-employment programs. However, an average of 4 inmates still die by suicide each year in the state.
- Around 93% of inmates who attempt suicide do so by hanging. It was found that prisoners often use clothes such as towels, dhotis, or lungis and hang themselves from nails fixed in prison walls.
- Recently, a 24-year-old inmate named Prasanth, from Madurai (arrested in a drug-related case), died by suicide by hanging in Cuddalore Central Prison.

(iv) ADGP's order:

- Tamil Nadu Prison ADGP K. Shankar, after reviewing such incidents, noted that inmates frequently use nails to hang themselves. Although prison rules prohibit nails for safety reasons, they were still being used for hanging clothes in cells.
- Following this, he ordered the removal of all nails across prisons in Tamil Nadu—not just in cells, but also in offices, visitor areas, dining halls, workshops, and libraries.
- As a result, teams of prison staff were deployed, and approximately 30,000 nails have been removed over the past two months. Strict monitoring has also been introduced to ensure no new nails are installed.

(v) Not a complete solution:

- While removing nails may help prevent hanging suicides, human rights activists argue that it is not a permanent solution and may only delay such attempts.
- They stress that addressing the root causes—mental distress, despair, and emotional suffering—is essential. Otherwise, inmates may resort to other extreme methods.
- Suggested measures include increasing the number of psychologists and psychiatrists, providing parole and leave when needed, ensuring regular meetings with family and friends (at least once a month), timely release of life-term prisoners, and installing surveillance cameras throughout prison facilities.