

Modi unveils Odisha Vision Document China, Pak, B'desh hold trilateral meet NN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 20: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday launched 105 development projects valued at over ₹18,600 crores, unveiled the Odisha Vision Document' and flagged off new trains during his visit to the state to mark the first anniversary of Odisha's maiden BJP government. He also felicitated several people on the ocassion.

Modi, who visited Odisha for the sixth time since the BJP government was formed in the state in June 2024, launched the projects at a function at Janata Maidan here. The projects launched by the Prime Minister included drinking water and irrigation, health infrastructure, rural roads and bridges, national highways and railway infrastructure.

Modi flagged off the first passenger train to Boudh district after inaugurating the Sonepur-Purunakatak railway line. Railway projects such as the third and fourth rail lines between Sarla-Sason and the fourth rail line between Jharsuguda-Jamga were also launched. This apart, Modi also flagged off 100 electric buses under the Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT), promoting eco-friendly urban mobility. Modi said the saffron par-

ty fulfilled the long-awaited demands of the people as the four gates of Puri Jagannath temple and its

Delhi-Pune Air India flight suffers bird hit

Mumbai: An Air India Punebound flight from Delhi suffered a bird hit Friday, forcing the airline to cancel its return journey. The aircraft landed safely and the bird hit was detected after it touched down in Pune, the airline said in a statement. It has been grounded and extensive checks are being carried out by the engineering team, Air India said. "Flight AI2470 scheduled to operate from Pune to Delhi June 20 has been cancelled due

Congress leader and to a bird-hit which was detected



Charan Majhi, Deputy CMs Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo and Pravati Parida and Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and Jual Oram among others at Janata Maidan in Bhubaneswar, Friday PIC! RIKASH NAVAK

'DECLINED TRUMP'S INVITE TO PRIORITISE ODISHA VISIT'



BHUBANESWAR: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday said he had declined an invitation from US President Donald Trump to visit Washington, and instead chosen to come to Odisha, the sacred land of Lord Jagannath. Addressing a rally in Bhubaneswar, Modi said, "I was in Canada for the G7 Summit when US President Trump had called me and invited me to Washington for a discussion and lunch. I thanked him for the invitation, saying I have to visit Odisha, the land of Lord Jagannath. I humbly rejected his invi-

tation." Modi had Tuesday declined Trump's invitation to visit the US while returning from Canada, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said in a statement on the Modi-Trump phone call.

and at the same time teach

have been reopened. Prepared following people's feedback, the Prime roadmap for the state's dearound the centenary of ing some 'Lakhpati Didis'. Odisha's formation as a lindia's 100 years of Independence in 2047. The vision powering women in SHGs. aims to transform Odisha into a \$500 billion economy by 2036 and a \$1.5 trillion economy by 2047.

The Prime Minister also launched 'Baraputra Aitihya Gram Yojana', an initiative lakh 'Lakhpati Didis' in the to transform birthplaces of country.

'Ratna Bhandar' (treasury) Odia icons into memorials, featuring museums, interpretation centres, statues and libraries, promoting cul-Minister unveiled the 'Odi-tural tourism and preserving sha Vision Document', the heritage. Modi also felicitated some women achievers velopment goals, anchored from across the state, includ-

'Lakhpati Didi' is an initiaguistic state in 2036 and In- tive of the Ministry of Rural Development focused on em-The goal is to help them achieve an annual household income exceeding ₹1 lakh by adopting sustainable livelihood practices. The state tops the list of creating 16.60

MORE P3



Pakistani Foreign Secre

tary Amna Baloch partic-

ipated in the first phase of

the meeting via video link,

a Chinese Foreign Ministry

press release said here Fri

In his address, Sun Wei-

dong said Bangladesh and Pakistan are both good

neighbours, good friends,

and good partners of China, and important partners in

high quality Belt and Road

cooperation, the Foreign

Ministry's press release

na, Pakistan and Bangla

desh aligns with the com-

mon interests of the three

peoples, and can contribute

to regional peace, stability

development and prosper-

ity, Sun who was a former

The three sides ex-

Cooperation among Chi-

day.

said.

AGENCIES

Beijing, June 20: China, Pakistan, Bangladesh have held the inaugural session of their trilateral meeting of foreign ministry officials, as part of Beijing's new strategic initiative to promote closer ties between two estranged South Asian countries in India's immediate neighbourhood.

with no friends in the region

Ambassador to Pakistan and On Thursday, Chinese India. said. Vice Foreign Minister Sun changed views extensively Weidong, Bangladeshi Acting Foreign Secretary Ruhul on China-Pakistan-Bangla Alam Siddique and Addidesh trilateral cooperation tional Foreign Secretary of and agreed to establish a Pakistan Imran Ahmed Sidworking group to follow up diqui attended the meeting and implement the underheld at the Chinese city of standings reached during Kunming, capital of Souththe meeting, the press reern Yunnan province. lease said.



Oppn criticises Shah BJP accounts for 45% of total coording in for his English remarks 2024 LS polls: ADR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

English to every child. This New Delhi, June 20: Opis the path to an India that competes with the world, that position parties Friday criticised Home Minister gives every child an equal opportunity," the former Con-Amit Shah for his reported comments on English saying gress president said. the language is "not shameful but empowering" and is

In a post on X, Congress a tool to break the chains. each speak more Indian lan-

of total spending in

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 20: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) spent nearly ₹1,494 crore, accounting for 44.56 per cent of the total election expenditure, during the 2024 Lok Sabha election, leader Jairam Ramesh at- poll rights body the Assotacked the home minister ciation for Democratic Resaying, "Millions of Indians forms (ADR) said Friday.

after the incoming flight landed safely in Pune," it said. **P9**

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Fantastic news! Now, when the govt brings back black money, everyone will get ₹45 lakh each

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi alleged guages - in addition to Enthe BJP-RSS do not want glish - than him." poor children to learn this TMC leader Derek O'Brien language because they don't

said India has 22 constitutionwant them to attain equality. ally recognised languages and In a post in Hindi on X, Gand-19,500 languages and dialects hi said, "English is not a dam, and this is the 'unity in diversity' of our country. In a vidit is a bridge. English is not shameful, it is empowering. eo statement, the TMC leader said, "In India, 97 per cent peo-English is not a chain -- it is a tool to break the chains." ple use one of the 22 constitu-'The BJP-RSS don't want tionally recognised languages

poor kids of India to learn as their mother tongue. 19,500 English - because they don't languages and dialects are used as mother tongues. This want you to ask questions, move ahead, and attain is the 'unity in diversity' of our equality," he claimed. great nation. Amit Shah, PM In today's world, English is Narendra Modi and gang will

as important as one's mother never understand this. CPI leader and RS MP P tongue because it will pro-Sandosh Kumar said Shah's revide employment and boost one's confidence, Gandhi marks are a "deliberate attempt to stigmatise India's linguistic said. "Every language of India has soul, culture, knowledge. diversity and push RSS-BJP's We have to cherish them -cultural majoritarianism."

The Congress followed next with ₹620 crore or 18.5 per cent of the total expenses among the 32 national and regional parties whose records were analysed, the ADR said.

Together, these parties spent ₹3,352.81 crore during the Lok Sabha and simultaneous Assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha and Sikkim between March 16 and June 6, 2024.

The national parties accounted for more than ₹2.204 crore (65.75 per cent) of this expenditure

"Of the total funds collected, national parties collected ₹6,930.246 crore (93.08 per cent) while regional parties received ₹515.32 crore (6.92 per cent)," the report said.

Halls to homes: Classical music transition

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 20: To steal away from the mad rush of an over-stimulated life into the comfort of a living room where time flows in a trickle and the air is filled with classical ragas is like stepping into a postcard from times gone by. It's a bouquet of music made for the gods.

Baithaks, those intimate gatherings of Indian classical music lovers and the 'music curious'. are slowly getting back, reshaping an age-old tradition that largely limited itself to the practitioners of the craft and a few learned patrons.

Music, as it was envi-



and Vishnu Narayan WORLD Bhatkhande, is finding ing artistes. At the centre of it all is the MUSIC newer audiences - one living room at a time. idea of introducing DAY the magic of mu-So, far away from sic to those whose

consultant Sukanva Baner-

jee and fitness educator Te-

the impersonality of an auditorium, indepen- ears have never heard it dent groups and music con- and those who have long noisseurs are creating new yearned for it. performing arts spaces -- ei-

ther in their living rooms sioned by pioneers like or those of their hosts -- and Vishnu Digambar Paluskar crucially offering steady em- jas Jaishankar were among cert," Jaishankar told PTI.

those who set the ball rolling in 2018 when they opened their south Delhi home to people ready to pay to listen to an aspiring artiste in a small gathering of some 25.

What started with 200 a ticket as 'Evening Raag' in 2018 has transformed into a 2,000 fare as 'Upstairs With Us' five years down the line. The aim is to create an audience that appreciates music enough to pay for it and offer a respectable compensation to the artiste.

"We recognised a bunch of barriers in Indian classical music. Firstly, people are accustomed to government organised events that are EduTech and strategic free and as a result artistes effectively don't get paid for anything that's not a big con-

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Day' message, Adah said, "Yoga

isn't just physical

stretches. It's about

making your mind

low. Yoga for me is a

disciplined life-

around.

Eating

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Sharing

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CARLA GUGINO JOINS WINTHROP CAST

Carla Gugino, known for Spy Kids and San Andreas, will star with Lou Taylor Pucci in Winthrop, a film adaptation of the cult podcast Knifepoint Horror. Inspired by The Lockbox, it begins production in Vancouver this summer.

MILEY, BEYONCE SURPRISE **DUET AT PARIS CONCERT**

Beyoncé and Miley Cyrus lit up the France leg of the Cowboy Carter tour with a surprise duet of their song II Most Wanted. Introducing Miley, Beyoncé told the crowd, "I wanted to do something very special for you guys."



UNE FORECAST

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If you're looking to get

married, buy the ring today. But before you take the leap, weigh all the pros and cons carefully, says Ganesha. All in all, this may be a day filled with activities related to your relationship and by the time the day ends, you may be on cloud nine!

TAURUS

Today is a perfect day to

relax and enjoy your health, feels Ganesha. However, precaution should be the buzzword while dealing in money matters. You may develop a new interest in jewellers, artists, bankers and orators. Dinner will be laced with all the deserving delicacies of a hearty meal.

GEMINI

It is a good day for you to participate in cultural events and group activities. predicts Ganesha. You are likely to be an important part of some convention or

joint venture, but don't get too bogged down by it. In the evening, you may take a fancy to fine arts, such as drawing or classical music.



clearly in the most adverse conditions will be your key weapon as you get cornered by unrelenting assaults of work and deadlines. The clarity will reflect in your work as you deal with inhuman work pressure. Your mind will save the day for you as well as your peers.

LEO

You sure love playing a team sport, but that does not diminish the fact that you are a tough player to compete with, says

Ganesha. If only they had a rugby team at the local club! You derive a sense of com pletion from the fact that you have given vour best effort to any endeavour.



All the work done in the past will reap rich rewards today, says Ganesha. You'll direct things your own way, and in no way would you take orders from anyone. But don't go overboard with all the authority and keep a cool, calm head.

LIBRA

Nothing overshadows your love for your children today. And love is precisely what drives you incessantly to give them the best possible of everything. Be it special classes for that extra edge in education, or a visit to

Vaani's travel tips Mumbai: There's something uniquely memor-

able about first solo trips - the excitement, the uncertainty, and, of course, the stories that last a lifetime. For actress Vaani Kapoor, that unforgettable first solo adventure took place in none other than New York City, which ready to celebrate was not a pleasant one.

As she doesn't claim to be the most efficient packer, she's got some light-hearted this advice for those setting off on their own Saturday, journeys-especially solo female travacclaimed ellers. actress Adah

"Don't travel like I do," she quipped. "I travel with my entire house in my suitcase. I practically carry everything in my bag, and I'm always paying for extra baggage. That's not the smartest thing to do."

Vaani's tip? Travel light. Not iust for convenience, but because you're bound to pick up new things along the way. "You'll end up buying something or the other anyway. And yes, I always have excess baggage with me. because she's like, 'Why can't

style all year ian food. to keep my calm in stressful

and controlling my anger. All of that is Yoga for me." Aside from being a versatile ac-

tress, Adah is also known for her holistic and wholesome lifestyle, an important part of which is Yoga.

the screen as a *Devi* in an untitled trilingual film with the National Award-winning director BM Giriraj. Shedding light on her approach to-

wards her character, Adah stressed her commitment to making the portrayal as realistic and authentic as possible. "I am very fortunate to be getting

the opportunity to play such amazing roles and work with such talented filmmakers. Stories like The Kerala Story or fictional ones like Reeta Sanyal, I will do my best to make it as realistic as possible," the actress stated.

In addition to this, Adah is likely to be seen as a superhero in an international

Admitting she hates pack ing but does it anyway, Vaani offered a practical packing hack for over-packers: vacuum bags. "Use those vacuum bags to store all your clothes in and vacuum-seal them to create more space in your bags,'

she said. AGENCIES

My sister constantly scolds me

you ever

situations.

Work-wise, Adah will next grace

film. IANS

PEANUTS

IS THE GAME OVER,

MANAGER? WHO WON?

Pankaj on today's relationships

Mumbai: Acclaimed star Pankaj Tripathi, who is gearing up for the release of his upcoming film Metro...In Dino, has talked about how relationships today have become complex due to the fast-paced, demanding nature of modern life

Asked if he agrees that today's relationships have become very complex and that love has become underrated, Pankaj told told this news agency: 'Love has not become underrated. Relationships have become complex. If the world itself has become complex, how can relationships not be?'

Citing an example of how currency was created thinking that life would become

FUN

'Success, criticism both important for growth'

Mumbai: Actor Diana Penty, who played a Mughal princess in Chhaava, a film that was a box office hit but also received backlash for its depiction of certain historical events, says it is important to have both success and criticism for art-

ists to grow. The action drama, based on the life of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj played by Vicky Kaushal became the highest-grossing Hindi film this year by earning over Rs. 600 crores at the box office in India after its release in February. think ʻΤ that's the case with

all films where everybody has mixed opinions, some like it, some don't, to each their own. Like, I might not walk into a theatre and like the film that I'm watching, but that doesn't mean that it's not a good film or that it won't find its audience. It's important to have both sides so that actors or makers can do better the next time or change certain things. Every time I watch a film that I've done before, I'm

like, I could have done that better I'm a huge crit ic of my work, Penty, whose latest work Detective is Sherdill, told this news agency. PT

easier, he added: "For example, if you travel from one place to another, how many goods can you carry in exchange? So currency was invented to simplify life. You carry money in your pocket and in return, you get what you

need. I believe that the invention of currency in human history was to make life easier. But now, life has become more difficult in the process of earning that currency.

Talking about where do relationship problems begin, he said: "The root of the problem is the mind the brain. We assume the other person thinks like us. In the early stages of romance, it doesn't matter. But as time passes, each brain starts creat-

SCORPIO

The day does not begin on a very good note as you seem to be in a belligerent mood. Be calm and patient as your hot temper may spoil a good deal. Limit your conver sations and discussions with colleagues and friends, advises Ganesha,

SAGITTARIUS

Remember that actions always speak louder than words. You will, in all probability, finish your work that has been seeking your attention for long now. You shall also successfully bring continuing disputes to the table and resolve them logically.

CAPRICORN

Your hands are full with plenty of projects and as-signments. Finish them off as soon as you can and spend rest of the day refreshing your mind. Communicating with people of all walks of life will make you enhance your horizon of knowledge, feels Ganesha. Talking about personal life, you will feel free to conduct yourself as per your wish.

Things have become stagnant but it fails to frustrate your spirit. Slow and steady wins the race and it seems you have imbibed it very well. You will be able to seize opportunities coming your way and march ahead on your path. Financially, you will be on a stable ground, says Ganesha.

PISCES

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You need to tread cautiously today when it comes to matters related to business. Do not make any decisions in haste, or it could come back to haunt you at a later date. All financial dealings will need to be carefully monitored. Do not indulge in speculative activities or undue risk taking. A little consideration now will save you a lot of trouble later, says Ganesha.

CALVIN AND HOBBES

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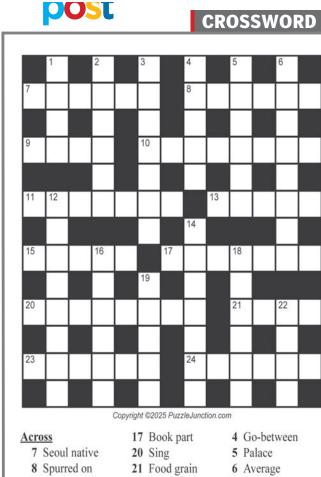
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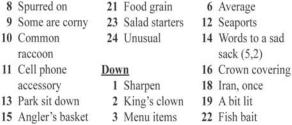
HUNGRY.



BREVITY







CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.

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SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

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ing conflict"

a holy place to seek divine blessing, you will do it all today.



downtown

Odisha a shining star of India's rich heritage: PM



Odisha Assembly Speaker Surama Padhy greets PM Narendra Modi on his arrival at Bhubaneswar airport Friday



Modi flags off several Railway projects worth over ₹2,750cr

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 20: Odisha is not merely a state, but a shining star of India's rich heritage, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said while addressing the celebration of the first anniversary of the BJP government in the state, Friday.

Modi said June 20 is a very special day as it marks the completion of one year of Odisha's first BJP government.

"This anniversary is not merely that of a government but of the establishment of good governance devoted to public service and public trust," the PM said.

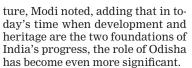
He said the BJP government has made sincere efforts to live up to the expectations of crores of voters in Odisha and extended his heartfelt greetings to the people, acknowledging their support and trust.

The PM congratulated Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and his entire team for their commendable work, noting that their efforts have given a fresh momentum to Odisha's



Motorcade makes way for ambulance

he motorcade of PM Narendra Modi gave way to an am-L bulance during his roadshow here Friday. A video showed the convoy slowing down to allow the ambulance to overtake as people lined up on the road to catch a glimpse of the Prime Minister. Modi was going to Janata Maidan to attend the first anniversary celebration of the BJP government in the state in a roadshow from the airport here amid tight security. When the carcade reached near Kalinga Stadium, an ambulance came on the same route and as the emergency vehicle was carrying a patient to the hospital, the PM's convoy made way for it.



He stated that over the past year, Odisha has wholeheartedly embraced the mantra of development while preserving its legacy, and has made rapid progress along this path.

Modi chaired the state-level function to mark the completion of one year of the BJP government in Odisha. "The growth of 21st century India will be powered by eastern India. This is the era of Purvodaya," Modi said, adding that with this vision. the government is focused on the development of Odisha along with the entire eastern region.

Highlighting the expansion of industrial zones from Paradip to Jharsuguda, he said this is strengthening Odisha's mineral and port-led economy. Modi stated that the Central government is investing thousands of crores in improving road, rail, and air connectivity across the state.

The PM highlighted that nearly



PM presses the remote button to unveil several development projects worth over ₹18,600cr in the state



PM Modi, CM Mohan Charan Majhi and state BJP president Manmohan Samal reach Janata Maidan, the venue of the event commemorating the first anniversary of the BJP govt in Odisha



Huge gathering at Janata Maidan





DSPL-133

development

"Odisha is not merely a state, but a shining star of India's rich heritage,' he said.

For centuries, Odisha has enriched Indian civilization and cul-

₹1.5 lakh crore has already been invested in Odisha's petroleum and petrochemical sectors in recent years. "Odisha is rapidly advancing towards becoming India's petrochemical hub." he added.



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ହସ୍ତନ୍ତ, ବୟନ ଓ ହସ୍ତଶିଳ୍ପ ବିଭାଗ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାର

Op Sindoor proves India safe under Modi: Majhi



gressed.

Bhubaneswar, June 20: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Friday said that Operation Sindoor proved that India is safe under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Majhi was addressing a function organised to celebrate the first anniversary of Odisha's maiden BJP government.

Showering praises on the PM, who was also present on the dais, Majhi said, "Earlier people used to say 'Modi hai toh mumkin hai' (it is possible if Modi is there), but today, the entire country is saying 'Modi hai toh desh surakshit hai' (the country is safe when Modi is at the helm)." "With Operation Sindoor, a new India has emerged, which will not bow down under any circumstance es. This new India will write its own destiny,' the CM said.

reaching new heights of development under Modi's leadership, Maihi said that in the last 11 years, every section of the society has pro-

Stating that India is

"Today, India has be-

come the fourth-largest economy in the world. and is soon going to become \$5 trillion economy. Extreme poverty in the country has come down from 27.1 per cent to 5.3 per cent. This proves that under your leadership, the country is changing and is moving forward on the path of development at a rapid pace," he said.

He said Odisha is also making progress and the state's initiatives are modelled keeping in mind the four categories mentioned by Modi the poor, the farmers, women and youth.

He wished President Droupadi Murmu on her birthday. Majhi said the Odisha government has secured an investment proposal of ₹17 lakh crore in just two days after Modi's call to the industries during Utkarsh Odisha: Make in Odisha Conclave held earlier this year.

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- ୨. ଖାଦ୍ୟ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତି ପୂର୍ବରୁ, ଖାଇବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଓ ଶୌଚ ହେବା ପରେ ସାବୁନ୍ରେ ଭଲଭାବେ ହାତ ଧୁଅନ୍ତୁ ।
- ୩. କାହାର ଝାଡ଼ା / ବାନ୍ତି ଲକ୍ଷଣ ଦେଖାଦେଲେ ତୁରନ୍ତ ଓ.ଆର୍.ଏସ୍. ଦ୍ରବଣ ପିଆନ୍ତୁ ଓ ଡ଼ାକ୍ତରଖାନା ନିଅନ୍ତୁ । ବିଳୟ କଲେ ବିପଦ ଅଛି ।



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SATURDAY | JUNE 21, 2025 | BHUBANESWAR

downtown



Parking fee hike at rly station sparks outrage



ANOJ KUMAR JENA, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 20: A steep hike in two-wheeler parking fees at Bhubaneswar railway station has triggered strong resentment among commuters, who termed the sudden move as arbitrary and unjustified.

Many bike owners, who had parked their vehicles during the Raja holidays, were shocked to discover the revised rates upon returning. The daily fee for two-wheelers shot up from ₹12 to ₹94, while bicycle charges increased from ₹5 to ₹24 overnight. Monthly parking fees were also raised significantly. Sources said the parking con-

tract is renewed every three years. The new rates came into effect from June 13, following the handover of the parking space by the previous contractor, Maa

Tarini Security Services. As per the earlier tariff chart, the parking fee was ₹6 (including GST) for motorcycles and ₹3 for bicycles for a duration of up to 12 hours. However, from June 13, parking tariffs saw a sharp hike after a new contractor, D&S Associates, took over management of the space.

According to the new rates, a motorcycle or scooter cycle user will pay ₹47 and a cycle user will pav ₹12 to park for 12-24 hours. Similarly, ₹24 for beyond 24 hours for cycle and

₹94 for motorcycle. The monthly charges have been fixed to ₹177 for cycle and ₹885 for motorcycle

"The hike is too steep. I used to park here every day, but these rates are unaffordable for common people. The government should reconsider and bring down the prices," said a commuter.

"As students, we don't have any source of income. Our travel budget is very limited, and such high parking charges will seriously affect our expenses. The railway authorities and the government should look into this issue, said a student.

A senior official of the East Coast Railway (ECoR) said the parking facility at the railway station is meant exclusively for railway passengers. "In many cases, vehicles

are left in the parking area for months by non-passengers, which limit availability for actual railway users. The revised rates are expected to discourage such misuse," the official said.



SUPPORT RALLY: Biju Janata Dal leaders gather at Biju Patnaik International Airport in Bhubaneswar, Friday as a show of support for party president and former chief minister Naveen Patnaik, as he departs for Mumbai to undergo cervical arthritis surgery

'Diarrhoea controlled through joint efforts'

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 20: The state government Friday said the diarrhoea situation has been brought under control by concerted efforts of field-level teams of the departments of Health and Family Welfare, Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water, Housing and Urban Development, Women and Child Development, and Mission Shakti, an official said.

Public Health Services director Nilakantha Mishra presented the updates and outlined the issues at a review meeting chaired by Health secretary Aswathy S, the official said.

Aswathy S has advised peo ple to follow hygienic practices, hand washing, and drink boiled water. Water supply agencies have been asked to undertake intensive disinfection of water sources at regular intervals,

Health and Family Welfare Minister Mukesh Mahaling has directed officials to keep up the campaign till the end of the monsoon to check the possible outbreak of any waterborne diseases including diarrhoea.

He advised people not to panic but to remain vigilant about following hygienic practices both in personal and communitv life.

SOA, Broadridge sign MoU



delighted to partner with SOA

as this collaboration under-

scored the company's commit-

ment to nurture talent and drive

innovation by working closely

SOA has actively pursued

partnerships like this across IT

and core sectors to ensure the

students could gain relevant,

hands-on skills, said Ripti Ran-

jan Dash, SOA's director, Cor-

porate Relations and Industry

SOA and Broadridge will

collaborate on enhancing

industry-relevant training

programmes by integrating

current tools and trends, organising guest lectures, indus-

try-led workshops and expert

mentoring sessions while pro-

viding students with internship

opportunities and potential ca-

Engagement.

Cl

with academic institutions.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 20: Siksha 'O' Anusandhan Deemed to be University recently signed a Memorandum of Understand ing (MoU) with Broadridge Financial Solutions, a global fintech leader to foster deeper collaboration between aca demia and industry.

The MoU was signed between SOA vice-chancellor Pradipta Kumar Nanda and Broadridge India's HR Head Ritu Rakhra in the presence of senior leadership of both institutions.

This collaboration reflects SOA's sustained commitment to engaging meaningfully with industry partners and preparing our students to be future-ready through practical learning," Nanda said.

Rakhra said Broadridge was reer pathways.

Cong holds demo over crimes against women

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 20: Hours before Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in the Capital city, several Congress leaders and workers Friday started a six-hour-long hunger strike here, alleging a "rise" in violence against women and a "collapse" of the health system in the state.

Senior leaders of the Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC), led by its president Bhakta Charan Das and AICC's state in-charge Ajay Kumar Lallu held the hunger strike in front of the party's state head quarters here.

"Over 5,000 people have been affected and 17 have died due to an acute diarrhoea outbreak in 11 districts. These people are entitled to at least sympathy from the government," Das said.

The prime minister and Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi should visit those affected by diarrhoea and hear their problems, he said.

Atrocities against women are "increasing day by day in Odisha as the state reported more than 65 "gangrape" incidents in the past one year of the BJP government", Das alleged.

ASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit in the Court of Executive Magistrate, Bhubaneswar, I, Soumy Sephalika Rath, W/o-Sukanta Kumar Dash, At/P.O.-Kshatriya Barapur, P.S.-Gangapur, Dist.-Ganjam, PIN-761123 do hereby declare that I have changed my former name from Soumy Sephalika Dash to Soumy Sephalika Rath, by this affidavit C.F. No.-123/25, dt.20.05.2025. Henceforth, I will be known as Soumy Sephalika Rath of Aadhaar No.- xxxx xxxx 8056 for all future purposes. Soumy Sephalika Rath Deponent

OS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS KIIT tops among private universities in Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 20: KIIT Deemed to be University has achieved a major milestone by ranking No. 1 among all private universities in Odisha in the QS World University Rankings 2026. It also secured the 9th position among India's leading private higher education institutions and made its debut in the global rankings, earning international recognition for academic excellence.

In its debut appearance, KIIT made a strong mark on the global academic stage by securing the 55th spot in South Asia in the QS Asia University Rankings-highlighting its swift ascent in higher education and commitment to excellence in teaching, research, innovation, and internationalisation. The QS World University Rankings 2026 assessed over



er reputation, faculty-student ratio, research impact, international diversity, research collaboration, employment outcomes, and sustainability. Reacting to the achievement, KIIT and KISS founder Achyuta Samanta said, "This recognition is

ed to this proud moment.'



the result of our consistent efforts towards academic excellence, social commitment, and global engagement. KIIT, though only 21 years old, has outperformed many long-established institutions. I congratulate all our teachers, staff. and students who have contribut-

she said.

INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY

sworn before Notary Public, Bheden dated 10.06.2025, I, Kumodini Bhue, Address : At-Hatagaon, P.o.-Rusuda, Dist.-Baragarh declare that I have changed my name from Susmita Sandha to Kumodini Bhue. Henceforth, I shall be known as Kumodini Bhue for all purposes. Kumodini Bhue

By virtue of an affidavit

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before Executive Magistrate, Astaranga, dated 16.06.2025 I, Suvashri Pradhan, Address : Village-Nuagarh, P.O. Nuagarh, PS-Astaranga, Dist.-Puri, PIN-752109, State-Odisha declare that I have changed my name from Subhashree Baral to Suvashri Pradhan. Henceforth, I shall be known as

Suvashri Pradhan

Suvashri Pradhan

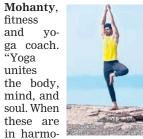
for all purposes.

Yoga links inner peace to planet health: Experts

RESHMI YADAV, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 20: As the world marks the 11th International Yoga Day, this vear's theme-Yoga for One Earth, One Health—has struck a deep chord with practitioners across Odisha. Experts and instructors highlight that yoga not only harmonises the body, mind, soul but now also fosters a stronger connection with the planet.

"Wellness isn't just a personal goal — it's a planetary responsibility," says Abhishek



ny, you become calmer, more focused, and spiritually aware – which, in turn, fosters a deeper sense of responsibility towards the Earth.

Reflecting on his journey since 2008, he adds, "Yoga helped me overcome depression and anxiety during college. It

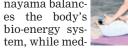




through practices like pran-Academy ayama, kriya, and meditation. 'Every asana we perform is rooted in nature - from Bhujangasana to Surva Namaskar. As we engage in yoga, we naturally deepen our connection with the Earth. This awareness encourages more mindful

Yoga is more than a physical practice — it's a spiritual

Mohanty, a Bhubaneswar-based instructor. "Pranayama balances the body's bio-energy sys-



itation and chanting 'Om' help reduce anxiety and build emotional resilience," she explains.

She says further, "Patanjali's concept of Pratyahara - withdrawing from negative influences and embracing purity goes beyond personal peace. It promotes ecological harmony by encouraging us to live with less, make conscious choices, and respect all forms of life."

Adding to this. Kaial Satpathy, founder of Namami Yoga

and an aerial yoga expert. emphasises that yoga cultivates inner harmony that

> naturally extends outward. "It helps us manage stress, breathe better, and live with compassion. And when we live kindly, we become more eco-conscious — consuming less, wasting less, and caring more," she explains.

Manosmita Mishra, yoga teacher and public health that expert, underscores

clarity, emotional intelligence. and a sense of purpose. "Yoga reduces stress, improves sleep, enhances breathing, and builds resilience — both mentally and physically. When we feel grounded, we naturally connect with nature," she says. "You begin to feel disturbed by water waste or dying trees. That's the deeper impact of yoga — it awakens compassion for the planet." she adds.

regular yoga practice fosters

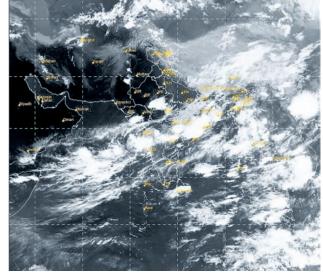
To mark the occasion, schools and institutions across Odisha are hosting essay contests, expert-led workshops, and digital campaigns to raise awareness. Yoga professionals are also encouraging the integration of yoga into daily routines, online platforms, and health publications.

As voices from the state's yoga community unite, their



INDEX VARIATION	INDEX VARIATION	INDEX VARIATION
DOLLAR 86.67 🕈 0.10	SENSEX 82408.17 🔺 1,046	GOLD ₹ 99,115 ♦ ₹214
EURO 99.86 † 0.24	NIFTY 25112.40 3 19.15	SILVER ₹106,103 ♦ ₹1,29
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the 1 a		
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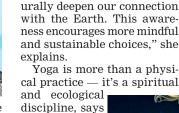
MARKET WATCH



	WEATH	ER	
	BBSR	СТС	FORECAST
Max Temp	33.1°	33.8°	Partly cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain or
Min Temp	27.0°	25.4°	
Humidity	89%	83%	thundershowers.
Rainfall	5.9	Nil	

BOOKING STAT ASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS OUR CON EOR

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur-9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488 Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816 Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookieman-9439491273, Nigamananda Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347 Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.



10

Praina

Orissapos SATURDAY | JUNE 21, 2025 | BHUBANESWAR

state



Illegal sale of rly land in Rourkela; nexus alleged

Rourkela, June 20: A growing land mafia targeting railway properties in Rourkela has triggered concern among residents and authorities, amid allegations of illegal sales, encroachments and suspected collusion by railway employees. The issue has further deepened the city's housing crisis and is hindering urban development too

Of late, housing shortage in Rourkela and across Sundargarh district has worsened. While rich people are purchasing plots in upscale localities at premium rates, people belonging to economically weaker sections are turning to unutilised lands-particularly those owned by the Railways. the Forest department and Rourkela Steel Plant-for shelter.

Encroachments have surged across several railway-owned plots, especially in areas like

Bandhamunda, where unauthorised structures have obstructed road construction projects. Similar encroachments are also affecting steel plant and forest lands, where planned infrastructure initiatives face repeated delays due to illegal

settlements. Recently, multiple allegations have surfaced regarding the large-scale sale of railway

land through illegal means. "Shockingly, some railway employees are suspected of facilitating these transactions,'

said a source. Rourkela falls under the Mumbai-Howrah section of the South Eastern Railway, and unauthorised settlements along the tracks are allegedly being sold by long-time occupants at exorbitant prices before they

Scientific exploration, mega beach

cleaning drive held in Chandipur

sessions on the ecological impor-

tance of Horseshoe Crabs. Their

insights encouraged students to

take on the role of marine conser-

Adding to the educational

fervour, Dr Biswajeet Panda,

founder of Bikash Saathi, led an

engaging interaction focused on

Horseshoe Crabs and the wider

vation ambassadors.

disappear, leaving buyers stranded.

As demand for affordable housing rises, land mafia networks have identified railway properties as lucrative targets. Despite numerous complaints, authorities have reportedly taken little concrete action. However, railway officials claim that stringent measures will be taken if formal complaints are received

According to local sources, over 20 settlements—including Railway Colony, Malgodown, Gopabandhu Palli, Timber Colony, Durgapur Basti, Nehru Palli, Madhusudan Palli, Rajiv Basti, Indira Nagar and FCI Basti—are located on railway land. Many of these settlements have been occupied for decades. Typically, encroachers construct temporary shelters with tin or asbestos roofs, and later convert into permanent homes using brick and mortar.

Sikandar Alam, a resident of Malgodown area, alleged that railway land is being openly sold and that drug peddling is thriving in the region. "Many young people are falling prey to substance abuse. Authorities must take immediate action," he said.

Railways inspector of works Tuhinkant Satpathy confirmed that monitoring is underway. "We are identifying encroached zones near the railway lines as part of a redevelopment plan and working to reclaim the land. Eviction drives have already been carried out in areas such as Railway Colony and Malgodown," he said.

Satpathy added that no official complaints have been received linking railway employees to the illegal land sales. He, however, assured that stringent legal action would follow if such allegations are substantiated



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, June 20: A Class V

student of Deobandh Primary

School under Ghatagaon block

in Keonjhar district sustained

a bleeding head injury Friday

after plaster fell from the school

roof on the first day of reopen-

The injured student, identi-

fied as Divyanshu Mohanty, 10,

of Sanajiuli village, was report-

edly sent home without medical

treatment, sparking outrage

among locals, who staged a pro-

test demanding action against

District Education Officer

the school authorities.

ing after summer vacation.

Purna Chandra Bariha said an investigation has been ordered and action will be taken after inquiry.

Block Development Officer Khageswar Baral and Assistant Block Education Officer Sanjay Kumar Palei visited the school and spoke to parents and stu dents.

Block Education Officer Harekrushna Nayak said the school, which has 40 enrolled students and two teachers, is running in an old building. A proposal for reconstruction has been sent to the Public Works department.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

'E'PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS

The following tenders have been

uploaded on website www.ireps.gov.ir

No. MCS/Stores/E-Procure/Tender lotice/Air Spring/199, Dtd : 16.06.2025

TENDER No. 92255422

Man poisons self over son's abuse

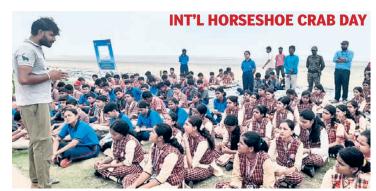
POST NEWS NETWORK

Langaleswar, June 20: Unable to bear repeated abuse by his son and daughter-in-law, a 70-year-old man from Malanbalikuti village under Baliapal police limits in Balasore district attempted suicide by consuming poison after pasting handwritten posters on shop walls describing his ordeal.

The elderly man wrote down details of the abuse he had been suffering and pasted posters on the walls of several shops

Debendra Behera reportedly faced frequent humiliation and physical assault by his son Gauranga and daughter-in-law Ranjita over trivial matters. Following a heated argument Wednesday over sale of tender coconut, Gauranga allegedly beat up his father and asked him to leave the house. Debendra's wife remained silent throughout the ordeal, which reportedly added to his distress.

Sources said a humiliated Debendra wrote down details of the abuse he had been suffering and pasted posters on the walls of several shops at Mandhata market. Later that night, he allegedly consumed poison in an attempt to end his life, and is battling for his life.



POST NEWS NETWORK

Chandipur, June 20: In celebration of International Horseshoe Crab Day, Chandipur beach Friday witnessed an inspiring convergence of environmental consciousness and scientific learning through a grand scientific exploration and mega beach cleaning drive. The event drew over 200 spirited participants, including NCC cadets, Junior Red Cross volunteers, Scouts and Guides, united by a common goal: to protect marine biodiversity and raise awareness about the endangered Horseshoe Crab.

Eminent academicians Prof Manoranjan Mishra (Department of Geography) and Dr Asesh Kumar Shaw (Department of Journalism and Mass Communication), both from Fakir Mohan University, delivered captivating marine ecosystem. His session enriched students' understanding of coastal biodiversity and the urgent need for its preservation.

Youth leaders Akash Jena, Saipriya Nayak, Tushar Behera, Adarsh Jena, Rashmita Kabat, and Rebati Singh conducted a 'Beach Eco Walk', introducing participants to diverse marine species and their natural habitats along the coast.

Outstanding contributions by students Siddhi Pradhan, Arju Ara Khan, and Ankita Dinda were recognised with awards for their creative posters and impactful presentations. Teachers from Siddhivinayak Public School - Malay Ranjan Mohapatra, Sanat Kumar Mohanty, Namita Patra, and Mousumi Shaw — also shared valuable perspectives on the importance of marine life conservation.

Spearheaded by coordinator Sambit Patra, the programme emphasised action as much as awareness. In a powerful display of commitment to ocean health, students collected over 500 kg of single-use plastics and ghost nets, which were responsibly disposed of.

This meaningful initiative was made possible with the support of Wildlife Trust of India, Fondation Segré, Dharitri, Orissa Post, and ASD Auditors, underscoring the strength of collective efforts in preserving our oceans for future generations.

Decomposed body of missing youth found

Chakapad: The decomposed body of a youth, who had been missing for last 40 days, was found hanging from a tree in a forest near Dandasaru hill under Kusument panchayat in Kandhamal district, Friday, with his family members al-leging foul play. A group of locals noticed the severely decomposed body hanging from a tree and immediately informed police. Tikabali IIC Prajna Ritambar Kar, Additional Tehsildar Rashmiranjan Das and ASI Abanikanta Pradhan reached the site and initiated preliminary inquiries. Locals identified the deceased based on the shirt and trousers he was wearing, and informed his family members. The deceased was identified as Sudarshan Kanhar of Sudasahi (Dumuriguda) under Shankarakhola panchayat. His wife, Jharana Behera, who identified the body, al leged that her husband had been murdered and later hanged in the dense forest to make it appear like suicide. Sudarshan had reportedly gone missing May 11, while returning to his home from his in-laws' place in Khajuripada.

DESCRIPTION : SUPPLY OF AIR SPRING ASSEMBLY (160 KN) ETC. Tender Closing Date & Time : At 1500 hrs. of 14.07.2025. Dy. Chief Materials Manager/CRW PR-260/Q/25-26 Mancheswa EAST COAST RAILWAY e-Tender Notice No. ETCECONIIIBBS 2025024, Dated : 10.06.2025 AME OF WORK E EXECUTION OF BALLAST LESS TRACK AT PURI STATION YARD FOR PLATFORM NO. 7 & 8 UNDER KHURDA ROAD DIVISION OF EAST COAST RAILWAY.

Approx. Cost of the Work : ₹ 1007.61 Lakh, EMD : ₹ 6,53,800/-, Completio Period of the Work : 05 (Five) Months. Tender Closing Date & Time : At 1200

hrs. of 11.07.2025. No manual offers sent by Post / Courier Fax or in person shall be accepted agains such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summari without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tende documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.ireps.gov.in The prospective tenderers an Note : advised to revisit the website 15 (Fifteen days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigenda issued fo this tender. The tenderers/bidders mus have Class-III Digital Signature Certificat and must be registered on IREPS Porta Only registered tenderer/bidder ca participate on e-tendering.

The tenderers should read all instructions to the tenderers carefully and ensure compliance of all instructions includin check lists, para 3.1 (additional check-list) of Tender form (Second sheet) Annexure-I of chapter 2 of Tender documents, submission of Annexure-B duly verified and signed by Chartered Accountant

Chief Administrative Officer / Con PR-43/CI/25-26 RSP / Bhubaneswa PR-44/CI/25-26

nts, submission

check lists, para 3.1 (additional check-list) of Tender form (Second sheet) Annexure-I of

chapter 2 of Tender docum

Chief Administrative Officer (Con)

EAST COAST RAILWAY EAST COAST RAILWAY (1) Tender No.19-KUR-TRD-OT-2025-26 e-Tender Notice No. CAOCRSPBBS NAME OF WORKS EXECUTION OF OHE MODIFICATION WORK IN CONNECTION WITH CONSTRUCTION 09-2025, Dated : 06.06.2025 NAME OF WORK: ROAD OVER BRIDGE (ROB) (1) SPAN (1 X 60.0 M BOW STRING GIRDER + 2 X OF THE PROPOSED ROAD OVER 18.0 M COMPOSITE GIRDER) AT RAILWAY KM. 539/15 IN LIEU OF LEVEL CROSSING NO. JT-15 BETWEEN LAPANGA-RENGALI STATIONS ON BRIDGE (ROB) AT KM. 424/15-17 IN LIEU OF EXISTING LEVEL CROSSING JHARSUGUDA-TITLAGARH SECTION

COAST RAILWAY. Advertised Value : ₹8,09,578.92, EMD : Period of the Work : 24 (Twenty Four ₹16,200/-, Period of Completion : 180 Tender Closing Date & Time : At 1500

(2) Tender No.20-KUR-TRD-OT-2025-26 MAMEOFWORK EXECUTION OF OHE M O D I F I C A T I O N W O R K I N CONNECTION WITH CONSTRUCTION OF THE PROPOSED ROAD OVER BRIDGE (ROB) IN LIEU OF LEVEL CROSSING NO. 182 AT KM. 422/4-5 IN DETWIEEN STATIONS PARADAC BETWEEN STATIONS BARANG BHUBANESWAR NEW ON HOWRAH VISAKHAPATNAM MAIN LINE UNDER KHURDA ROAD DIVISION OF EAST COAST RAILWAY.

have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal Only registered tenderer/ bidder car participate on e-tendering. The tenderers should read all instructions to the tenderers carefully and ensure compliance of all instructions including

(for Tender No. 2). lanual offers are not allowed against thi tender, and any such manual offe eceived shall be ignored. Complete information including e-Tende ocuments and corrigendum is available website www.ireps.gov.in Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD) PR-259/Q/25-26 Khurda Road

LIEU OF EXISTING LEVEL CROSSING NO. CP-93 AT KM. 424/13-15 ON NH-55 AT KANDARPUR (KDRP) BETWEEN STATIONS CUTTACK (CTC)-KNADARPUR (KDRP) ON CUTTACK (CTC)-PARADEEP (PRDP) SECTION OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION OF EAST COAST DAU WAY OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION Approx. Cost of the Work : ₹ 9061.46 Lakhs, EMD : ₹ 46,80,700/-, Completion

Days.

hrs. of 08.07.2025. No manual offers sent by Post / Courier Fax or in person shall be accepted agains such e-tenders even if these are submitte on firm's letter head and received in time All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration. Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.ireps.gov.in Note: The prospective tenderers an advised to revisit the website 15 (Fifteen days before the date of closing of tender t

Advertised Value : ₹ 13,30,146.39, EMD: ₹ 26,600/-, Period of Completion : 180 note any changes / corrigenda issued fo Days this tender. The tenderers/bidders mus

Bidding Start Date : 23.06.2025 (for Tender No. 1) and 25.06.2025 (for Tender No. 2). Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1300 Hrs. of 07.07.2025 (for Tende No. 1) and at 1300 Hrs. of 09.07.2025

of Annexure-B, G & G1 duly signed by Chartered Accountant.

Safety at stake: Illegal truck parking continues unabated

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, June 20: Safety of commuters on National Highways (NHs) across this district continues to be at stake as repeated notifications from the administration fail to deter truck drivers from haphazardly parking their vehicles on the NHs, while lack of designated parking zones along most of these roads is aggravating the issue. The result: Frequent mishaps and damage to life and property.

Sources said NHs-20, 520, and 49 pass through the district, along with several key state highways, expressways and district roads. Keonjhar sees heavy movement of iron-oreladen trucks, trailers, containers, and other interstate commercial vehicles. However, organised truck parking facilities are available only at a few places, while major junctions and transport corridors lack any structured arrangement.

Truck drivers are often seen parking their vehicles on roadsides to eat, rest, or wash, with breakdowns frequently leaving trucks stranded for hours on roads. These conditions have intensified traffic congestion, es-

pecially in the district headquarters town. Illegally parked trucks waiting in line to load minerals often block lanes. leading to both traffic disruptions and hindrances to elephant movement across forest corridors.

The regional transport office (RTO) has issued notices to the district truck owners' associations in this regard. However, lack of enforcement has only encouraged further violations, locals alleged.

In 2021, the divisional forest officer (DFO) had directed all mining companies not to allow truck parking in wildlife movement zones. However, the directive is reportedly being ignored in mining areas such as Suakati, Joda, Barbil, and Rugudi in the district. Environmentalists have expressed concern over the Forest department's failure to act under Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, despite clear violations.

Similarly, Keonjhar Municipality had issued letters to the president and secretary of the District Truck Owners' Association, urging them to avoid using the new bus terminal area for truck parking. Despite this, compliance remains low.

Keonjhar Truck Owners' Associa

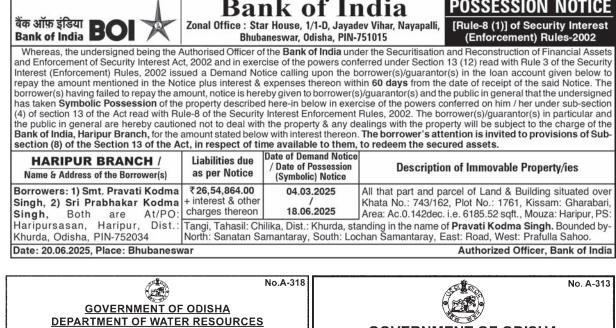
tion president Pradip Barik said the administration has failed to provide designated parking areas for trucks in many locations, forcing drivers to park haphazardly.

Barik added that government departments are indifferent to the problems faced by truck owners, and mining companies too are avers to providing any parking arrangements.

Sachidananda Mohapatra, a truck owner, urged the authorities to conduct regular patrolling and impose fines on trucks that violate parking rules. "This will not only help augment revenue collection but also make drivers more aware and responsible," he said. Mohapatra stressed that it is the administration's duty to address these pressing issues.

Advocate Ashok Das said in cases where illegal parking or breakdowns occur on NHs, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) should take immediate action. He pointed out that although the responsible agency has a patrolling mechanism in place, it rarely acts proactively. "They only respond after accidents occur. All concerned parties should be held accountable," Das stated.





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power post

Sit in meditation! But do not think! Look only at your mind!You will see thoughts coming into it! Before they can enter, throw these away from your mind till your mind is capable of entire silence SRI AUROBINDO



Quiet Scramble

he Modi government has recently relaxed its rules for selecting joint secretaries to encourage more IAS officers to take on central roles. The timing is telling. As of 2023, only 442 IAS officers were on board at the Centre versus the "required" 1,469 spots. That's a yawning gap.

By tweaking the rules, babus who've spent two years as under-secretary at the Centre can now leap to joint secretary. Previously, one had to be a director or deputy secretary first. Official-speak calls it 'widening the pool", but practically, it's a gentle shove.

The move has sharpened the state-Centre tug-of-war. These tweaks effectively force officers to choose to stay back in a comfy district DM post, or move to the Centre, learn a different bureaucratic lingo, and get counted for the big leagues. One officer quipped that it's "do-or-die"—if you skip Centre postings now, your chances at JS are gone forever.

Still, there's a disconnect. Many observers see little upside in moving to the under secretary level. Who wants to go from being the local boss to a junior foot soldier at North Block, with fewer perks? So, has this really bulked up the IAS presence at the Centre? Probably not, at least not yet

There's also a fairness itch here. Babus tied up in negotiations with their state governments over transfers feel penalised but their state is reluctant to relieve them. They are stuck. That's the system excluding them from the Centre even before they can apply.

So, while the tweak signals intent, it also smacks of top-down micromanagement. The Centre wants boots on its ground; the states want to hang on to theirs. And the individual officer? He's stuck in the middle-or caught in a bureaucratic Catch 22.

The policy tweak is a step, but it just might not be enough to cross the finish line.

Amitabh Kant bows out as G20 Sherpa-a curtain call, not an exit

There's something to be said about a babu who not only survives four decades of public service but manages to exit on a high, leaving behind a trail of deliverables that actually delivered. Amitabh Kant, India's

G20 Sherpa since 2022 and former CEO of NITI Aayog, has stepped down from his latest assignment, marking the end of a remarkable innings that stretched across 45 years. Few officials have been so consis-



tently at the right place, at the right time, with the right PowerPoint!

As Sherpa, Kant helped steer India through one of its most high-profile multilateral events-the 2023 G20 Summit in New Delhi. From consensus-building on climate and development to deftly navigating geopolitical tightropes (remember the Russia-Ukraine language deadlock?), he brought both gravitas and good old-fashioned negotiation skills to the table. His tenure wasn't just about speechifying; it was about delivering outcomes, often in rooms full of clashing national interests and veiled threats.

Of course, Kant's legacy predates his Sherpa stint. His tenure at NITI Aayog saw the early architecture of India's startup ecosystem, national missions on innovation, and a policy voice that occasionally managed to cut through the bureaucratic noise.

Now, as he hints at championing free enterprise, startups, and think tanks in his next avatar, one hopes he carries forward his ability to push big ideas without letting them get buried in file-noting. The G20 role may be behind him, but something tells us Amitabh Kant isn't done being relevant. Not just yet.

Babus' big migration begins

The babus are on the move-literally. With three new spanking towers in the Central Vista zone ready for occupancy, ministries have been told to pack up their files (and potted plants) and head to the Common Central Secretariat. MoHUA has kicked things off, and others—from Finance to Health—are bracing for their turn.

This was long overdue. For decades, government departments have been scattered across Delhi in crumbling, creaky buildings. Bringing them together under one roof should improve coordination, reduce duplication, and save taxpayers a fair bit of money on inter-ministry note-carrying But governance isn't just about geography. Moving to a new building doesn't fix the culture of delay, turf wars, or that all-too-familiar tendency to measure productivity in kilograms of paperwork. Fancy new elevators don't move files any faster. That said, symbolism matters. The Modi government has pushed the Central Vista as a visual metaphor for a more decisive, aspirational India. The buildings are meant to look like the future, and in fairness, they do. The challenge is whether the bureaucratic mindset will follow suit.

FOCUS NATION **PRICE OF HUMAN LIFE** t was meant to be a week

when the Narendra Modi-led NDA government would celebrate its 11th year in power with the signature 'band, baaia, baarat' media hype that has been its forte. And yet, for once, even the astute headline management skills of the government's cheerleaders couldn't detract from the awfulness of the breaking news in the second week of June: at least 270 people dead in the worst civil aviation disaster in this country since two planes collided in mid-air in 1996. That the Air India flight 171 crashed just outside Ahmedabad in Gujarat, the home state of the government's Big Two, perhaps makes the tragedy even more poignant.

While it is premature to speculate over the causes of the crash – various aviation 'experts' in TV studios have proffered different theories - the crash has triggered a renewed debate over air safety. While official data suggests India's safety track record is at par with global standards, there are enough reasons for concern. Just to give a context. A parliamentary standing committee report on the Ministry of Civil Aviation in March this year pointed out that the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DG-CA) was operating with 53% of its sanctioned posts vacant while the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security has a vacancy rate of 35%. The government's ambitious UDAN scheme aims to connect 120 new destinations but its budget has been slashed by 32%. While the number of airports has nearly doubled in the last decade, the amount being spent on maintaining safety standards lags behind. Which raises a big question: will a horrific air crash change anything on the ground? The black box and flight data recorder may provide more clues as to what happened for a Dreamliner plane to explode into a fireball just seconds after take-off but will the inquiry be fair and transparent in revealing the truth given the



Unless there is a fundamental change in approach that places a premium on accountability above all else, we will simply lurch from one disaster to the next

mighty stakeholders involved? Which brings one to ask a critical question: is there any ACCOUNTABILITY in our system to ensure responsibility is fixed on key figures in a time-bound manner? Just look at the series of events in a disastrous month of June that still has some days to run.

On 4 June, just a day after the IPL final, a stampede in Bengaluru during the victory celebrations of the Royal Challengers Bengaluru left 11 people dead, many more injured. The rushed event was organized despite the fact that the police had not given the required permission. With back to back events being organized at the Vidhan Soudha and Chinnaswamy Stadium, the police were overwhelmed by surging crowds. A public spectacle for a privately-run franchise's triumph was given priority over the urgent need for public safety. Instead of accepting responsibility, the faction-ridden Congress government in Karnataka has busily disowned its culpability. Bengaluru's top cop has been suspended while no politician who happily posed with the star players has been held to account.

On 9 June, four people died and nine were injured in a rail accident in Mumbra near Mumbai. The commuters fell onto the tracks while they were standing on the footboards of overcrowded trains. People hanging by the door in peak hour crowding is not new with a sharp curve

along the Mumbra track making it even more hazardous. While a Central Railway committee is probing the incident, the underlying causes of a shambolic public transport system in a megapolis like Mumbai remain unaddressed. Is the creaking suburban train system suffering from neglect as alleged by commuter organisations while the private car traffic whizzes by

on a shining coastal road? On 16 June, a bridge collapsed near Pune due to over-crowding amidst heavy rainfall leaving four people dead and several more injured. The 30-year-old bridge was deemed 'unsafe' but despite red flags being raised by locals for several years, a work order for the construction of a new bridge was delayed and reportedly issued only five days before the collapse. Approval of ₹8 crore for a new bridge was given last year but bureaucratic red-tapism meant that it was all too late to avoid a tragedy. Yet again, Maharashtra's BJPled ruling alliance politicians have fulminated and promised action, only presumably until the next bridge collapse serves as another wake-up call.

On 15 June, seven people died when a chopper flying from the Kedarnath temple to Guptkashi in Uttarakhand crashed in the forest. Worryingly, this was the fifth such incident in just six weeks in the area, raising questions over the feasibility of the helicopter services in inclement weather in the mountains. The

Chief Minister Pushkar Dhami has promised to put in place a Standard Operating Procedure while the DGCA has assured extra surveillance. Once again, a case of too little, too late.

Indeed, the chronology of each such tragedy follows a familiar pattern. Little attention is paid to adhering to strict safety norms in a characteristic 'chalta hai' attitude. Rather than focusing on the rigors of daily governance, priority is given to optics of political grandstanding. More fast trains are flagged, more airports are commissioned, more tourist sites are created, more glitzy sports celebrations are organised.

Building a Viksit Bharat by 2047, as envisaged by the Modi government, is a noble aim. Yet, the grim reality on the ground often doesn't match the dreams being spun in the air in a nation of 1.4 billion people. And then, when every now and then, a rickety bridge collapses, a stampede is caused by mass hysteria or there is a rail or air accident, those in positions of power are the first to shrug off responsibility. After all, in almost instances, it is the faceless, anonymous Indian who pays with their lives. Unless there is a fundamental change in approach that places a premium on accountability above all else, we will simply lurch from one disaster to the next. Because in India if there is one sport that we deserve an Olympic medal in, it is 'passing the buck'.

Post-script: Ironically, just a few days ago, a BBC investigative report exposed the truth of the Mahakumbh stampede deaths in January this year. Officially, the UP government claimed 37 people died, the detailed BBC investigation found the number was at least 82. If we lie about death, what price is there for human lives?

The writer is a senior journalist and author. His latest best-selling book is 2024: The Election That Surprised India.

INTRNATIONAL YOGA DAY SPECTRUM

Ancient answer to modern life's turmoil

s we celebrate International Yoga Day, the world finds itself at a crossroads of unprecedented stress and unrest. In India's rapidly changing landscape, psychological distress has reached epidemic proportions-56 million suffer from depression, 38 million from anxiety disorders (WHO). At the same time, a staggering 1.71 lakh lives were lost to suicide in 2022 (NCRB). Students are particularly vulnerable, with 11% reporting chronic anxiety, 14% experiencing extreme emotional swings, and 43% grappling with mood disorders-largely triggered by academic pressures. These statistics paint a grim picture of our collective well-being, exposing the hollowness of material progress divorced from inner peace. In this crisis, Maharshi Patanjali's Yoga Sutras emerge not as ancient scripture but as a vital prescription for modern living. When he defines yoga as "chitta vritti nirodha" (cessation of mental fluctuations), Patanjali addresses the core malady of our age: the restless, fragmented mind. The eightfold path of Ashtanga Yoga presents a step-by-step antidote to contemporary afflictions. Its ethical foundations-Yamas (restraints like non-violence and truthfulness) and Niyamas (observances like con-

tentment and self-discipline)-

Yoga's mind-training techniques are being adopted by the corporate world and government establishment alike to enhance leadership focus,

ease. Patanjali's system works precisely because it integrates body, mind and values-asanas prepare the body for meditation, ethical living creates mental



Rajdeep Sardesai

RATHER THAN FOCUSING ON THE RIGORS OF DAILY GOVERNANCE, **PRIORITY IS GIVEN TO THE**

OPTICS OF POLITICAL GRANDSTANDING

So yes, let's welcome the move. It's clean, central, and overdue. But let's not pretend the hard part is over. The true transformation of governance lies not in where officials sit, but in how they think, act, and collaborate.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

Whoever is happy will make others happy too

ANNE FRANK

There are two powers in the world; one is the sword and the other is the pen. There is a third power stronger than both, that of women

MALALA YOUSAFZAI

Once we start to act, hope is everywhere. So instead of looking for hope, look for action. Then, and only then, hope will come

GRETA THUNBURG

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- **1813:** The Battle of Vitoria was fought during the Peninsular War, breaking Napoleon's power in Spain.
- 1905: Jean-Paul Sartre, a French novelist, playwright, and exponent of existentialism who was awarded but declined the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1964, was born.
- 1945: Japanese resistance on Okinawa was finally crushed , less than three months after U.S. troops landed there as the last stepping-stone before the planned assault on Japan's main islands in World War II.
- **1982:** Prince William of Wales (later Prince William, duke of Cambridge) was born to Charles, prince of Wales and heir to the British throne, and Diana, princess of Wales.



Bhagirathi Jena

POLICYMAKERS SHOULD **LEVERAGE YOGA'S** PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE **POTENTIAL TO ALLEVIATE OUR OVERBURDENED MEDICAL**

SYSTEMS

counteract the greed and aggression poisoning our social fabric. Consider how Ahimsa (non-violence), when applied beyond the mat, could temper online hatred and geopolitical tensions alike. The physical aspects (Asana and Pranayama) are now scientifically validated to reduce cortisol levels by 27% (Journal of Clinical Psychology), while the meditative limbs (Dharana to Samadhi) rewire neural pathways, with MRI studies showing increased gray matter in practitioners' brains. Pataniali's genius lies in offering multiple yogic paths tailored to human diversity. The active find solace in Karma Yoga's selfless service, particularly meaningful when 53% of Indian employees report disengagement at work (The State of the Global Workplace 2025 report by Gallup). For intellectuals drowning in information overload, Jnana Yoga's discernment between transient and eternal provides anchorage. Meanwhile, Raja

proving ancient wisdom meets modern boardroom and good governance needs

The healthcare sector is witnessing yoga's transformative power firsthand. Leading cancer hospitals now integrate yoga therapy, with studies showing a 40% reduction in chemotherapy-related fatigue (National Cancer Institute).

At the societal level, voga's potential is even more profound. In a world where numerous nuclear warheads exist, Patanjali's teaching that "the root of suffering is misidentification with the transient" offers a philosophical vaccine against destructive ideologies

The UN's adoption of International Yoga Day recognizes this civilizational gift India offers to global peace.

Yet, the true test lies in translating philosophy into daily practice. Corporate yoga sessions that ignore ethical foundations or fitness-centric approaches that discard meditation are like prescribing painkillers without treating the disclarity, and self-realisation blos soms into compassionate action.

This Yoga Day must transcend symbolic celebrations. Schools need yoga education that builds emotional resilience early, potentially reducing those alarming student suicide figures. Most importantly, individuals must move beyond treating yoga as mere exercise to embracing it as "the spiritualization of life for a holistic living" that Swami Vivekananda envisioned.

The solutions to modern crises-mental health epidemics, social fragmentation, even geopolitical tensions-may well lie in this 5,000-year-old tradition. Patanjali's yoga isn't about touching your toes, but about transforming lives. This International Yoga Dav. let us reclaim voga not as a commodity but as consciousness, not as routine but revolution-the ultimate homecoming for a stressed civilisation seeking its soul.

The writer is a senior officer working at the Parliament of India.

etters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 10 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact

numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: dit@orissapost.com



B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

India must decode its duty

Sir, The Air India crash at Ahmedabad demands more than technical scrutiny - it calls for institutional candor. The recovery of two black box sets is no ordinary detail; it is a symbol of aviation accountability. Yet, ambiguity persists over whether decoding will occur in India's newly established ₹9 crore lab or be outsourced again. This is not a routine drill — it is a test of sovereignty, speed, and sincerity. Wherever the analysis occurs, India must retain operational command, ensuring the data remains unsullied by opacity or external tampering. The nation awaits not a protracted silence but a timely, factual, and transparent preliminary report. In aviation, delay kills not just time, but trust. Let us not allow procedural fog to cloud public faith. The black box holds the voices of the fallen — their truth deserves more than bureaucratic dithering. India must decode — not defer — its duty.

Gopalaswamy J, CHENNAI

Science of inner engineering

Sir, On June 21, the world unites to celebrate International Yoga Day, an initiative proposed by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014 and adopted by the United Nations with overwhelming global support. What began as an ancient Indian practice has now evolved into a global wellness movement, blending India's deep-rooted ethos, spiritualism, and holistic healing. Yoga, far beyond mere physical exercise, is a science of inner engineering. It offers a transformative path to self-discipline, mental clarity, and spiritual elevation. India's gift of yoga to the world is not just cultural pride, but a timely solution to modern lifestyle ailments. Amid rising cases of non-communicable diseases—like diabetes, hypertension, obesity, and cancer—voga provides a drugless remedy, focusing on mind-body harmony, stress control, and disciplined living. This ancient wisdom, once confined to ashrams and scriptures, now echoes across continents-in parks, schools, offices, and even prisons. Its global traction is a testament to yoga's universal appeal and relevance. As the world embraces yoga, it not only adopts a practice but aligns with India's civilizational vision-that health, peace, and spiritual well-being are humanity's shared heritage.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE







CLASS ACT

Pune school soars from brink of closure to fame

The school has hogged the global limelight after being shortlisted among the top 10 contenders for the prestigious 'World's Best School Prize' for Community Collaboration

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, June 20: With just three students, the future appeared bleak for a government school in Maharashtra's Pune district in 2022 as the authorities toyed with the idea of closing it down.

Then, the unthinkable happened after Dattatray Ware, a national award-winning teacher, was shunted to the Zilla Parishad school in the nondescript Jalindarnagar of Khed tehsil following some controversy.

Three years on, the school has hogged the global limelight after being shortlisted among the top 10 contenders for the prestigious 'World's Best School Prize' for Community Collaboration.

Ware, fondly called Guruii. remains the axis of the remarkable turnaround of the school, which now has over 120 students. He has introduced many innovative teaching practices, including the 'Subject Friend' system, a peer-learning model where students of different ages teach and learn from each other.

He also led a significant revamp of the school's infrastructure with active support from the local community. Ware had earlier earned widespread recognition for his work at a Zilla Parishad school in Wablewadi. Shirur tehsil.

After rigorous rounds of interviews and assessments, the Zilla Parishad School at Jalindarnagar is now among the top 10 contenders in the World's Best School Prize competition, organised by UK-headquartered T4 Education.

Jalindarnagar Zilla Parishad



The turnaround of the school is a fine example of how public participation and vision of a teacher like Ware Guruii can change the face of a school. I congratulate Ware Guruji, other teachers, students, parents and locals from the village for this achievement. We will extend all possible help to the school to emerge as the winner

SACHINDRA PRATAP SINGH | EDUCATION COMMISSIONER

School is the only school in the country to have achieved the feat in the category of community collaboration, said Ware.

"It is the general expectation that our schools should become global in outlook and students should get a qualitative and world-class education. We took part in the competition to understand what sort of parameters are needed to get recognition at the global level and to know our exact standing at the

world level," said Ware He said they learnt about the

development June 18. "In the next phase, the final winner out of these 10 contenders will be determined through a public vote. We appeal to the general public to come forward and vote for the school to help it achieve the rare feat," Ware said.

The other 9 finalist schools are from Brazil, the United Kingdom, Dubai, Pakistan, Italy, Costa Rica, and Argentina.

T4 Education, which calls itself a global platform bringing together a community of over 2,00,000 teachers from more than 100 countries to transform education. has founded World's

Best School Prizes – for Community Collaboration. Environmental Action, Innovation, Overcoming Adversity, and Supporting Healthy Lives.

In its citation, T4 Education said the Jalindarnagar school has successfully changed the mindset that public schools have no future through its "transformative teaching methodology'

"The school is revolutionising public school education by providing quality student-led learning with its Subject Friend system, a peer-learning model where students of different ages teach and learn from each oth-

er," it said. Subjects like coding, programming, robotics, and electronics have been introduced into the curriculum, along with multilingual learning. T4 Education noted, adding that the Zilla Parishad school now serves 120 "confident and

The school's educational model has been officially accepted by the government for implementation in other government schools across the country, it said.

Yogi inaugurates Gorakhpur Link Expressway

The 91.352-km expressway connects Gorakhpur to several districts, including Azamgarh in Uttar Pradesh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Azamgarh/Lucknow, June 20: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minis ter Yogi Adityanath Friday inaugurated the Rs 7,283 crore Gorakhpur Link Expressway, thus making operational the seventh expressway in the state.

The 91.352-km expressway connects Gorakhpur to several districts, including Azamgarh in Uttar Pradesh.

With the opening of this expressway, the state now accounts for 42 per cent of the country's total access-controlled expressway network, up from the earlier 38 per cent. the state government said in a statement. Of the seven expressways in the state, five were built and completed in the eight years of the Yogi Adityanath government, it said.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Singh said there are a total of 2,900 km of access-controlled expressways across the country, and more than 1.200 km of these are located in Uttar Pradesh alone.



tal investment of Rs 7,283 crore,

with Rs 3,400 crore spent on

construction and the remain-

ing allocated to land acquisition and other expenses. For

this, 1,100 hectare of land was

acquired from 22,000 farmers.

and only state in the country

where the maximum number

of expressways are not only

Uttar Pradesh is the first

Singh said Ganga Expressway will also be added to the list soon, taking UP's share to more than 62 per cent.

He stated that Gorakhpur Link Expressway has not only crossed geographical barriers, but is also set to transform the socio-economic landscape of Purvanchal.

The expressway entailed to-

ready, but many are under construction and proposed, the statement said.

The 7 expressways operational in UP are: Purvanchal Expressway (341 km), Bun delkhand Expressway (296 km) Agra-Lucknow Expressway (302 km), Yamuna Expressway (165 km), Delhi-Meerut Expressway (96 km), Noida-Greater Noida Expressway (25 km) and Gora khpur Link Expressway (91 km).

The state's longest express way Ganga Expressway (594 km), Ballia Link Expressway (35 km) and Lucknow-Kanpur Greenfield Expressway (63 km) are being completed rapidly.

Besides, the construction of the Chitrakoot Link Expressway, which connects the Agra-Lucknow Expressway to the Purvanchal Expressway and the Bundelkhand Expressway via Farrukhabad, is in progress. Additionally, the construction of the link expressway connecting the Ganga Expressway and the Jewar Airport Link Expressway is also underway.



Women perform yoga at Dussehra Ghat behind the Taj Mahal, ahead of the 'International Day of Yoga', in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, Friday

Rhino rehabilitation areas to be set up in Dudhwa Minister launches gharial Lucknow: The Uttar Pradesh government Thursday said it has approved the

conservation drive in UP

HC raises alarm over commuter

deaths on Mumbai local network

observations while hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) Mumbai, June 20: The Bomrelated to deaths of commuters in accidents on Mumbai's suburban network, considered the city's lifeline. Taking note of the June 9 incident where five passengers died and eight others sustained injuries after falling off a crowded local train near Mumbra station in adjoining Thane district, the court observed measures taken by authorities to stop such untoward

skilled students".

dd

N N

bay High Court Friday expressed concern over deaths of commuters on Mumbai local trains, describing the situation as "alarming," an observation coming days after five people lost their lives post-falling off a packed suburban service.

The court suggested installing automatic door-closing mechanisms in Mumbai local trains to prevent commuters from falling off, but insisted this was an advice purely from a "layman" perspective and Railway expert views were needed on the issue.

A division bench of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Aradhe and Justice Sandeep Marne urged authorities to take measures to ensure tragic incidents don't occur on the Mumbai suburban network in the future.

Citing an affidavit filed by the Railways, the court noted that in 2024 alone over 3.588 fatalities happened on local trains (due to various accidents on the suburban network), which means on an average ten Mumbaikars die everyday.

"This is an alarming situation. Though you have projected that there was a reduction (in casualties) of 49 per cent (compared to previous years)," the court added.

The division bench made the

incidents were not sufficient. The court suggested they (trains) should be equipped with automatic doors (currently they have open doors). The bench, however, was quick to add that it was a "layman" suggestion and they were not an expert on Railway safety.

The Railways informed the bench that they have set up a multi-disciplinary committee to examine the cause of the Mumbra incident and waiting for its report. The panel will give recommendations and suggestions for avoiding such untoward incidents in the future.

The court directed the Railways to place on record suggestions made by the committee, along with timeline for their implementation. The committee should be open to including the suggestions made by the petitioner (a commuter) for avoiding reoccurrence of

such incidents



Park in Lakhimpur. Under the Forest and Wildlife Department's ambitious plan, a budget of Rs 1.5 crore has been allocated for the project, the government said in a statement. "This fund will be utilised for the long-term preservation of the natural habitats of rhinos and other endangered species, training personnel for wildlife monitoring, and procuring essential medicines and equipment," the government said. "Additionally, a portion of the funds will be dedicated to raising awareness among local communities about the importance of

rhino and wildlife conservation," it said. The Forest and Wildlife Department has launched this long-term conservation project focused on protecting the natural habitat of rhinos and other endangered species in the Terai region of Uttar Pradesh. The project will be implemented specifically in Dudhwa National Park, with the goal of ensuring sustainable measures for habitat protection.

establishment of two new Rhino Rehabilitation Areas (RRAs) in Dudhwa National

Bahraich (UP): Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav Friday launched a conservation programme for gharial species here. During a boat safari on the Gerua River in Katarniaghat, the minister released seven one-year-old gharial hatchlings into the river's currents, marking the official start of the initiative, officials said. During his boat ride, Yadav observed dolphins, crocodiles and gharials, officials said. Speaking to reporters, the Union minister said a meeting was held during



his visit to Dudhwa Tiger Reserve with public representatives, departmental officials conservation NGOs and villagers residing near forest areas. He noted that numerous suggestions were received and these would be incorporated into a new action plan for the development and conservation of forests and wildlife. Furthermore, Yadav instructed departmental officials to ensure timely action on pending cases related to human-wildlife conflict compensation to avoid delays in providing assistance to victims.

Lakhimpur Kheri scripts record by constructing 1,030 ponds in a month

The 'monumental achieve-

ment' was accomplished under the 'Har Gaon Talab Abhivan' (every village pond campaign), a special initiative of the rural development department aimed at water conservation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lakhimpur Kheri, June 20: The Lakhimpur Kheri district in Uttar Pradesh has registered its name in the India Book of Records by constructing 1,030 water pools in just one month, officials said.

The "monumental achievement" was accomplished under the 'Har Gaon Talab Abhiyan'



(every village pond campaign), a special initiative of the rural development department aimed at water conservation, the officials said.

Chief Development Officer (CDO) Abhishek Kumar said, "The water pool in every village campaign was not only an initiative for wa-

ter conservation but it also worked to accelerate the rural economy.

In a felicitation ceremony Wednesday at the Collectorate, India Book of Records judge Pramil Dwivedi honoured Kheri District Magistrate (DM) Durga Shakti Nagpal and CDO Kumar with certificates and medals, commending the collective efforts of the administration and the villagers.

Nagpal emphasised the significance of the achievement, saying, "For the district administration, this is not just a record but a historic achievement arising from public participation in the direction of water conservation."

She said the team completed the target of digging "more than 1,000 ponds in a month and that too with the resolve that every pond should be ready before the first rain"

The DM credited the CDO for his "full dedication and leadership", transforming the campaign into a "mission mode". The initiative saw the digging of 70 to 80 ponds in each block, converting approximately 700 acres of land into water conservation areas.

Gondia, June 20: Traffic on a state highway passing through a village in Maharashtra's Gondia district came to a standstill for over half an hour after a tiger was seen taking a stroll there, prompt ing thousands of curious onlook ers to throng the spot to catch a glimpse of the majestic feline.

Tiger strolling on highway

brings traffic to halt

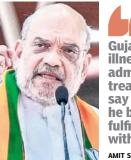
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The drama ended after the tiger was finally tranquilised by the forest department personnel from a nearby spot.

The incident occurred around 10 am on the highway between Sakhritola and Anjora in Amga on taluka. It took more than two hours for the forest team to tran quilise and rescue the big cat as it had a tough time controlling the large crowd. An official said the tiger had earlier been spotted near human settlements located on the peripheries of Yermada, Wadad Togaon, Ovara, Lohara, Teda Saoli and other villages. Forest teams were keeping a watch over the feline's movements to prevent any untoward incident.



national



Our leader and PM Modi had said several years ago in Gujarat that poverty's biggest issue is illness, and the cost of treatment; the administration has to provide for the treatment of illness for the poor. I can say with pride today that Modi, when he became the Prime Minister, has fulfilled it by providing 60 crore poor with free treatment up to ₹5 lakh AMIT SHAH I UNION HOME MINISTER

SC STAYS MADURAI TEMPLE DEMOLITION

The Supreme Court Friday stayed the demolition of a temple allegedly constructed without valid permission in Tamil Nadu's Madurai





Right now, Jammu is facing water scarcity... There is no water in the taps. Why should I send water to

Punjab? Punjab already has three rivers as per the Indus Water Treaty. Has Punjab given us any water? OMAR ABDULLAH | J&K CM

If this deliberate evasion continues, we will be left with no choice but to take this peace-

ful struggle for the rights of our youth to the streets across Jammu and Kashmir WAHEED PARA | PDP LEADER

Though we have not yet held discussions with the Congress, our party, the Uddhav Thac-

keray-led Shiv Sena (UBT), the Shetkari Kamgar Paksh, and other parties will come together and explore the possibility of contesting the polls together. A final decision will be taken, as we wish to fight the polls together

SHARAD PAWAR | NCP (SP) CHIEF

SHORT TAKES

Cops solve murder case within 24 hours

Hoshiarpur (Punjab): Police Friday claimed to have solved a blind murder case in Hoshiarpur district within 24 hours by arresting the main accused and two others involved in supplying the weapon used in the crime. Aryan (20), a resident of Sehwan village in the district, was shot dead around 11 pm June 18 near Shahpur Ghata village

Cop killed as police car crashes into bus

Unnao (UP): A 35-year-old police officer died on the spot, and six others were injured when a speeding car police car collided with a private bus on the Agra-Lucknow Expressway. omciais said Friday. The accident took place around 6 am near the kilometre marker 238 under the Bangarmau Police Station area.



A man crosses the flooded Mankanali bridge over Gandheshwari river following heavy rainfall, in Bankura, West Bengal

ED directs investigators to not summon advocates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 20: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Friday said it has directed its investigating officers not to issue summons to any advocate in a money laundering investigation being carried out against their client, adding that exception to this rule can only be made after "approval" by the agency's director.

The statement from the federal probe agency came in the wake of the lawyer-client privilege linked controversy that erupted after the ED issued back-to-back summons to senior Supreme Court lawyers Arvind Datar and Pratap Venugopal for giving legal advice to Care Health Insurance Limited (CHIL) on the employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) given to Rashmi Saluja, former chairperson of Religare Enterprises. The summons was condemned by the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) and the Supreme Court Advocates on Record Association (SCAORA). which called it a "disturbing trend" that struck at the very foundations of the legal profession. The bar bodies urged the Chief Justice of India (CJI) to take suo motu cognisance of the matter. The ED, the central agency tasked with combating money laundering crimes, said in a statement that it has issued a circular for the guidance of



SC LAWYERS CONTROVERSY

its field formations, stating that "no summons" shall be issued

that the said section makes it "amply clear that a legal practitioner cannot be compelled to disclose any communication made to him in the course and for the purpose of his professional service as such legal practitioner, by or on behalf of his client unless with his client's express consent". The ED said the summons issued to Venugopal was in his capacity as the independent director of Care Health Insurance Ltd (CHIL) and it has now been "withdrawn". In the case of the summons issued against Datar, agency sources said it has not been withdrawn but kept in abeyance, and no new notice will be issued to him. Providing a background to the summons issued to Venugopal for appearance before the investigating officer June 24, the ED said the case pertains to a money laundering probe being conducted by its Mumbai zonal office.

Prez opens Rashtrapati Niketan in Dehradun

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, June 20: President Droupadi Murmu Friday formally opened a renovated Presidential Retreat in Dehradun on her 67th birthday and addressed visually impaired children at a facility.

The President, who is on a three-day visit to Uttarakhand

that began Thursday, also laid the foundation stone for Rashtrapati Udyan, a 132-acre public garden on the campus of the Presidential Retreat, now renamed Rashtrapati Niketan.

While she was at the National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Visual Disabilities (NIEPVD) here, the president was moved to tears when a group of visually impaired children sang for her on her birthday. The President said she got emotional as the children sang beautifully. "I could not hold back my tears. They were singing so beautifully. They were singing from their heart." she said. The President said the talent possessed by the group reaffirmed her view that children born with disabilities are blessed with certain special abilities. She also encouraged them to move ahead with confidence, saying their success is certain. Murmu asserted that government policies are designed to empower people with disabilities and provide them with equal opportunities for growth. Addressing the children, Uttarakhand Governor Lt Gen Gurmit Singh (retd) said the



country is passing through a transformative phase.

"We are moving steadily towards achieving the vision of a strong India by 2047 under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. You are an integral part of this journey of nation-building," the governor said.

Chief Minister Pushkar

Singh Dhami wished the pres-

ident a long and healthy life so

that the country continues to

get the advantage of her guid-

Iran lifts airspace curbs to evacuate 1K Indians

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 20: In a special gesture, Iran has lifted airspace restrictions for three charter flights to evacuate about 1,000 Indian nationals, mostly students, from the Iranian city of Mashhad.

Mohammad Javad Hosseini, the deputy chief of mission at the Iranian embassy, said more evacuation flights could be operated in the coming days to bring back Indians if required

The Indian nationals were moved to Mashad from Tehran following Israeli attacks on the Iranian capital city. The evacuation flights, to be operated by Iranian airline Mahan, are being arranged by New Delhi.

India launched Operation Sindhu on Wednesday to bring back its nationals from Iran and Israel in view of the precar ious security situation arising out of Iran-Israel hostilities.

The first chartered flight car rying Indians are set to land in Delhi Friday evening. "We consider Indians as our own people. Iran's airspace is closed but because of this issue, we are making arrangements to open it for the safe passage of Indi-an nationals," Hosseini said at a media briefing.

"We consider Indian nation als to be our own people. They are like Iranians," he said.

The Iranian diplomat said more such flights could be arranged in the coming days in required. Hosseini said Tehran is in close contact with the Min istry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Indian embassy in Tehran to ensure safe evacuation of Indian nationals.

CLASSROOM SCAM

Sisodia questioned for over 3 hours by ACB



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 20: Former Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia was Friday questioned for over three hours by the Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) in an alleged graft case related to the construction of classrooms in government schools here, officials said. The ACB had summoned AAP leaders Sisodia and Sa tyendar Jain over alleged graft in the construction of class rooms in government schools. Jain appeared before the agen cy June 6.

4 of family killed in wall collapse

Dehradun: Four members of a family were killed early Friday when a wall of their house collapsed in Uttarkashi district, an official said. The incident took place at 2 am in Gujjar colony of revenue village Odata in Mori area when the family was asleep, Uttarkashi District Disaster Management Office said.

UP: Lightning strike leaves 4 kids dead

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Kaushambi: Four children were killed after being struck by lightning in two places in the district, police said Friday. SHO, Sarai Akil, Sunil Kumar Friday said the first incident took place when four children were grazing goats. The second incident took place in Tara Ka Pura village when children had taken out buffaloes for grazing.

Life convict found dead in Jaipur jail

Jaipur: A 35-year-old convict serving a life sentence for the murder of a transgender person was found dead in a bathroom of the Jaipur Central Jail, police said Friday. Naresh Mulani alias Nishu, the deceased, had been in the jail since 2022 and was found dead Thursday night, they said. Police claim Mulani died by suicide, though investigation is on in the matter.

to any advocate in violation of Section 132 of the Bhartiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA),

"Further, if any summons needs to be issued under the exceptions carved out in proviso to Section 132 of the BSA, 2023, the same shall be issued only with the prior approval of the director, ED," the agency said. This section on "professional communications" states that no advocate shall at any time be permitted, unless with his client's express consent, to disclose any advice or communication made to him in the course of his service. The provision is also commonly known

as lawyer-client privilege. The ED circular, which has been accessed by PTI, says ance

Later, Murmu inaugurated the Presidential Retreat in the presence of Uttarakhand Governor Singh and CM Dhami.

Rashtrapati Niketan will be open to the public from July 1, offering a rare opportunity to experience a unique confluence of architecture, history, and landscape design in the heart of the city. Known earlier as Rashtrapati Ashiana or the Presidential Retreat. Rashtrapati Niketan has a rich legacy dating back to 1838 when it served as a summer camp for the Governor General's Body-

Murmu also inaugurated Rashtrapati Tapovan which will be open for public viewing from June 24.

The case pertains to alleged irregularities involving the construction of classrooms and school buildings in Delhi government schools at highly inflated costs. In a statement Madhur Verma, Joint Commissioner of Police, ACB, said Sisodia appeared before the agency at 11 am.

Centre forms panel to review coaching dependence, exam fairness

The coaching centres in the country have been at the centre of several controversies and the move comes following complaints received by the government about rising cases of student suicides, fire incidents, lack of

facilities in coaching institutes as well as methodologies of teaching adopted by them

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 20: The Ministry of Education has set up a nine-member panel to examine issues relating to coaching, emergence of 'dummy schools' as well as

effectiveness and fairness of entrance examinations, according to officials.

The panel headed by Higher Education Secretary Vineet Joshi will suggest measures to reduce the dependency of students on coaching centres for transition to higher education.

"The committee will examine the gaps in the current schooling system that contribute to students'reliance on coaching centres, particularly the limited focus on critical thinking, logical reasoning, analytical skills and innovation and the prevalence of rote learning practices," a senior Ministry of Education official told PTI.

Scores of students preparing for engineering and medical entrance exams prefer to take admission in dummy schools so that they can focus solely on their preparations for com-



petitive exams. They do not attend classes and straightaway appear in the board exams. Aspirants also choose dummy schools to take advantage of state-specific quotas for admissions to medical and engineering colleges. For example, candidates who complete their senior secondary education in Delhi become eligible for the

Delhi state quota in medical colleges, giving them an additional incentive to enrol in dummy schools in the capital.

"The reasons behind the emergence of 'dummy schools' will be examined and the panel will study their role in encouraging full-time coaching at the cost of formal schooling and suggest ways to mitigate them,"

the official added.

guard horses

The panel will study the effectiveness and fairness of competitive entrance examinations in the context of the school education system and their influence on the growth of the coaching industry.

'The role and impact of formative assessments at school and higher education levels will be assessed and how their absence affects students' conceptual understanding and preparedness for competitive examinations. The panel will also analyse the rising demand for quality higher education, limited availability of seats in premier institutions and how the imbalance drives students towards coaching institutes," he said

Evaluating the awareness levels among students and parents regarding multiple career pathways and the impact of this lack of awareness or the over-dependence on a few elite institutions: assessing the availability and effectiveness of career counselling services in schools and colleges and suggesting measures for strength ening career guidance frame works, are among other terms of reference of the committee.

Other members of the panel include the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) chairman; joint secretaries from school education and higher education departments; representatives of Indian In stitute of Technology (IIT) Madras. National Institute o Technology (NIT) Trichy, IIT Kanpur and National Counci of Educational Research and Training (NCERT); and prin cipals of schools (one each from Kendriya Vidyalaya, Navodaya Vidyalaya and a private school).













national



Operation Sindoor is proof that New India is assertive. resolute and will no longer be a victim of terrorism. It will respond with strength and strategy RAJNATH SINGH DEFENCE MINISTER

UDDHAV MEETS SENA (UBT) DISTRICT CHIEFS

Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray Friday met his party's district unit presidents to discuss preparations for the local body polls to be held across Maharashtra later this year. Local body polls will be held for 29 municipal corporations, for which the ward delimitation process has already begun, as well as 32 zilla parishads (ZP), 336 panchayat samitis and 248 municipal councils





One cannot ignore the US. The Pakistan Army Chief getting an invitation means they are developing

closer ties with the US. This is not good for India. If another conflict breaks out between India and Paki stan in the future, the US will come out in support of Pakistan and may also supply weapons

PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN SENIOR CONG LEADER

Official programmes will be held at 11 places. I will be participating in the Yoga programme in Sonia Vihar

on Yamuna bank. There will be programmes at Thyagraj Stadium, Chhatrasal Stadium, Raiiv Gandhi Stadium, Cricket ground in Dwarka Sector 6, among others REKHA GUPTA DELHI CM

I have directed all district commis sioners to strictly implement the Act and ensure that

slaughter, sale or consumption of beef is banned within the restricted area HIMANTA BISWA SARMA ASSAM CM





Iran trusted India when others doubted. But Modi ditched them for PR with Israel and hugs with Trump. Now Iran is in

Iran gave us oil

without drama.

China camp and India is in deep mess. This is what happens when clown runs foreign policy

@Politicx2029

SHORT TAKES

CBI books ex-officials of TCE, JNPT

New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation has filed a case against former officials Jawanariai Nenru Port Trust (JNPT) and Tata Consulting Engineers (TCE), and two dredging companies over alleged irregularities worth over Rs 800 crore in a project to deepen ship navigational channels near Mumbai, officials said. The agency took the action after a three-year-long preliminary inquiry to look into the allegations of inflated estimates, throttling of competition to favour international bidders, extension of undue favours to contractors. and suppression of reports of independent expert organisations.

Al cancels 8 flights; bookings drop 20%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 20: Air India Friday cancelled eight flights, including four on international routes, due to operational reasons even as the impact of the Ahmedabad plane crash last week is becoming manifest on its overall bookings dropping nearly 20 per cent.

In a statement Friday, Air India announced cancellation of several flights -- Dubai-Chennai (AI906), Delhi-Melbourne Melbourne-Delhi (AI308), and Dubai-Hyder-(AI309) abad (AI2204). On domestic routes, Pune-Delhi (AI874), Ahmedabad-Delhi (AI456). Hyderabad-Mumbai (AI-2872) and Chennai-Mumbai (AI571) flights were cancelled.

The Delhi-Pune flight was cancelled after the airline, on its arrival from Delhi, detected that it had a bird hit. Consequently, it was grounded for extensive inspection. The airline also said it made all arrangements, including accommodation for the stranded passengers.

Refunds on cancellation or complimentary rescheduling were also offered to passengers, the airline said. According to the tour operators body, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), bookings for Air India flights have declined by around 20 per cent on domestic as well as international routes while the average fares have dropped by 8-15 per cent in the aftermath of the Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner crash last week. Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism



n a statement Friday, Air India nnounced cancellation of several flights -- Dubai-Chennai (Al906), Delhi-Melbourne AI308), Melbourne-Delhi (AI309)

and Dubai-Hyderabad (AI2204) On domestic routes, Pune Delhi (AI874), Ahmedabad Delhi (Al456), Hyderabad-Mumbai (Al-2872) and Chennai-Mumbai (AI571) flights were cancelled

& Hospitality (FAITH) General Secretary Rajiv Mehra also said that an up to 20 per cent decline in bookings has been observed for Air India flights while the fares have turned cheaper by about 10 per cent on certain sectors where there is high competition with other carriers. An Air India spokesperson did not respond to a query seeking comments from the airline on

decline in bookings. "Following the unfortunate incident involving Air India, we have observed a temporary decline in bookings, particularly on international sectors," IA-TO president Ravi Gosain told PTI. Noting that there has been a moderate adjustment in fares across key Air India routes, he said. "On an average, ticket prices have reduced by 8-12 per cent on domestic sectors where

231 victims identified

Ahmedabad: Over a week after

270 people were killed in the Ahmedabad plane crash, 231 victims have been identified through DNA tests, and the mortal remains of 210 of them were handed over to their families. a health official said Fridav. A London-bound Air India flight AI-171 carrying 242 passengers and crew members crashed in Ahmedabad June 12. All but one on board the plane died along with nearly 29 on the ground when the aircraft smashed into a medical complex in Meghaninagar area of the city shortly after its take-off. Authorities are carrying out DNA matching to establish the identity of the victims, as several bodies were charred beyond recognition or damaged.

the airline competes directly with low cost carriers like IndiGo and Akasa.

On international routes, especially to Europe and Southeast Asia, fares have seen a drop of 10-?15 per cent, depending on route occupancy and competition. These reductions are a mix of promotional strategies and yield correction due to lowered demand," Gosain said.

Indian student in Canada dies PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 20: With less than a month to go for her 27th birthday, family members of Tanya Tyagi, who passed away in a Canadian University, remember her as a hard-working woman, a bright student and a brilliant dancer.

Tanya's cousin, Vipul Tyagi (25), said the sad news of the demise of Tanya, a post-graduate student of food technology in the University of Alber ta, was broken to her father Wednesday morning by her roommates. "We received a call from her roommates that they found her dead on the bed. The investigating officer in Canada has informed us that the cause of the death is possibly heart failure. However, it will be confirmed by the detailed reports, which will come after three months," Vipul said.

The process of bringing Tanya's mortal remains from Canada will begin around midnight Friday and the same will be received by her family that resides in Delhi, Vipul recalled that the family members used to talk to Tanya at least once a day and said her last phone call was short as she was tired and wanted to go to sleep. Tanya went to Canada to pursue her master's degree in August 2023. She pursued her B.Tech from a college in India and wanted to study food technology in the University of Alberta, which is one of the best, as she enjoyed researching, Vipul recalled, adding that she had big dreams for her future



Modi slams RJD for insulting Ambedkar



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Siwan (Bihar), June 20: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday slammed the RJD for allegedly insulting Babasaheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar and asserted that the people of Bihar would not tolerate any disrespect to the Dalit icon.

At a rally in Siwan district, which marked his fifth visit this year to the state and second in less than a month, Modi hailed the "big role" played by Bihar in India's emergence as the "third largest economy" of the world.

In a nearly 45-minute-long speech that followed the launch of projects worth more than Rs 5,900 crore and the flagging off of a Vande Bharat train, the Prime Minister cautioned the people against "attempts to recapture economic resources of Bihar" by the RJD-led Opposition in the assembly polls due later this year.

"Ambedkar was against dvnasty rule. But they (RJD and its allies) do not like it. So they have his portrait placed at their feet. On my way, I saw posters demanding an apology for this insult to Babasaheb." said Modi. He added, "But there has been no apology. This is because they hold Dalits in contempt. In contrast, Modi has Babasaheb in his heart and would like to keep his portrait close to his chest". Modi, who did not mention RJD chief Lalu Prasad by name, referred to the instance of a portrait of Ambedkar being placed close to the feet of the ailing septuage narian, for which he (Prasad) has been drawing flak from the BJP-led NDA.

Modi also asserted that the world was greatly impressed with India's progress and underscored Bihar's big role in the country's emergence as the world's "third largest economy".

Training his guns at the op position INDIA bloc, he said 'Beware, those responsible for jungle raj are looking for another opportunity to wreak havoo like they had once done.'

They are playing various tricks to ensure that they recapture the state's economic resources, claimed Modi, in an apparent reference to several populist promises made by the RJD and its ally Congress in the run-up to the Assembly polls.

"Unlike the NDA, which worked for development of all with support of all ('sabka saath sabka vikas'), the opposition stood for family rule ('parivar ka saath, parivar ka vikas'), which was against the spirit of the Constitution, given to us by Babasaheb Ambedkar", Mo di claimed. "This is the reason why the Congress-RJD people have portraits of Babasaheb Ambedkar placed at their feet In contrast. Modi keeps Baba saheb Ambedkar in his heart. remarked the Prime Minister.

UK COLLEGE ROW ECHOES IN KOLKATA Bengal BJP head. London doc held after roadside meet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 20: In a dramatic flashpoint echoing the UK's 'Kellogg College Lecture controversy, West Bengal BJP chief Sukanta Majumdar and London-based doctor Rajat shubhra Bandyopadhyay were detained for several hours by the police Friday, moments after they held a brief roadside interaction in Kolkata, sparking a political uproar. Majumdar who is also a Union minister of state and Bandyopadhyay, a British passport holder with roots in South Kolkata, were later released The BJP alleged that the detentions were linked to the doctor's now-famous confrontation with Chief Minister Mamata Baner jee during a lecture at Kellogg College, Oxford University, in March. Bandyopadhyay had asked the CM to name a single major industry that had come to Bengal during her tenure, following which chaos ensued and university security had to intervene.



The Constitution is very categorical. Referring to the role of the judiciary during the Emergency, Dhankhar said, 'That was a time when the fundamental essence of democracy capsized in times of distress. People look up to the judiciary.



Train hits push trolley; one killed, 4 injured

Katihar: A railway personnel was killed and four others were injured Friday when the Awadh Assam Express coming from Delhi ploughed into a push trolley in Katihar district of Bihar, a senior official said. According to Manoj Kumar Singh, the Additional Divisional Railway Manager, Katihar, the trolleyman died on the spot while the injured persons were rushed to a hospital.

Rajnath likely to visit **China next week**

New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is likely to travel to China next week to attend a conclave of the Shanghai **Cooperation Organisation** (SCO), people familiar with the matter said Friday. It will be the first visit to China by a senior Indian minister after the ties came under severe strain following the military standoff along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh that began in May 2020. New Delhi and Beijing are in the process of finalising Singh's visit to China, the people said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 20: Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar Friday slammed the Supreme Court for its verdict delivered during the Emergency, dubbing it as the "darkest" in the judicial history of the world.

According to an official statement, he said the judgment of the Supreme Court overruling that of nine high courts legitimised dictatorship and authoritarianism. Dhankhar also questioned the then president Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed for signing the proclamation of Emergency on the "instance" of then prime minister Indira Gandhi and not the entire council of

ministers. Addressing a group of Rajya Sabha interns here, the vice president said, "A president cannot act on the advice of an individual, the prime minister.

'Nine high courts in the country have gloriously defined that emergency or no emergency, people have fundamental rights and there is access to the justice system. Unfortunately, the Supreme Court overturned all nine high courts and gave a judgment which will be the darkest in the history of any judicial institution in the world that believes in the rule of law," he further said.

In the 1976 ADM Jabalpur case, a five-judge Constitution bench, by a majority of 4-1, upheld the suspension of fundamental rights during the national emergency

The majority verdict of the then chief justice of India A N Ray and Justices M H Beg, Y V Chandrachud and P N Bhagwati held that the right to seek legal remedy for violations of Article 21 was suspended during the Emergency.



Workers of West Bengal State Rural Livelihoods Mission (WBSRLM) take part in a protest march demanding their appointment letters and recognition as government employees, in Kolkata

Scientists say 1.22 degrees

The year 2024 was the hottest

on record and marked the first

calendar year with a global av-

caused by human activities.

World may exceed 1.5°C carbon budget in 3 years: Scientists

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 20: If the world continues to release carbon dioxide at the current rate, the carbon budget for limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius will be exhausted in just over three years, according to an international group of scientists.

The carbon budget refers to the total amount of carbon dioxide the planet can emit while still having a good chance of staying below a certain temperature threshold. In this case, the limit is 1.5 degrees Celsius, which countries agreed to at the Paris climate conference in 2015. Exceeding the carbon budget does not

mean the 1.5-degree limit will be crossed immediately. It means the world is on course to surpass it very soon unless emissions are drastically cut. The latest "Indicators of

Global Climate Change" study, published in the journal Earth System Science Data, also found that the carbon budget for 2 degrees Celsius could be exceeded by 2048 if current levels of CO2 emissions continue.

Scientists said human activities have led to the release of around 53 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Gt CO2e) into the atmosphere everv year over the past decade. This is mainly due to increasing emissions from burning



fossil fuels and deforestation. In the last 10 years (2015 to Celsius of this warming was

2024), the Earth's temperature was 1.24 degrees Celsius higher than it was before the industrial era began.

Exceeding the carbon budget does not mean the 1.5-degree limit will be crossed immediately

t means the world is on course to surpass it very soon unless emissions are drastically cut

erage temperature more than 1.5 degrees Celsius above the 1850–1900 baseline, the period before human activities such as fossil fuel use began significantly affecting the climate.

A permanent breach of the 1.5-degree Celsius target in the Paris Agreement refers to sustained warming over a 20 to 30-year period.

Last month, the World Meteorological Organization said there is a 70 per cent chance that the average global tem perature between 2025 and 2029 will exceed pre-industrial levels by more than 1.5 degrees Celsius.

In 2022, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) said the world must cut greenhouse gas emissions by 43 per cent by 2030, compared to 2019 levels, to keep the temperature rise within 1.5 degrees Celsius since the Industrial Revolution.

However, IPCC Chair Jim Skea told PTI in an interview in March that the 43 per cent reduction target is now outdate due to a lack of action. meaning the actual reduction needed is even higher.











international



The perception of Russian economy as based on raw materials and dependent on hydrocarbons exports have clearly become outdated VLADIMIR PUTIN | PRESIDENT, RUSSIA

DUTCH LAUNCH OP ORANGE SHIELD TO KEEP NATO SUMMIT SAFE

The Netherlands has launched Operation Orange Shield to secure next week's NATO summit in The Hague, deploying over 10,000 security personnel, combat helicopters, sea patrols, bomb squads, and air defences to protect 6,000 delegates from 32 countries, including world leaders



of the day

Our trade

complementary

and econom ic links are

A pinch of pink salt in India-Pakistan trade

For years, Indian importers imported raw Himalayan pink salt from Pakistan and then it was refined, packaged and marketed/exported to other countries as a finished Indian product at higher prices



CHRISTOPHER LUXON | PRIME MINISTER, NEW ZEALAND

First, Canada will adjust its existing counter-tariffs or US steel and aluminum products on July 21 to levels consistent with progress made in the broader trading agreement

with the United States MARK CARNEY | PRIME MINISTER, CANADA

Now is the time to put a stop to the grave scenes in the **Middle East and** prevent a regional escalation that would benefit no one

DAVID LAMMY | FOREIGN SECRETARY, UK

SHORT TAKES

Putin boasts about **Russia's economy**

St. Petersburg (Russia): President Vladimir Putin Friday hailed Russia's economic outlook, saying it has managed to curb inflation and ease its reliance on energy exports. His optimistic account in a speech at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum contrasted with sombre statements by some members of his government who warned at the same conference that Russia could face a recession. Economic Minister Maxim Reshetnikov had said Thursday that the country is "on the brink of going into a recession." Putin mentioned the recession warnings, but emphasized that "it mustn't be allowed." He pointed out that manufacturing industries have posted steady growth, allowing the country to reduce its reliance on oil and gas exports. "The perception of Russian economy as based on raw materials and dependent on hydrocarbons exports have clearly become outdated,"

Putin said, adding that the economy grew by 1.5 per cen in the first four months of 2025 and inflation has dropped from double digits to 9.6 per cent.



explore new markets. Pakistan is one of the world's largest producers and exporters of Himalayan Pink Salt. The Khewra pink salt mines in Punjab province is the largest mine in the country and has 30

ban has meant zero exports to

After the April 22 Pahalgam

terror attack that claimed 26 lives, India took a series of measures, including immediate shutting down of the Attari land-transit post, used for movement of certain kinds of goods. In retaliation, Pakistan too

announced that "all trade with India, including to and from any third country through Pakistan, is suspended forthwith.' The trade ban hit the expor

ers of Himalayan Pink Salt, which is in high demand on the other side of the border. "India has been one of the biggest importers of Himalayan pink salt from Pakistan. The

that country," Mansoor Ahmed, a senior director in Ghani International, one of the top exporters of pink salt and related

products, said. "For years, Indian importers imported raw Himalayan pink salt from Pakistan and then it was refined,

back to diplomacy over Iran's nuclear programme. Before the meeting with France, Britain, Germany and the European Union's foreign policy chief, two diplomats said Araqchi would be told the US is packaged and marketed/exported to other countries as a finished Indian product at higher prices," Mansoor claimed. That is why India was ranked

among the top three exporters of salt with Pakistan and China, he said, adding, "It is only Pakistan, not India or China that produces Himalayan Pink Salt." However, Pakistan's top

exporters of pink salt are not alarmed by the ban as it also offers a silver lining for them. Saima Akhtar, chairperson of the Pakistan Salt Manufacturers Association (SMAP) said that Pakistan's Himalayan pink salt is already in huge demand globally due to its perceived health benefits and culinary uses.





REUTERS

Cairo/Geneva, June 20: Is raeli fire killed at least 44 Palestinians in Gaza Friday, many of whom had been trying to get food, local officials said, while the United Nations' children's agency warned of a looming man-made drought in the en clave as its water systems col lapse

At least 25 people awaiting aid trucks were killed by Israeli fire south of Netzarim in central Gaza Strip, the Hamas-run local health authority said.

Asked by Reuters about the incident, the Israel Defense Force said its troops had fired warning shots at suspected militants who advanced in a crowd towards them.

An Israeli aircraft then 'struck and eliminated the suspects", it said in a statement adding that it was aware of others being hurt in the incident and was conducting a review.

Separately, Gazan medics said at least 19 others were killed in other Israeli military strikes across the enclave, including 12 people in a house in Deir Al-Balah in central Gaza Strip, taking Friday's total death toll to at least 44.

In a statement Friday, the Islamist Hamas group, which says Israel is using hunger as a weapon against the population of Gaza, accused Israel of systematically targeting Palestin ians seeking food aid across the enclave. Israel denies this and accuses Hamas of stealing food

aid, which the group denies. Meanwhile UNICEF, the UN's children's agency, warned in Geneva of drought conditions developing in Gaza.

"Children will begin to die of thirst ... Just 40% of drinking water production facilities remain functional." UNICER spokesperson James Elder told reporters. "We are way below emergency standards in terms of drinking water."

UNICEF also reported a 50% increase in children aged six months to 5 years admitted for treatment of malnutrition from April to May in Gaza, and half a million people going hungry.

Pak committed to regional peace: Munir

Munir met Trump at the White House Wednesday, a meeting that came weeks after recent tension between India and Pakistan following the April 22 Pahalgam attack that killed 26 people

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, June 20: Pakistan's army chief Asim Munir, in his interactions with several interlocutors in the US. committed for regional peace and stability and a rule based international order, the army said here Friday.

After his meeting with the US President Donald Trump, Munir held a comprehensive and candid exchange with senior scholars, analysts, policy experts, and representatives of leading international media outlets in Washington DC. Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the Pakistan Army, said in a statement.

The interaction with prominent US think tanks and representatives of the strategic affairs institutions, provided an opportunity to articulate Pakistan's principled stance on key regional and global issues, and to deepen understanding of Pakistan's strategic outlook, it said.

Munir met Trump at the White House Wednesday, a meeting that came weeks after recent tension between India and Pakistan following the April 22 Pahalgam attack that killed 26 people.

regional actors in sponsoring and perpetuating terrorism as a tool of hybrid warfare.

Munir, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), emphasised that Pakistan has been on the front lines of the global war against terrorism, having rendered immense sacrifices-both human and economic-in pursuit of a safer and more secure world. the statement claimed.

Munir also shed light on Pakistan's "untapped potential, particularly in the domains of information technology. agriculture, and its vast and underexploited reserves" in the mining and mineral sectors and invited international partners to explore collabora-

tive opportunities. The discussion further included an evaluation of the long-standing Pakistan–US partnership. The COAS underlined the historical convergences between the two nations, particularly in areas such as counter-terrorism, regional security, and economic development. He underscored the immense potential for a broader, multidimensional relationship

Iran said Friday it would not discuss the future of its nuclear programme while under attack by Israel, as Europe tried to coax Tehran back into negotiations and the United States considers whether to get involved in the conflict.

A week into its campaign, Israel said it had struck dozens of military targets overnight, including missile production sites, a research body involved in nuclear weapons development in Tehran and military facilities in western and central Iran.

Iran fired missiles at the southern Israeli city of Beersheba early Friday and Israeli media said initial reports pointed to missile impacts in Tel Aviv, the Negev and Haifa after further attacks hours later.

About 20 missiles were fired in the latest strikes, an Israeli military official said, and at least two people were hurt. according to the Israeli ambulance service. Fars news agency quoted an Iranian military spokesman as saying the latest missile and drone attacks used long-range and ultra-heavy missiles that targeted military sites, defence industries and command and control centres.

In a sign of increasing concern about any strikes on en-

ergy facilities in Iran or else-



gy majors, an industry source and a diplomat in the region told Reuters. Doha was asking companies to raise governments' awareness of the risks to global gas supply in the US and Europe, they said. QatarEnergy did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The White House said Thursday President Donald Trump would decide on US involvement in the conflict in the next two weeks.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said there was no room for negotiations with the US "until Israeli aggression stops". But he later arrived in Geneva for talks with European foreign ministers at which Europe hopes to establish a path

still open to direct talks. But expectations for a breakthrough are low, diplomats say.

> A senior Iranian official told Reuters Iran was ready to discuss limitations on uranium enrichment but that any proposal for zero enrichment - not being able to enrich uranium at all would be rejected, "especially now under Israel's strikes".

CIVILIANS KILLED

Israeli air attacks have killed 639 people in Iran, according to the Human Rights Activists News Agency, a US-based human rights organisation that tracks Iran. The dead include the military's top echelon and nuclear scientists. In Israel, 24 civilians have

No nuclear talks under fire: Iran REUTERS Dubai/Jerusalem, June 20:

processing units. In 2024, Pakistan's total pink salt exports stood at 3,50,000 tonnes estimated to be worth \$120 million.

WB: \$1.5bn loans approved to B'desh

Dhaka: The Asian Development Bank and the World Bank have approved loans worth \$1.5 billion to help Bangladesh reform its banking sector, fight climate change among other projects, according to a media report Friday. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a \$900 million loan, of which \$500 million will support efforts to stabilise and reform the country's banking sector, while the remaining \$400 million will promote climate-resilient and inclusive development initiatives, The Daily Star newspaper reported.

In his remarks, the Chief of Army Staff "highlighted Pakistan's unwavering commitment to regional peace and stability. and its constructive role in fostering a rules-based international order."

The Field Marshal alluded to the details and analysis of the Maarka e Haq, Operation Bunvanum Marsoos and elaborated on Pakistan's perspective on terrorism, noting the malign influence of certain

built upon "mutual respect, shared strategic interests, and economic interdependence,' the statement added.

Participants during the various exchanges noted the "openness and clarity" of Munir's perspectives and appreciated "Pakistan's consistent and principled policies," it said adding, the interaction was marked by a spirit of mutual understanding and was widely regarded as a positive step toward enhancing strategic dialogue between Pakistan and the United States.



where in the Gulf that could affect supplies, Qatar held crisis talks this week with ener-

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SNIPP

attacks, according to authorities. Israel's strikes on Iran's nuclear installations so far pose only limited risks of contamination, experts say.

been killed in Iranian missile

Pro-Palestinian activists damage planes at UK military base

London: Pro-Palestinian activists broke into a Royal Air Force base in central England Friday, damaging and spraying red paint

over two planes used for refuelling and transport. Palestine Action said two members had entered the Brize Norton base in Oxfordshire. putting paint into the engines of the Voyager aircraft



and further damaging them with crowbars. "Despite publicly condemning the Israeli government, Britain continues to send military cargo, fly spy planes over Gaza and refuel US/Israeli fighter jets," the group said in a statement, posting a video of the incident on X. "Britain isn't just complicit, it's an active participant in the Gaza genocide and war crimes across the Middle East." Prime Minister Keir Starmer condemned the "vandalism" as "disgraceful" in a post on X.

New research strengthens case for age of ancient New Mexico footprints

Embattled Thai PM faces call to step down to avert coalition revolt

Bangkok: Thailand's embattled Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra faced the prospect of losing her government's majority Friday, as a vital coalition partner looked set to demand her resignation and senators launched a legal bid to remove her from office. Paetongtarn, the politically inexperienced daughter of divisive tycoon and former premier Thaksin Shinawatra, is fighting fires on multiple fronts, struggling to breathe life into a stagnant economy facing steep US tariffs and under pressure to take a tougher stand on a territorial row with Cambodia that has seen their troops mobilise at the border. The United Thai Nation party, the

second-largest partner in her alliance, will demand Paetongtarn, 38, step down as a condition for it to remain in the Pheu Thai Party-led coalition, two UTN sources told Reuters, requesting anonymity because they were not authorised to speak to media. "If she doesn't resign, the party would leave the government," one source said. "We want the party leader to tell the PM as a courtesy."



1 killed in Russian attack on Ukraine

Kyiv: One person was killed and at least 14 were injured when Russian drones attacked the Ukrainian Black Sea city of Odesa overnight, damaging high-rise buildings and railway infrastructure. local authorities and prosecutors said Friday. Odesa is Ukraine's largest Black Sea port, key for imports and exports, and has been under constant missile and drone attacks by Russia since the war began. "Despite the active work of air defence forces, there is damage to civilian infrastructure. including residential buildings, a higher education institution, a gas pipeline and private cars," local governor Oleh Kiper said on Telegram messenger.

new line of evidence is providing further corroboration of the antiquity of fossilized footprints discovered at White Sands National Park in New Mexico that rewrite the history of humans

in the Americas. Researchers used a technique called radiocarbon dating to determine that organic matter in the remains of wetland muds and shallow lake sediments near the fossilized foot impressions is between 20,700 and 22,400 years old. That closely correlates to pre-

vious findings, based on the

age of pollen and seeds at the site, that the tracks are between 21,000 and 23,000 years old.

The footprints, whose discovery was announced in 2021, indicate that humans trod the landscape of North America thousands of years earlier than previously thought, during the most inhospitable conditions of the last Ice Age, a time called the last glacial maximum.

The age of the footprints has been a contentious issue. Asked how the new findings align with the previous ones. University of Arizona archaeologist and geologist Vance Holliday, the study



leader, replied, "Spectacularly well.'

rica roughly 300,000 years ago and later spread Scienworldwide. tists believe our species entered North America from Asia by trekking across a land bridge that once connected Siberia to Alaska. Previous archaeological evidence had suggested that human occupation of North America started roughly 16,000 years ago.

The hunter-gatherers who left the tracks were traversing the floodplain of a river that

Homo sapiens arose in Af- flowed into an ancient body of water called Lake Otero. The mud through age of the which they walked footprints has been a contentious included bits of semi-aquatic plants issue that had grown in

New study finds racks to be 20,700 22,400 years

dating is used to determine the age of organic material based on the decay of an isotope

called carbon-14, a variant of the element carbon. Living organisms absorb carbon-14 into their tissue. After an organism dies, this isotope

these wetlands.

Radiocarbon

changes into other atoms over time, providing a metric for determining age.

"Three separate carbon sources - pollen, seeds and organic muds and sediments - have now been dated by different radiocarbon labs over the course of the trackway research, and they all indi cate a last glacial maximum age for the footprints," said Jason Windingstad, a University of Arizona doctoral candidate in environmental science and co-author of the study published this week in the journal Science Advances.

















Silver slid from recent highs, nearing one-week lows and heading for their first weekly decline in three weeks. It fell below \$35.70 per ounce after a sharp rally earlier in the week RAHUL KALANTRI

VICE-PRESIDENT, MEHTA EQUITIES

BSNL SOFT LAUNCHES QUANTUM 5G FWA

BSNL has foraved into 5G fixed wireless services to provide home broadband service with its launch in Hyderabad, the company said Friday. At present, Reliance Jio and Bharti Airtel have been providing 5G Fixed Wireless Service (FWA) by using their 5G spectrum. Quantum 5G FWA demonstrates how Indian engineers can create world-class connectivity. It is the first SIM-less, 100 per cent home grown customised 5G FWA for BSNL



guidance to the market partic

ipants for having reasonable

procedures and control systems

in place for supervision and

governance of usage of AI/MI

As a part of the proposal, the

working group suggested that

market participants using AI/

ML models should have an in-

ternal team with adequate skills

and experience to monitor the

performance, efficacy and secu

rity of the algorithms deployed

throughout their lifecycle, as

well as maintain auditability

and explain interpretability of

Furthermore, the team

should establish procedures for

exception and error handling re-

lated to AI/ML-based systems.

It should also establish fallback

plans in the event an AI-based

application fails due to tech

nical issues or an unexpected

disruption to ensure that the

relevant function is carried out

through an alternative process

It has been proposed that mar

ket participants using AI/ML

models for business operations

-- such as selection of trading

algorithms, asset management

or portfolio management and

advisory and support services

-- that may directly impact their

customers should disclose the

same to the respective custom-

ers to foster transparency and

should adequately test and

monitor the AI/ML-based mod-

els to validate their results on a

continuous basis. Also, market

participants should maintain

proper documentation of all

the models and store input and

participants

accountability.

The market

such models.

applications or tools.



The rupee gained Friday but declined a little over 1 per cent this month so far, with a large portion of

its decline occurring after Israel attacked targets in Iran last Friday MANEESH SHARMA | AVP COMMODITIES, ANAND RATHI SHARES AND STOCK BROKERS

DoT's Sanchar Saathi appli cation has enabled reporting and blocking of fraudulent mobile connections and helped trace over 20 lakh lost oi stolen phones. We remain com mitted to building a secure and

citizen-centric digital ecosystem CHANDRA SEKHAR PEMMASANI STATE MINISTER, TELECOMMUNICATIO

Introduction of the 5MW platform and the RLMM approval demonstrates our commitment on innovation and quality in India. Designed to suit

Indian wind conditions, the EN 182-5.0MW platform will be hugely beneficial for Indian market RPV PRASAD | MD, ENVISION ENERGY INDIA

SHORT TAKES

House price index up

Mumbai: All-India House Price Index (HPI) increased by 3.1 per cent annually in the January-March quarter of 2024-25 compared to 3.1 per cent growth in the previous quarter and 4.1 per cent a year ago, the Reserve Bank said Friday. The Reserve Bank has released its quarterly house price index (HPI) for Q4 2024-25, based on transaction-level data received from the registration authorities in ten major cities. The annual HPI growth varied widely across the cities ranging from high growth of 8.8 per cent (Kolkata) to a contraction of 2.3 per cent (Kochi). On a sequential (q-o-q) basis, all-India HPI increased by 0.9 per cent in Q4 2024-25. Bengaluru, Jaipur, Kolkata and Chennai are the major cities recording a sequential rise in house prices during the latest quarter.

Another rate cut to support growth: MPC minutes

As per the minutes, Deputy Governor Gupta was also of the opinion that a 50 bps reduction *in repo rate should help foster policy certainty and*

faster transmission than a staggered rate cut and more effectively counter the challenges emanating from the global economy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 20: Reserve Bank of India Governor Saniav Malhotra said front-loading of monetary policy rate action would give a clear signal and some certainty to the economic agents that the central bank is supportive of growth amid global tensions, MPC meeting

minutes released Friday said. June 6, RBI governor-headed six-member panel reduced the benchmark short-term lending rate by 50 basis points, taking the total reduction to 100 bps in quick succession, besides a change in the policy stance to neutral from accommodative and liquidity infusion mea-

sures

While five members voted for a 50 bps reduction in the repo rate during the three-day meeting (June 4-6), an external member of the panel, Saugata Bhattacharya, suggested a 25

bps cut. Given a sharp reduction in inflation of about 3 percentage



points over the past few months (6.2 in October 2024 to 3.2 in April 2025) and the projected reduction in annual average inflation by almost one percentage point from 4.6 to 3.7 per cent, Malhotra voted for a 50 bps rate

cut, the minutes showed. "It is expected that the front-loaded rate action, along with certainty on the liquidity front, would send a clear signal to the economic agents, thereby supporting consumption and investment through lower cost of borrowing," he said.

On the change of monetary stance, he was of the opinion that a neutral stance would provide monetary policy with the necessary flexibility to cut, pause or hike policy rates in response to the evolving domestic and global economic conditions.

RBI officials: Governor Malhotra, Deputy Governor Poonam Gupta and Executive Director Rajiv Ranjan, and three government-appointed nominees -- Nagesh Kumar, Saugata Bhattacharya and Ram Singh.

Governor Gupta was also of the

opinion that a 50 bps reduction in repo rate should help foster policy certainty and faster transmission than a staggered rate cut and more effectively counter the challenges emanating from the global economy

She also supported a change in stance from accommodative to neutral. "This means that any further actions should be contingent upon incoming data and the evolving global uncertainties," Gupta said.

Ranjan said from the perspective of inflation, growth, transmission, global and most importantly signalling and imparting certainty perspective, a 50 bps cut is apt at this juncture.

He further said having front-loaded the policy rate cut by 50 bps; the RBI would be left with less room for further downward adjustments in policy rates.

"There is a risk that a combination of 50 bps cut with an accommodative stance could mislead financial markets about the scale and scope of further monetary policy easing, repricing of which eventually could create unnecessary volatility," he said.

Sensex jumps over 1,000 pts SEBI mulls guidelines for A Luce in markets for AI use in markets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 20: Sensex and Nifty rebounded sharply by over 1 per cent Friday after sliding for the past three sessions, propelled by bargain hunting in financial, telecom and tech stocks amid a correction in global crude prices

BSE Sensex later found its mojo back and surged 1,046.30 points or 1.29 per cent to settle at 82,408.17. During the day, it jumped 1,132.62 points or 1.39 per cent to 82,494.49.

The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 319.15 points or 1.29 per cent to 25,112.40. As many as 2,463 stocks advanced while 1.484 declined and 147 remained unchanged on the BSE

This week, the BSE bench mark gauge jumped 1,289.57 points or 1.58 per cent, and the Nifty surged 393.8 points or .59 per cent. From the Sensex firms. Bharti Airtel, Nestle, Mahindra & Mahindra, Power Grid, Reliance Industries, NTPC, Eternal and HDFC Bank were among the biggest gainers. In contrast, Maruti was the only laggard.

The BSE midcap gauge jumped 1.20 per cent, and smallcap index climbed 0.55 per cent. All BSE sectoral indices ended higher. Telecommunication surged 2.73 per cent, realty (2.22 per cent), teck (1.42 per cent) capital goods (1.17 per cent). bankex (1.15 per cent), consumer discretionary (1.12 per cent) and metal (1.10 per cent).

In Asian markets, South Ko rea's Kospi and Hong Kong's Hang Seng settled in positive territory, while Japan's Nikkei 225 index and Shanghai's SSE Composite index ended low er..Global oil benchmark Brent crude dropped 1.93 per cent to \$77.33 a barrel.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 20: Security Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Friday proposed guiding principles for responsible usage of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) applications in securities markets to safeguard investors and market integrity.

Also, the regulator has proposed that a regulatory lite framework may be adopted for usage of AI/ML in the securities market for any purpose other than for business operations that may directly impact their customers.

The proposed "guiding principles are intended to optimise benefits and minimise potential risks associated with integration of AI/ML-based applications in securities markets to safeguard investor protection, market integrity, and financial stability," Sebi said in its consultation paper.

At present, AI/ML is being used by market participants mainly for advisory and support services, risk management, client identification and monitoring, surveillance, pattern recognition, internal compliance purposes and cyber security.

"While AI/ML has the potential to improve productivity, efficiency and outcome, it is also important to manage these systems responsibly as their usage creates or amplifies certain risks which could have an impact on the efficiency of financial markets and may result in adverse impact to investors,' SEBI said.

Accordingly, Sebi proposed high-level principles to provide

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 20: India's forex reserves rose \$2.294 billion to \$698.95 billion for the week ended June 13 Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said Fri day. The overall reserves had increased by \$5.17 billion to \$696.65 billion for the previ ous reporting week ended June 6.

Forex reserves had touched an all-time high of \$704.885 billion in end-September 2024. For the week ended June 13, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves rose by \$1.739 billion to \$589.426 billion, the data released Friday showed. Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. The gold reserves were up by \$428 million to \$86.316 bil lion during the week, the RBI said. The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) also rose by \$85 million to \$18.756 billion, the central bank said. India's reserve position with the IMF also inched up by \$43 million at \$4.452 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed.

Vedanta Lanjigarh hosts scrap art sculpture competition



Govt, Tata Motors working to fetch alternate sources for rare magnets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 20: Tata Motors is working with the government and is also taking steps to procure magnets from alternate sources in the wake of China restricting exports of rare earth elements, company Chairman N Chandrasekaran told its shareholders Friday.

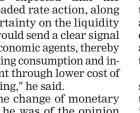
Responding to queries from



situation look like." However, he said Tata Motors

of work we have done over the past few years -- from simplifygroup's three firms -- commercial ing the businesses to making big strategic bets to strengthening our financial position -- our businesses are structured to not just handle this environment, but to thrive." he asserted. Responding to a query on passenger vehicle business expansion in international markets, he said, "This is something that we are always in discussions but we are waiting for the right geopolitical environment to be able to launch but we are getting prepared."

output data for at least 5 years. Forex reserves rise



The MPC consists of three

As per the minutes, Deputy

Accenture Q3 revenue rises

New Delhi: IT services and consulting firm Accenture. Friday, reported an 8 per cent vear-on-vear rise in revenue to \$17.7 billion in the March-May 2025 guarter, helped by tailwinds in AI-related services. Accenture operates on a September-August fiscal calendar. Its revenues for the quarter reflect a foreign-exchange impact of approximately positive 0.5 per cent, the company said in a statement. The Irelandheadquartered firm upped the lower band of its full-year revenue growth outlook to 6-7 per cent in local currency from 5-7 per cent earlier. Its gross margin (gross profit as a percentage of revenues) for the quarter was 32.9 per cent against 33.4 per cent in the year-ago period. The company increased its data and AI workforce to approximately 75,000 and looks to reach 80,000 by the end of FY26.

Bhubaneswar, June 20: Vedanta Lanjigarh, India's leading producer of smelter-grade alumina and a part of Vedanta Aluminium, recently hosted a unique scrap art sculpture competition to turn industrial scrap into awe-inspiring works of art. This vibrant celebration of innovation, sustainability, and teamwork brought together dynamic teams comprising employees, and business partners in a spirited showcase of

imagination and collaboration. The teams transformed everyday waste into visually striking sculptures to enhance the workplace. "At Vedanta, we believe that true innovation thrives when our people are empowered to think differently. This

initiative not only brought our teams together but also sparked a culture of imaginative problem-solving and sustainable thinking. We are proud to nurture a workplace where creativity is celebrated and every individual has the freedom to contribute in unique, impactful ways." said, Pranab Bhattacharya, CEO Alumina Business, Lanjigarh

More than an art competition, the event served as a robust platform to strengthen inter-department collaboration and foster meaningful dialogue around waste-to-wealth practices. This initiative underscores Vedanta Aluminium's continued commitment to cultivating a progressive, future-ready workplace.

shareholders on the impact of China's move to restrict exports of rare earth elements and shortage of magnets, he said, "As of now, this is not a concern, but this is something that we are watching very carefully.'

China's restrictions on the export of rare earth elements and related magnets are affecting the domestic auto and white goods sectors. The automobile industry had sought government support in expediting approvals from the Chinese government for importing rare earth magnets used in various applications, including passenger cars. To another query on the im-

pact of the ongoing Iran-Israel war on the company's business, he said, "It is very difficult to answer what will be a war kind of

vehicle, passenger vehicles and JLR -- have a very strong platform. "They will be able to tide over any of these geopolitical issues in the short term but are completely ready and poised for excellent growth and leverage the opportunity that this industry has to offer," Chandrsekaran asserted.

Earlier in opening address he said that going forward, volatility will continue to mark economic cycles -- from widespread geopolitical conflicts, military escalations, the redrawing of supply chains and tariff regimes, to AI and energy transition. Nowhere are all these disruptions visible more than in the automotive sector.

"Given the enormous amount

To another query on the completion of demerger of Tata Motors' commercial and passenger vehicle verticals into separate entities. Chandrasekaran said. 'We think the demerger will happen in the last quarter of this year.

ISRO assisting Coffee Board to assess carbon footprint

The aim is to quantify the carbon footprint of coffee amid the EU's Deforestation Regulation which requires firms to ensure that products exported to the European Union have been grown on land which has not been deforested after December 2020

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thursday.

lecting the data.

bon footprint of the commod-

ity ecosystem, an official said

ISRO have been initiated to

quantify carbon sequestration

in shaded coffee plantations in

India," said M Senthilkumar,

Director of Research, Coffee

Board, adding that ISRO is col-

The aim is to quantify the

carbon footprint of coffee amid

the EU's Deforestation Regula-

tion which requires firms to en-

sure that products exported to

"Collaborative studies with

New Delhi: Logistics provider Delhivery Friday announced the full-scale launch of Ondemand Intracity Shipping service on the Delhivery app in Delhi-NCR and Bengaluru after a pilot launch in Ahmedabad. In a statement, the company said the service offers pickups within 15 minutes of booking for local deliveries. Twowheelers are used for parcel deliveries, while three- and four-wheeler vehicles cater to larger consignments. Delhivery MD & CEO Sahil Barua said this launch offers millions of consumers and SMEs across the country a logistics solution that is fast, affordable, and reliable.

Delhivery launches

Intracity Shipping

the European Union have been grown on land which has not Coorg, June 20: Indian Space been deforested after December Research Organisation (ISRO) 31, 2020. The regulation has impliis assisting the Coffee Board of India to quantify the car-

cations for sectors like coffee, cocoa, soya, wood products, rubber and its products and leather goods exports

It proposes fines up to 4 per cent of a company's annual turnover in EU and confiscation of products and revenues gained from a transaction for non-compliance. He also said that the Board

is taking measures through Climate Resilience and Non-conventional Breeding in Coffee centre here to produce drought and pest-resistant varieties. Climate change poses a



threat to coffee production as it impacts yield per hectare, and quality. A veteran coffee grower, Bose Mandana said the measures taken by the Coffee Board are helping the producers grow high quality produce, which has huge demand in international markets such as Japan and Korea.

Jeena Devassy, Divisional head genetics and plant breeding, said lot of work is underway for further improving the quality of the commodity. She said India is mainly producing shade-grown coffee, which is environment friendly.

India's coffee exports rose 40 per cent on-year to \$1.8 billion in FY25. The production was 3.63 lakh tonne in 2023-24.

"We have come out with a formulation to improve yield and increase number of berries and retention of berries. There are three high yielding varieties on which the Coffee Board is doing multi location trials," Senthilkumar added.

The board has released 13 Arabica and 3 Robusta varieties of coffee and working on applying for Geographical Indications for around two varieties of coffee. At present, GI tags are granted for Coorg Arabica, Bababudangiri Arabica, Chik magalur Arabica, Araku Val ley, Wayanad Robusta coffees.

About 4.9 lakh hectare land is under coffee plantation across 12 states. At present, 30 per cent production is Arabica variety and 70 per cent is Robusta cof fee. Coffee growers Komal and Akshay, who are running South India Coffee Company cafes in about six countries including the UK, said that huge potential is there for Indian coffee in the global markets.













ANDERSON-TENDULKAR TROPHY SERIES DAY 1 **Ton-up Gill, Jaiswal lead India to 359/3**



India's Yashasvi Jaiswal celebrates after scoring a century during the play on day one of the first cricket test match between England and India at Headingley in Leeds, England, Friday PTI PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Leeds, June 20: Yashasvi Jaiswal and captain Shubman Gill announced their readiness to carry India's batting into the post Virat Kohli-Rohit Sharma era, striking marvellous hundreds to guide the visitors to a dominant 359 for three against a faltering England on the first day of the opening Test here Friday.

OrissaPO

SATURDAY | JUNE 21, 2025 | BHUBANESWAR

Gill (127 batting) and Jaiswal (101, 159b) shared a 129-run partnership for a determined third wicket alliance that carried India to 221 from a slightly wobbly 92 for two after KL Rahul (42) and debutant B Sai Sudharsan (0) were dismissed in quick succession.

Rishabh Pant (65 batting) was keeping vigil with Gill at close.

But there was an underlying significance to the centuries of Jaiswal and Gill other than giving India a head-start on the first day of the newly-minted five-match Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy.

Players observe silence in memory of plane crash victims

India and England players along with on-field umpires observed a minute of silence in remembrance of the victims of the tragic plane crash in Ahmedabad ahead of the first Test here Friday. In the gruesome accident of the Air India flight to London, 270 people, including 241 passengers and crew on board, were killed on June 12. Players of both teams also wore black armbands as a mark of respect for those who lost their lives in the crash in Ahmedabad last week.

Both Jaiswal and Gill are not newcomers to the unforgiving Test arena, but there has been this widespread anxiety over how the 'New Gen' India stars would step into the big shoes of their predecessors.

Jaiswal was the first to reach the three-figure mark, the fifth in his flourishing career, off 144 balls and Gill reached his own landmark off 140 balls in the final passage of the day, heralding the start of a new era in Indian cricket.

But the way they reached that point was entirely different. Jaiswal eschewed his natural flair as the first session offered its own share of assistance to the English bowlers in the shape of movement and carry.

However, it was an altogether different matter that the home bowlers were not prudent enough to exploit that offering, and later the pitch eased up considerably. But a flaccid track and a fan-

gless England attack without James Anderson or Stuart Broad could not take the sheen out of the knocks of Jaiswal and Gill. Jaiswal began the morning session with a gorgeous drive

through mid-off off pacer Chris Woakes, and he only grew in confidence from there. Perhaps, the only time he

showed his aggressive mindset was when the left-hander carted pacer Josh Tongue for a six and then later hammered him for two consecutive fours to reach 99

It was Jaiswal's first innings in England, and he made it memorable, making a hundred soon after scampering for a single despite suffering some cramps on his hands.

If Jaiswal's innings was more about adaptation, Gill's knock was all about following his natural batting doctrine, which has its fundamentals in timing and elegance.

The right-hander played shots with minimum follow-through through on-side and with a flourish on the off-side.

The 25-year-old's languid grace wowed the crowd when he essayed an off-drive off Chris Woakes and followed it up with a dreamy clip off the pads for a four as currently England's second most experienced Test bowler went for nearly five runs an over across the first two sessions.

Once he went past the fifty off just 56 balls, Gill slowed down a touch, and nerves grew once he went past 90.

There was a cheeky uppish shot through the gully of Tongue and a full-stretched dive saved him from a potentially close run out.

But Gill did not want to let go of the opportunity to score a hundred in his first innings as India's Test captain.

SCOREBOARD

India 1st innings: Yashasvi Jaiswal b Stokes 101, KL Rahul c Root b Carse 42. B Sai Sudharsan c Smith b Stokes 0, Shubman Gill not out 127. Rishabh Pant not out 65 Extras: (B-1, LB-10, NB-7, P-5) 24. Total: (For 3 wickets in 85 Overs) 359, Fall of wickets: 1-91, 2-92, 3-221.

Bowling: Chris Woakes 19-2-89-0, Brydon Carse 16-5-70-1, Josh Tongue 16-0-75-0. Ben Stokes 13-1-43-2, Shoaib Bashir 21-4-66-0.

After string of losses, Indian hockey men's & women's to take on Belgium

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SPORTS

Antwerp (Belgium), June 20: Their dream of booking a direct ticket to next year's World Cup crushed after six consecutive losses in the European leg of Pro league, India are now hoping to conclude their campaign on a positive note with wins in their last two matches against Belgium.

The Indian men's hockey team will take on world No 3 Belgium in consecutive matches here Saturday and Sunday.

After a good outing in the home leg earlier this year, the Indian men entered the European leg with high hopes, but they had a horrendous outing instead.

The losses meant India slipped from third to the eighth and penultimate position in the nine-team standings. The winner of the Pro League will automatically qualify for the World Cup, which will be jointly hosted by Belgium and Netherlands.

Against Netherlands, India lost 1-2 and 2-3, followed by defeats against Argentina (2-3, 1-2) and Australia (2-3, 2-3)

It was not that India played badly throughout the European leg, but what cost them dearly was their perennial habit of conceding late goals.

The Indian defence crumbled under pressure at late stages, evidence of which was their opponents scoring most of their winners in the last 13 minutes of the match.

India's senior players committed elementary mistakes when put under pressure.

Harmanpreet has stood tall in defence but the likes of Amit Rohidas and Sumit need to buckle up to support young goalkeeper Krishan Bahadur Pathak and Suraj Karkera

The Indian forward line too needs to convert the chances that come their way.

Chief coach Craig Fulton would also be worried about



Players to get monthly allowance

New Delhi: In a first for Indian hockey players, the sports ministry has approved an out of pocket allowance of ₹25,000 per month for those picked in the national camp of both men and women after repeated requests from the sport's governing body. Eighty players (40 men and 40 women) will benefit from the allowance which is giver to athletes in the developmental group of the Target Olympic Podium Scheme. The decision was taken at the Mission Olympic Cell's monthly meeting here Thursday. The allowance would cost the government ₹20 lakh per month. The core group athletes are entitled to ₹50,000 per month. "The allowance was being requested for by Hockey India for some time and we have decided to accept the demand. The players have performed reasonably well and it is on merit." Sports Minister Mansukl Mandaviya told reporters in an informal interaction here. Hockey India will have to submit a list of players every month for disbursement of the funds. Currently, the hockey players draw salaries from the departments and organisations that they ar employed with even though a proposal to have a graded contract system by Hockey India has been in the deliberation stage for past few years. Both the teams, men's and women's are currently competing in the FIH Pro League's European leg where the results have not been particularly encouraging so far.

hockey with sharp passes. the team's penalty corner con-But they were found wanting version rate, although Harmanpreet scored a few from them.

Women's team also struggling

The Indian women's team has suffered four consecutive losses so far in London. They lost 2-3 and 1-2 against Australia, and went down 1-4 and 2-0 to Argentina. However, under chief coach

Harendra Singh, the women played fast-paced attacking

in penalty corner conversions. The women too will play Belgium in back-to-back matches Saturday and Sun day, and will look for their first win in the European leg. The team is currently placed seventh in the nine-team standings and will end their campaign with consecutive matches against China in Berlin June 28 and 29

Delhi Redz defeat SHORT TAKES Archers return with 9 medals, lose 5 finals Hockey Masters Cup: AP, **Kalinga Black Tigers**

Odisha win in men's section PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai: Hockey Karnataka and Hockey Himachal had an eventful day in the women's category while Hockey Andhra Pradesh and Hockey Association of Odisha successfully registered win in their respective matches in the men's category on Day 3 of the Hockey India Masters Cup 2025 here Friday. In the last match of the day, the Hockey Association of Odisha defeated Hockey Punjab 5-2 in the men's category. Dharam

Despite making seven of the 10 finals across recurve and Pal Singh (17') and Ram Saran (22') scored for Hockey Punjab. In response, Anil Kullu (33', 37') scored two goals, whereas captain Lajrus Barla (18'), Sunil Lakra (30'), and Rajat Kumar Minz (45') also contributed with one goal each to register another victory in the tournament.

ASIA CUP LEG 2



albeit not without its own share of missed chances. Incidentally, they bagged

both their gold medals here.

Kushal Dalal, the top seed justified his billing by easing past Australia's Joshua Manon, seeded 22nd, in the men's individual final 149-143. India also bagged a bronze in this event, with Sachin Chechi. who was seeded 10th, defeated fourth-seeded Himu Bachhar 148-146 in a tight playoff.

In the women's event, the gold

AGENICES

Mumbai, June 20: The Delhi Redz are slowly beginning to pick up momentum in their campaign at Season 1 of the Royal Premier League (RPL). Friday, the Redz defeated the Kalinga Black Tigers 21-7 for their second consecutive win of the season at the Shahaji Raje Bhosale Sports Complex (Andheri Sports Complex) The Kalinga Black Tigers kicked off the contest at a good speed and were pushing Delhi Redz's defence back. The continued pressure eventually paid off, as Kyle Tremblay picked up a loose ball and ran through for a try, and Maurice Longbottom calmly put it between the posts. However, before half-time, the Redz roared back into the contest. Matias Osadczuk and Patrick Okongo scored crucial tries, and then Osadczuk wasted no time with the conversions. Midway through the contest, the Redz led 14-7. The Redz slammed the door



India will host Word **Para Athletics C'ships**

New Delhi: Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) president Devendra Jhajharia Friday said India will host the 'best-ever' World Para Athletics Championships to held here later this year, adding that they are leaving no stone unturned to make the event a grand success. India will host its first-ever World Para Athletics Championships from September 26 to October 5 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here.

Bangladesh in pole position against SL

Galle (Sri Lanka): Bangladesh held the upper hand at the end of Day 4 of the series-opening cricket test against Sri Lanka, reaching 177-3 in their second innings to lead by 187 runs Friday. With seven wickets in the hutch and the pitch beginning to show signs of wear and tear, the tourists will fancy their chances of pulling off a rare test victory overseas and pocketing some precious World Test Championship points in the process.

155 register for 2nd Indian Supercross Racing League

Pune: A record-breaking 155 riders including six-time German Supercross champion Greg Aranda have registered for the mega auction for the second edition of the Indian Supercross Racing League, organisers announced Friday.

compound disciplines, Indian archers finished on top of the podium just twice.

Singapore. June 20: India's

junior archers returned with

nine medals -- two gold, six sil-

ver, and one bronze -- from the

It seemed a successful outing

on paper, but a deeper look once

again highlighted a troubling

trend that has come to define

Indian archery at all levels -- fal-

tering when it matters the most.

Asia Cup Leg 2 here Friday.

The rest of the finals -- five in all -- ended in heartbreak, with the Indians visibly crumbling under pressure.

It wasn't so much that the losses stood out, but the manner in which the Indian archers lost was more concerning with top seeds going down to lower-ranked opponents, arrows straying to outer rings, and composure evaporating at the slightest of resistance.

As usual, the results were particularly alarming in recurve the Olympic discipline -where India failed to win a sin-

gle gold. In fact, apart from two silver medals in team events, the recurve archers returned empty-handed.

The men's team, top-seeded after the qualification round, simply fell apart against Japan in the final. Vishnu Choudhary, Paras Hooda, and Juyel Sarkar failed to touch the 50-mark in two of the three sets, bowing out in straight sets 6-0. It was a similar story in the

recurve mixed team final. Fourth-seeded Choudhary and Vaishnavi Pawar were error-prone throughout their clash against Indonesia.

A 32-point start, followed by a disastrous second set that included a one-pointer, effectively sealed their fate.

The lack of rhythm and nerve showed again in the third as they lost 32-35 to finish with silver.

The women's recurve team, along with all individual recurve entries, failed to even reach the medal rounds, an outcome that underlined India's deepening struggle in the discipline while they continue to chase a maiden Olympic medal. If the recurve results were

disheartening, the compound section offered some respite.

was assured as it featured two Indians -- second-seeded Tejal Salve prevailing over the higher-ranked Shanmukhi Naga Sai Budde 146-144. There were also a few near-misses for the Indians.

The men's compound team, also top-seeded, was stunned by third-seeded Kazakhstan 231-235. The women's compound team lost in the shoot-off to lower-ranked Malaysia after being tied 232-all. with the shoot-off score reading a disappointing 26-29.

The mixed compound team of Shanmukhi and Dalal lost a lead (78-77) at halfway stage against Kazakhstan, faltering in the crucial third end before losing in the shoot-off.

shut on the Tigers' attack in the second half and didn't concede an inch. With the Tigers desperate to make progress in the attacking half, the Redz took advantage with Matteo Graziano scoring a try, and Deepak Punia converting the kick to put the seal on the contest. Eventually the Redz won 21-7.

INDIA'S **DOPING WOES**

WADA numbers reveal high positivity rate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 20: India's doping woes came to the fore once again with the country topping the World Anti-Doping Agency's 2023 testing figures among countries which analvsed 5.000 or more samples even as the sports ministry promised an "aggressive clean-up" and an amended Anti-Doping Act after addressing objections from the WADA.

India's positivity rate for banned substances stood at 3.8 per cent -- 214 Adverse Analytical Findings (AAF) from 5606 samples. The sample size was significantly higher from 2022 when 3865 tests returned an AAF rate of 3.2 per cent.

Of the 5606 tests, 2748 were conducted in-competition. India's positivity rate for banned substances was significantly higher than China (28,197 samples, 0.2 per cent AAF rate),

USA (6798 samples, 1.0 per cent AAF rate), France (11,368 samples, 0.9 per cent AAF rate), Germany (15,153 samples, 0.4 per cent AAF rate) and Russia (10,395 samples, 1.0 per cent AAF rate).

As compared to India's 214, France, Russia, USA, China and Germany recorded 105, 99, 66, 60 and 57 AAFs respectively. "Any amount of doping is

unacceptable but we have to acknowledge that our testing is vigorous and with every year the sample size is increasing. With our aggressive awareness campaigns, we intend to bring the numbers down in the next

two years," a sports ministry source said when approached for a comment on the latest report

Globally, 204,809 tests were conducted in 2023, of which 1820 came positive for banned drugs with India's share of 214 accounting for over 11 per cent



of the total number of offenders, the highest for any country.

In all, Delhi's National Dope testing Laboratory (NDTL) tested 6,077 samples, including those from neighbouring countries. It's Adverse Analytical Findings (AAF) rate of 3.63 per cent makes up the highest percentage of positive dope results among the 30 WADA-accredited facilities across the world.

Athletics leads the number of India's positive cases with 61 AAFs from 1223 samples -- 567 in-competition and 539 out-of-competition urine samples as well as 117 blood samples. One AAF was reported from among the blood samples. Weightlifting accounted for 38 AAFs from 451 samples, while powerlifting and wrestling contributed 28 and 10 AAFs respectively.

The numbers have expectedly raised an alarm and an admission that the country is yet to implement its Anti-Doping Act, which was passed in 2022, due to objections from WADA on some unspecified provisions.

"The NADA bill will be brought back to the Parliament after a restructuring. We have addressed the objections raised by WADA, which required changes to certain provisions," a sports ministry source said.

The National Anti-Doping Act, 2022 empowers the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) with legal authority and investigative powers similar to law enforcement bodies. NADA even conducted a

workshop recently involving officers of CBI and INTERPOL to understand doping investigation mechanisms, including interrogation of suspected dope offenders and banned substanc es' suppliers.

"The ministry is going to tackle this menace aggressive ly. There will be compulsory monthly doping awareness programmes and nutritional supplements will be tested at specialised labs in Gandhinagar and Delhi to ensure that they do not contain prohibited sub stances," a ministry source said.

"Most of the time, doping by a young athlete is either unintentional due to lack of knowledge or in desperation to get that one national performance that would help in getting a gov ernment job. But we will drill it into their psyche that they have more to lose if they don't comply with anti-doping rules, he added.

Printed and published by Adyasha Satpathy on behalf of Navajat Printers and Media Pvt. Ltd. and printed at Navajat Printers, B-15 Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar -751010, Odisha; Phone: 7894447142 (Marketing). Editor: Tathagata Satpathy, RNI No. ODIENG/2011/37159









