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NIRMALA
SITHARAMAN
ON THE
WOMEN'S
BILL

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OF ICONS AND
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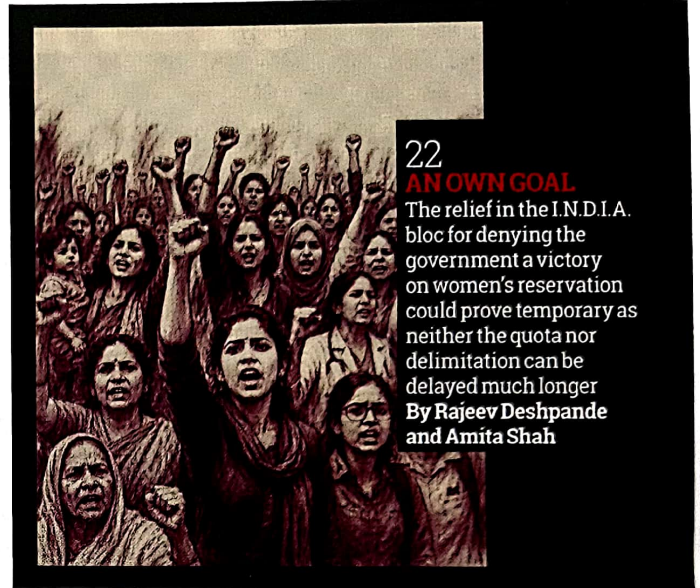


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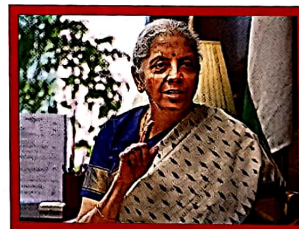
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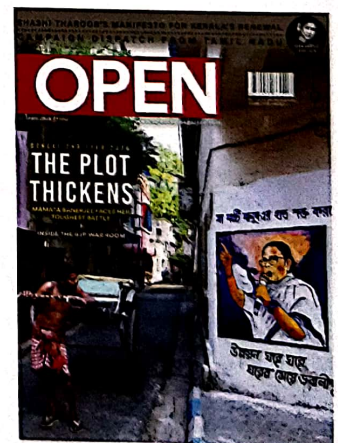
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LETTER OF THE WEEK

The situation in North Bengal points to a deeper problem of neglect that can no longer be ignored ('Banking on the Modi Mystique', April 27, 2026). In places like Darjeeling, even basic facilities remain poor, which is surprising for such an important tourist region. People across groups—youth, traders, and civil society—are not asking for grand promises in this Assembly election but simple improvements in daily life. That itself says a great deal about how far governance has fallen. In this context, the efforts of BJP appear focused and purposeful. The visible outreach by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah shows a willingness to engage directly with people and understand local concerns. This kind of ground-level campaigning stands in contrast to a system that many feel has grown distant and unresponsive. At a time when law and order and basic governance are key concerns, there is a sense that voters may be looking for change and accountability.



Subrato Mondal

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By Saumyaa Vohra



GOING TO THE PARTY

Move over casual friend-time.

The young crave curated experience

By Darshita Goyal



REWINDING TO REAL

An obsession with Noughties pop culture reveals a yearning for a tangible past

By Deepansh Duggal

DUE PROCESS

The rejection of the motion against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and Vice President CP Radhakrishnan was a necessary decision ('Shielding the Constitution', April 27, 2026). Attempts to target constitutional authorities on weak or politically timed grounds risk damaging institutional credibility. The bar for such action must remain high. The move by opposition parties, particularly amid ongoing elections, appeared more tactical than substantive. In this context, the stance taken by the presiding officers reflects a commitment to due process over political pressure. Importantly, the Election Commission continues its work aimed at ensuring fair polls. The Supreme Court has also found no fault with the process.

Pradip Mohapatra

FUTURE CARE

Falling birth rates are no longer a distant worry for India ('The Baby Slump', April 27, 2026). As states like Andhra Pradesh follow Sikkim in offering cash incentives and subsidised IVF, the concern is clearly growing. But paying people to have more children may not solve the deeper problem. Couples today are choosing to have fewer children because of rising costs, career pressures, and changing lifestyles. These are not issues money alone can fix. There is also a risk of turning a personal decision into a policy target. That can feel intrusive. India should be careful before treating low birth rates as a crisis. The focus should be on making it easier to raise children. Better childcare, flexible work, and affordable healthcare may matter more than incentives. Without that support, such schemes may have a limited impact.

Raksha Menon

TIMELESS VOICE

Asha Bhosle was more than just a singer; she had a voice that could express many emotions with ease ('The Voice of Cosmopolitan Cool', April 27, 2026). She could turn pain into passion, sorrow into seduction, and loss into a quiet sense of longing. That range made her special. In an industry where many play safe, she chose to experiment and try out new styles. That is why she remained popular for so long. Her songs feel modern and full of life, matching a changing India. She was not just versatile, she was also bold. What made her truly stand out was her ability to make every song sound personal. Even today, her music does not feel dated, it feels alive. With her death, Indian music loses a voice that was unique. Her legacy will continue to shape how music is made and heard.

K Sukumuran