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English Daily



Minimum 3-year legal practice mandatory to enter judicial services: SC



New Delhi, (HS) : The Supreme Court on Tuesday upheld that three years legal practice shall be mandatory for entry into judicial services. It further specified that direct recruitment of fresh law graduates as civil judges junior division shall be barred. According to reports, the Supreme Court has set clear conditions for entry into judicial service. A minimum of three years of practice as a lawyer is mandatory. A three-judge bench of the Supreme Court gave this important verdict. The Supreme Court further clarified that, if one has at least three years of experience as a lawyer then only one can apply for judicial service. However, this will not be applicable for the recruitment process that has already been started. This order will be applicable for the recruitment process that starts later than today. The decision was announced by the Supreme Court on Tuesday that is May 20, 2025. This judgment aims to appoint more experienced and competent people in the judiciary. According to this order of the Supreme Court, it is expected that candidates will gain real experience through legal practice and will be more capable to delivery of justice. It is further worth mentioning that, this rule will be implemented in all states.

Matric Supplementary Exam From July 1

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : The Board of Secondary Education (BSE) has released the timetable for the Matric supplementary examination, which is set to begin on July 1. The examination will be conducted for both regular and ex-regular students from July 1 to 10. Exam Time table-- The exams will be held in one sitting from 9 am to 11:30 am, with the Mathematics exam

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Future of healthy world depends on inclusion, integrated vision: PM

New Delhi, (HS) : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that the future of a healthy world depends on inclusion, integrated vision and collaboration. Addressing the 78th World Health Assembly in Geneva, Modi said, "Inclusion is at the heart of India's health reforms; Ayushman Bharat, the world's largest health insurance scheme, covers 580 million people and provides free treatment in India." He announced that the scheme has recently been expanded to include all citizens above the age of 70. Additionally, he said, India has established a vast network of Health and Wellness Centres that offer screening for major conditions such as cancer, diabetes, and hypertension.

"Thousands of public pharmacies across the country also provide high-quality medicines at prices significantly lower than market rates, increasing access to essential drugs for all," he added. Highlighting that the theme of the Assembly "One World for Health" resonates with India's vision of global health, he stated



that "the future of a healthy world depends on inclusion, integrated vision and collaboration." He emphasised that technology is an important catalyst to improve health outcomes and highlighted India's achievements in this regard. "We have a digital platform to track vaccination of pregnant women and children. Millions of people have a unique digital health identity. It is helping us integrate benefits, insurance, records and

information," he said. He also added that "with telemedicine, nobody is too far from a doctor. Our free telemedicine service has enabled over 340 million consultations." He further pointed out that because of these initiatives, the out-of-pocket expenditure as a percentage of total health expenditure has fallen significantly, while government health expenditure has gone up considerably. The prime minister underscored that the health of the

world depends on how well we care about the most vulnerable, especially in the Global South who are particularly impacted by health challenges. Noting that India's approach presents replicable, scalable and sustainable models, he offered to share India's learnings and best practices with the world, especially the Global South.

Welcoming this year's focus on "Yoga for One Earth, One Health," he extended an invitation to all countries to actively participate in promoting yoga as a means to improve physical and mental well-being. He gave a call for a shared commitment to fight future pandemics with greater cooperation. "While building a healthy planet, let us ensure that no one is left behind," he added.

Looking ahead to the 11th International Day of Yoga in June, Modi encouraged global participation. "He also congratulated the World Health Organization (WHO) and all member states on the successful negotiations of the INB (intergovernmental negotiating body) treaty.

Odisha Unveils Adventure Tourism Guidelines-2025



Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : In a significant step toward promoting tourism, the State government finalized the Odisha Adventure Tourism Guidelines-2025 during a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi at Lok Seva Bhawan today. The initiative aims to position Odisha as a premier adventure tourism destination, aligning with the state's 'Think India, Think Odisha' vision. Chief Minister Majhi emphasized that adventure tourism will be developed to ensure Odisha is the first destination that comes to mind for tourists visiting India. The guidelines are part of a broader strategy to support Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Viksit Bharat-2047 vision, with tourism identified as a priority sector. The state plans to map and develop adventure tourism sites across all 30 districts, leveraging Odisha's natural beauty and thrilling landscapes. Key projects include rafting in Satkosia and hot air balloon tourism over Hirkud, with similar facilities planned for other locations. The guidelines also focus on creating employment opportunities for Odisha's youth by providing training and certification for adventure tourism activities on water, land, and air. The initiative is expected to generate significant job prospects while promoting private sector participation through the 'Go Adventure' portal. To attract investment, the state will offer incentives under the Odisha Tourism Policy-2022, aiming to establish Odisha as a globally competitive tourism hub. Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja and Tourism Department Commissioner-cum-Secretary Balwant Singh were present at the meeting.

Plus-II Results To Be Announced Tomorrow



Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : The Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE), Odisha, will announce the results for the Plus II examinations tomorrow. The results of all streams, including Arts, Science, and Commerce, will be announced simultaneously at 4 pm on Wednesday, the CHSE said. The results will be available on both the CBSE website and DigiLocker. Students can access their results and digital mark sheets through these platforms after the result declaration. Earlier, Minister of School and Mass Education, Nityananda Gond, mentioned that the results would be declared soon, within the next one or two days. Approximately 3.85 lakh students had appeared for the examinations in all streams. The examination had commenced on February 18. Due to the delay in publishing the results, the Higher Education Department has extended the deadline for admission into Plus 3 courses to June 1.

India reports 257 Covid cases, Health Ministry to review situation

New Delhi, (HS) : Covid cases seem to be on the rise in India, as many as 257 Covid positive cases have been reported however all are said to be mild in nature. Following recent media reports of a surge in COVID-19 cases in Singapore and Hong Kong, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)

convened a review meeting with experts from National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Emergency Medical Relief (EMR) division, Disaster Management Cell, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and central government hospitals, sources said. The meeting was

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More 'power' to Ministers; Odisha Cabinet undergoes structural change

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : Powers of Secretaries in the Cabinet Meetings were curtailed by the Odisha Government, and Ministers were accorded more authority, a notification issued in this regard on Tuesday by the Parliamentary Affairs Secretary to all departments mentioned. "As per instructions contained in Part III of the Rules of Business deals with the Procedure of Odisha Cabinet, it has been decided to reiterate strict adherence to these instructions. Accordingly, certain decisions have been taken under the approval of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi," the

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Nor'wester Alert Issued for 17 Odisha Districts; Yellow Warning in Place

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : The Regional Meteorological Centre in Bhubaneswar has issued a yellow warning for 17 districts of Odisha, forecasting the likelihood of Nor'wester (Kalbaisakhi) storms on Tuesday. The alert includes the possibility of thunderstorms accompanied by lightning and gusty winds, with wind speeds expected to reach 40-50 kmph during the afternoon and evening hours.

The districts under warning



are Puri, Khordha, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Sonepur, Boudh, Sundargarh, Balangir, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Mayurbhanj,

Keonjhar, Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Nabarangpur, and Gajapati. Residents in these areas have been advised to remain cautious, especially those working in open or vulnerable locations, due to the potential safety hazards posed by sudden weather changes. The weather office also noted that a cyclonic circulation is currently active over the Bay of Bengal, having shifted from the southwest and adjoining southeast region to the west-

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Heavy rain lashes Kerala, TN and Karnataka; eight killed in rain-related incidents

Kerala, (HS) : Heavy rains lashed Chennai and neighbouring districts on Tuesday evening, as the India Meteorological Department (IMD) announced that conditions are favourable for onset of southwest monsoon over Kerala during next 4-5 days. A total of eight deaths in separate rain-related incidents have been recorded in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu so far. Meanwhile, the IMD, in the forecast bulletin issued on Tuesday at 4.30 pm, predicted widespread rainfall accompanied with thunderstorm, lightning and strong winds across Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana over the next seven days. The

southwest monsoon, which typically arrives towards the end of May, has arrived about two weeks earlier than predicted. The early onset of southwest monsoon can be attributed to climate factors like stronger westerly winds and rising sea surface temperatures, experts told. Another change in the usual monsoon pattern is the northward tilt in rainfall distribution due to a low-pressure system forming near Karnataka's coast. IMD has issued a red alert for seven districts in Karnataka --which include Uttara Kannada, Udupi, Dakshina Kannada, Kodagu, Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru and



Hassan-- and four districts in northern Kerala --which include Kasaragod, Kannur, Wayanad, and Kozhikode. Orange alert has been issued for parts of Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.

Various parts of Karnataka

continued to receive heavy rainfall on Tuesday. Heavy rain, along with thunder and lightning, was reported in coastal districts. Traffic congestion due to flooding was reported in the arterial roads of Bengaluru. At least five people died in the state, including three

in Bengaluru, due to rains. Two people --63-year-old Mannohan Kamath and 12-year-old Dinesh-- died due to electrocution in Bengaluru's BTM layout on Monday while trying to use a motorised pump to clear water out of his house. Though they were rushed to a hospital soon after, they were declared dead on arrival by doctors. Another person, 35-year-old Shashikala, who worked as housekeeping staff at a software firm in Mahadevapura area, died after a wall in company premises collapsed on her. Additionally, two people died due to lightning in Raichur and Karwar regions. In the 24 hours ending on

Tuesday morning, the centres to receive heavy rainfall include, Guttal (dist Haveri) 11 cm, Kalasa (dist Chikkamagaluru) 10, Kolar Pwd (dist Kolar) 8, and T G Halli Hms (dist Bengaluru) 7. Chennai received moderate to heavy rains late Monday night and on Tuesday evening. Heavy to very heavy rainfall along with thunderstorms and strong winds were reported in several isolated places across the state. At least three people died in the state due to rains. Three people were killed in Madurai when a sunshade slab collapsed from the weight of water that stagnated in top. The three --65-year-old Ammapillai, her 10-year-old grandson

Veeramani, and her 55-year-old neighbour Venkadammal-- were pulled out of debris a while later. Venkadammal was declared dead by doctors upon admission, while the two others succumbed to their injuries later. The centres to record heavy rainfall in the 24 hours ending on Tuesday morning include, 12 cm in Hosur AWS (dist Krishnagiri), 6 cm in parts of Krishnagiri, Ranipet, Dharmapuri, Salem districts, and 5 cm in parts of Coimbatore, Vellore, Nilgiris.

Widespread waterlogging has been reported in several parts of north Kerala, disrupting daily life and transportation, officials

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Environment Clearance

Environment clearances are guardrails that ensure developmental projects do not injure ecosystems, wildlife and natural resources and harm people's health. One of the defining elements of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Rules of 2006, these screenings were meant to enable policymakers to strike the right balance between the imperatives of development and sustainability. The precautionary principle behind this provision has, however, been substantially undermined in the past eight years. In 2017, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change issued a notification that allowed developers to obtain an environmental clearance after beginning work on a project. The notification provided a one-time window to defaulters to comply with due procedure. However, in the process, it inaugurated a regime of post-facto clearances, which was consolidated in 2021 when the Centre issued an Office Memorandum (OM) to "identify" and "handle" violation cases. Now, the Supreme Court has called out the government for "going out of its way... to protect those who harm the environment". On May 16, a two-judge-bench struck down the 2017 notification and the 2021 OM. The verdict is not the first time that the SC has admonished the Centre for diluting the EIA. In Common Cause vs Union of India (2017), a two-judge-bench ruled that the government had committed "serious lapses" in allowing large-scale mining to be "carried on without forest and environmental clearances". Such "violations of laws and policy need to be prevented," it underlined. Three years later, in Alembic Pharmaceuticals vs Rohit Prajapati, the Court held that post-facto clearances go against the "fundamental principles of environmental jurisprudence", and that they were an "anathema to the EIA notification". Then, in January last year, the SC stayed the 2021 OM. However, as an analysis by this newspaper in February revealed, the regulatory laxity precipitated by the 2017 notification allowed more than 50 defaulting projects to go unpunished - coal, iron and bauxite mines, steel and iron factories, cement plants and limestone quarries were approved without proper scrutiny of their impacts on people's health and ecology.

The weakening of the EIA goes against the SC's environmental jurisprudence, where it has continuously expanded the scope of Article 21 to include the right to a healthy environment. In its latest verdict, too, the Court has drawn attention to urban India's pollution crisis and reaffirmed the links between regulatory diligence and the Right to Life. The problem, however, is that governments tend to view sustainability and development as binaries - their ease-of-doing-business drives very often pay short shrift to the imperatives of environmental protection. The Court has rightly questioned the tendency to see industry and ecology as locked in a zero-sum game. Its words - "conservation of the environment and its improvement is an essential part of the concept of development" - must resonate among policymakers and inform regulatory processes.

21st May

International Tea Day



International Tea Day is celebrated every year on May 21. On this day, tea lovers unite in celebration of their favorite beverage. International Tea Day also promotes ways to sustain the production and consumption of tea. On this day, we can also learn of the importance of tea in combating hunger and poverty. You might be surprised to know that tea is the most loved beverage for millions worldwide. Every second, people consume 25,000 cups of tea, meaning more than two billion cups of tea are consumed per day. If you want to celebrate in style, check out our guide to gifts for tea lovers.

In 2005, tea-producing countries came together to celebrate International Tea Day. These countries were Sri Lanka, Nepal, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, and Uganda. In 2019, the Intergovernmental Group on Tea decided to celebrate International Tea Day on May 21. The U.N. said yes to the celebrations on December 21, 2019. The first official U.N. International Tea Day was celebrated on May 21, 2020. Projections show that as the world population increases, so will the number of tea drinkers. Tea enjoys great popularity in India and China. These two countries alone account for 37% of the world's total population, meaning a substantial number of tea lovers reside in India and China. According to legend, Emperor Shen Hung of China discovered tea when leaves from a tree blew into his pot of boiling water. He loved the hot liquid and humanity has not looked back ever since.

Besides drinking it for taste, there are quite a few health benefits of tea drinking. Tea contains antioxidants that reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke, aid with weight loss, protect the bones, prevent tooth loss, boost the immune system, help battle cancer, soothe the digestive system, and relax the body. Habitual tea drinkers are also less likely to die prematurely. Habitual tea drinkers drink the beverage at least three times a week. Green tea seems to have more health benefits than black tea.



Subash Ch. Mishra

Economic Diary

Perhaps one image the world etched in its memory is the aeroplanes hitting the World Trade Centre in New York and smoke billowing out of the towers. This type of terror act was unprecedented and the whole world looked at the picture in awe. At home we had the attack on Parliament, Mumbai attack (26/11) by Pakistani terrorists and thereafter several terrorist attacks in Kashmir. The Hamas led terrorist attack in Israel on 7th October 2023 resulted in death of 1200 people attending a music festival. The terrorists also took 250 people hostage. Acts of terror in Africa are regular affairs in some countries and terrorism has become a profession in the modern world. Most of the terrorists have nothing personal against the victims except religious fanaticism in most cases. Recently the murder of 26 innocent tourists by Pakistani terrorists in Pahalgam has shaken the patience of Indians and people demanded a counter attack on Pakistan for revenge.

Terrorism is not a modern phenomenon as it started in ancient times in the form of religious intolerance. After the onset of revolutionary politics and invention of dynamite and pistol in 19th century, terrorism took a modern and more violent shape. The first organizational terrorism started with the formation of the Irish Republican

The profession of Terrorism

Brotherhood in 1858. They deployed time bombs in various parts of London to generate fear in the minds of English people and gain political mileage. Several other organizations cropped up in Europe like Norodnaya Volya in Russia, mostly for political purpose. Today there are several terrorist organizations in middle east, Africa, Asia and Europe that operate like corporate entities by employing people. The workers work more for salary than for ideological reasons. They have a well laid down hierarchy and organizational structure with several departments working under one authority. Some of the large and well known terrorist organisations like Hamas, Hizbul Mujahideen and Houthi operating in middle east, Jaish E Mohammad and Laskar E Taiba in Pakistan, Boko Haram in Nigeria and Taliban ruling in Afghanistan have a succession plan to take care of the organisation after the death of the leader. Al Qaeda and Islamic state operate in many countries. Some of these organizations occupy and administer land mass like a state and have a well laid down military structure. While Taliban runs Afghanistan, Hamas occupies Gaza strip, Houthi occupies a part of Yemen and Hizbul Mujahideen occupies a part of Lebanon and some of its members are represented in the parliament of the country. The governments in these countries have bowed before the military prowess of the terrorist organizations. Syria is occupied by several groups and the current president of Syria is a former Al Qaeda man. When an organisation is formed to get independence of the country from foreign rulers, the members of such organisation are called freedom fighters by the local people and terrorists by the ruling class. But today terrorism is not limited to seeking independence; instead terrorists operate for



religious supremacy or against the local rulers who are deemed as dictatorial. One form of terrorism today aims to propagate communist ideology in its extreme form and wants to eliminate the traditional ruling order. We call them Maoists in India. A few terrorist organizations have been created and funded by the state governments to act as proxy for them and fight with enemy countries. Some of these organisations operate like private limited companies. A study done a decade back on terrorists operating in Kashmir has recorded that a terrorist gets a monthly payment of Rs.8000-12000. When a new person is enrolled in to the organisation, he gets an upfront payment (signing bonus) of Rs 25000-50000. At the end of his tenure he gets a separation payment of Rs 2 - 2.5 lakh. For every terror act committed he gets an additional payment of Rs 1-2 lakh. Another report indicated that if the terrorist is killed during his service tenure his family gets a house. A report also mentioned that Hamas paid about USD 350 million per annum to its army which had 20000-30000 fighters in 2020. Hizbullah has a much bigger army of 1-1.20 lakh people and it pays about USD 1000-1200 per month to every soldier. Since

most of the terrorists organizations are blacklisted for opening accounts with banks, they maintain their own bank like structure for making payments and receiving funds and donations. The new recruits are trained and some of the organisations have prescribed schedule of training like any corporate. Initially they are taught religious matters to brain wash them and make them feel that they are unjustly deprived and they will be fighting for a noble cause. In subsequent phases, they are trained in use of armaments and electronic instruments, making of bombs, survival technique in adverse conditions and the best of them are sent for missions.

Some of the terrorist organizations were supported and nurtured in the initial stage by governments to act against an enemy country. In course of time the terrorist organisation becomes too big and demands more benefits from the supporting country. With change of governments and priority, the terrorist organisation may not remain relevant for the supporter country and it wants to get rid of it. At that stage the terrorist organisation hits back at the country that nurtured and supported it all through. Osama Bin Laden of Al Qaeda was

supported by USA in the initial stage, but ultimately Bin Laden staged the attack on World Trade Centre in New York. Terrorism results in death of people, creation of a sense of fear among the local people, sometimes results in war between countries and affects the economy of the region and country. Terror activities affect the trade, the financial market, reduce tourism and usually affects road and rail transport in the area affecting the overall economic environment. As it increases the risk perception, insurance premium go up in the area. The Pahalgam act has suspended tourism in the region for some time which in turn has affected the livelihood of hotel owners and the people engaged in providing support to tourism like the shikara owners, taxi operators and horse operators in the region. One study estimated that in Basque region of Spain, GDP per capita declined by 10% during 1980-1990 due to terrorist activities. Two states in Turkiye experienced decline in GDP per capita by 14% over a period of 20 years due to terrorism. Developed economies experience a short term economic impact of terrorism as terror activities are usually infrequent. One study estimated the global economic impact of terrorism at USD 566 bn during 2010-2018. The study also recorded that between 2010 and 2018 globally 167,000 deaths took place due to terrorism and the most affected countries were Iraq, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Pakistan, Syria, Somalia and Central African Republic. The Institute for Economics and Peace publishes the Global terrorism Index which provides a comprehensive summary of the key global trends and patterns in terrorism. As per the Index, 66 countries were affected by terrorism; there were 3492 attacks and a total of 7555 people lost their lives in 2024. Islamic State and its allies remained the world's deadliest terror group.

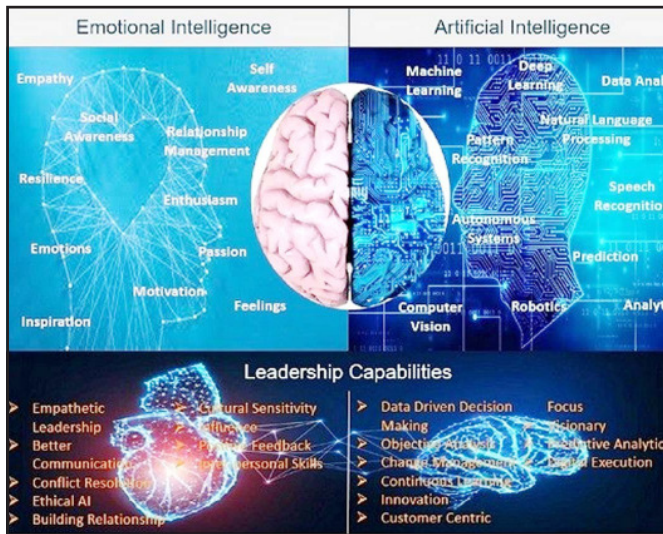
The author is a retired Chielsraelf General Manager of Reserve Bank of India.

Artificial versus emotional intelligence & soul food

Indu Bhusan Bhuyan (Badal)

From the expansive world of technological reality delivering artificial intelligence (AI) to the truth of fading humanity killing emotional intelligence (EI), we need to respond to the ways in which the millennial's world is shape-shifting, and what lies ahead. Formal education is not enhancing the learner's ability to live a good life, have peace with oneself and others, and become a worthy member of society. Linking education with commercial objective, we are only educating the left side of the head and not the heart.

We cannot deny the significance of emotions in human life. Modern education is not addressing 'hygiene of emotion' to promote harmony in society. But in this era of internet and social media where post-truth has become a reality, people have once again begun to realise importance of ethics and values in managing post-truth. Only adherence to ethics can take us closer to Self-realisation, self-respect and thereby self-compassion necessary to command AI. Being guided always by 'external regulation' in decision-making creates feelings of subjugation and stress. Adherence to ethics improves emotional health and does not apply any specific 'rules' or 'guidelines' on you while making decisions. It attempts to make decisions that are motivated by virtues like



courage, wisdom, temperance, fairness, integrity and consistency. Innovations are needed in ethics to restore the depleting self-pride/ respect/ discipline of individuals and ushering in self-rule or 'Swaraj' as enunciated by MK Gandhi to deal with nuances of AI.

While working for the fulfilment of basic needs through AI, education is generally missing out on the need for soul food. It is adherence to ethics that will enable fulfilment of such need or a feeling of a deep sense of self-satisfaction in life. Self-satisfied people are generally self-actualised; virtuous, have improved relationships and report an empathetic concern, altruism, and forgiveness. Responding to the emergence of AI, which is doing one thing instead of another, we need to ascertain how we shall live. Shall we live in a way that destroys our relationships, our planet,

conscience, sentiments, and ultimately our own lives? Or shall we live in a way that heals and supports all inhabitants, eliminating poverty, fear, exploitation, degradation and destruction? To live in the current dominant culture participating in the economics of post-truth and AI is to choose the former. To live according to the natural habitat of humans that can be correlated to truth and EI is to choose the latter.

Ironically, despite having rich spiritual and cultural heritage, we do not have a single contemporary book of ethics that can serve as a practical or authentic life-guide. This is why most of us lack self-confidence and live in a state of constant mystical longing or seeking the truth.

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True Spirit of Patriotism

Jajati Keshari Naik

India is a diverse country and we Indians genuinely believe in "Unity in Diversity". Independence Day ceremonies deserve serious attention and should be set in a longer historical time frame and in a broader geographical perspective. Independence Day is a milestone in the history of India and we should rejoice and celebrate with enthusiasm each year the anniversary of this historic day.

Do you really believe that by wasting this golden period in senseless things, you would be able to do spiritual practice or move towards God in your old age? Well, this belief is not correct. This is the right time! If you get enthusiastically involved in the accomplishment of your goal from this young age, you would be able to spend your entire life with bliss. But if you fail to build your life in the right sense in your youth, then it would be very difficult to do so in old age. So, do not let even a single moment go waste. India's today is in your hands. Every youth needs to be of very high character and great talent. You must worship strength. The greatest charm of this young age is its ever rising zeal which gives the strength to perform just any task. It does not get bogged down by the difficulties and obscurities of the course and is capable of making possible even the impossible. All those valuable tasks that cannot be performed in any other age can easily be performed in this age.

Oh, youth of India, rise! Rise and devote yourself in spiritual tasks, welfare of others and for the sake of your country. The time is not of slumber and laziness; your country is looking up to you with expectations. If



you devote yourself completely in performing your duties towards the task of reviving your country as world spiritual leader by your effort and by the blessings of saints and God then prosperity and salvation both would adorn your feet. But you need not get attached to it. If only I get 20 such boys and girls who have enthusiasm, passion, obedience and truthfulness, I would be able to change the whole picture of the country. I am presently training such youths; I am carving such supreme personalities today that you all would be awe struck once they appear on the platform of the society

The freedom that we enjoy in India can never be equalized by any other nation across the world. India is a land of emotions and our emotions bind us together. This is the imperceptible cord that pulls to the motherland.

"Aparna Bhawan", Binjharpur, Jajpur

312 cloth bags for 10,000 fine! BMC's two-pronged strategy to make Bhubaneswar polythene-free



Bhubaneswar, (DMC): In a bid to curb plastic pollution and move towards a polythene-free Bhubaneswar, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has introduced an innovative approach that not only penalises violators of the single-use plastic ban but also empowers them to adopt eco-friendly alternatives. This two-pronged strategy,

combining enforcement with incentivisation, marks a shift from punitive to participatory environmental governance. According to a report by The Times of India, rather than simply collecting fines for violations of the single-use plastic ban, BMC has launched a unique model where vendors, who are fined for using or selling

polythene carry bags, receive cotton cloth bags equal in value to the penalty imposed. For instance, if a vendor is fined Rs 10,000, he/she will be provided with 312 cloth bags by the BMC, each worth approximately Rs 36. The reports also stated that these bags would be sourced from empanelled vendors and carry BMC branding, promoting both compliance and sustainability. The aim is not just to penalise but provide a tangible and immediate solution to vendors, enabling them to stop using polythene altogether.

The one-time distribution will be documented, and vendors will be required to sign a declaration acknowledging the benefit. In a complementary move to boost operational efficiency and reduce logistical costs, the

BMC is also planning to set up its own fuel station and garage near the Temporary Transit Station (TTS). The initiative is expected to streamline the management of over 500 municipal vehicles and machinery, which currently rely on external fuel suppliers and private garages. By internalising its fuel supply, the BMC hopes to reduce procurement delays, cut expenses and gain greater control over its fleet operations.

Moreover, if the fuel station is opened to public use under a commercial model, it could also become a revenue-generating asset for the corporation. Together, these initiatives show that Bhubaneswar is charting a new path toward becoming one of India's cleanest and most efficiently managed cities.

Two former Odisha government officials convicted in vigilance cases; Pension stoppage proceedings initiated

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): In a major development highlighting Odisha Vigilance's ongoing crackdown on corruption, two retired government officials were convicted today in separate vigilance cases by Special Vigilance Courts in Bolangir and Cuttack.

Both cases were charge-sheeted earlier by the Odisha Vigilance and have culminated in rigorous imprisonment along with financial penalties. Following the convictions, the Vigilance Department will now move the competent authorities

to initiate proceedings for the stoppage of their pensions. In the first case, Kalandi Charan Bhuyan, Former Junior Accountant-cum-Lease Clerk at the Office of the Divisional Forest Officer (Territorial), Bolangir, was convicted by the Hon'ble Special Judge, Vigilance, Bolangir.

He had been charge-sheeted in Sambalpur Vigilance PS Case No. 16 dated 27.06.2019 under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018. The case pertained to the demand and acceptance of a bribe

of ₹10,000 from a complainant for granting permission to cut exempted trees standing on farmer-owned lands and to shift the felled timber for sawing purposes. The court sentenced Bhuyan to 3 years of rigorous imprisonment and imposed a fine of ₹10,000.

In light of the conviction, Odisha Vigilance will move the competent authority for the stoppage of his pension. In the second case, Subash Chandra Mishra, Former Block Development Officer (BDO), OAS-I, of Lefripada Block in

Sundargarh district, was convicted by the Hon'ble Special Judge, Vigilance, Cuttack. He was charge-sheeted under Section 13(2) read with Section 13(1)(e) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, for possessing assets disproportionate to his known sources of income.

The court found him guilty and sentenced him to 2 years of rigorous imprisonment and imposed a fine of ₹50,000. Odisha Vigilance will also initiate the process for the stoppage of pension benefits for Mishra following his conviction.

Biswaranjan Wins Bronze Medal in Asian Martial Arts Taekwondo Championship

Khordha, (DMC): The Asian Martial Arts Taekwondo Championship was held in Kathmandu, Nepal from May 16 to May 18. In this competition, in the senior boys' category, AKS Taekwondo Academy's Biswaranjan Amardeep has won the third place in the "Poomsae" category in the Asian Martial Arts Taekwondo Competition, bringing glory to India in the Asian continent.

Under the guidance of Grandmaster Ashok Kumar Sahu and his excellent teaching, Biswaranjan has become the pride of India and Odisha today. Under the leadership of Grandmaster Ashok Kumar Sahu, Secretary (Founder of Khordha District Taekwondo Association & International Trainer of World Taekwondo Headquarters),



World Taekwondo Federation (WTF) Judge & Team Manager Ms. Bharti Jagdev, he has achieved success and brought glory to India. Biswaranjan is the youngest son of Dilip Kumar Sahu & Kalpana Mohanty of Gurjang village, Khordha. He is a

final year student of "The Law University, Cuttack". Principal The Law University, Cuttack, S.K. Ray & Vice-Chancellor Dr. Kamaljit Singh have inspired him to reach his life's goal with the blessings. MP, Ms. Aparajita Sarangi, MLA, Khordha, Prasanta Kumar Jagdev, former MLA Rajendra Kumar Sahu congratulated Biswaranjan on his success & wished him a bright future.

A wave of happiness has spread across the state for this achievement of Biswaranjan. Behind his success his teacher, who became the chief judge in the Asian Martial Arts Taekwondo competition & won the gold medal in the 60-year age group, bringing glory to the Asian continent & India. He has inspired & blessed Biswaranjan.

Bhubaneswar Court sentenced five persons to life imprisonment in Sushant Nayak murder case

Bhubaneswar,,(DMC): The Bhubaneswar court on Monday sentenced five individuals to life imprisonment in connection with the brutal murder of Sushant Nayak in 2023. The verdict was delivered by Judge Bandana Kar of the Additional District Judge Court-2, Bhubaneswar. The five convicts - Vishal Nayak, Sujit Nayak, Ajit Nayak, Tikili Nayak, and Subash Nayak - were each fined ₹25,000. In case of non-payment, they will have to serve an additional one-year jail term. Sushant Nayak, a housekeeping staff member at the Central Horticultural Experiment Station (CHES) in Aiginia, was hacked to death near GED Basti in Unit-III under the Capital Police Station limits during the early hours of May 24, 2023. According to police reports, the accused intercepted Sushant while he was returning home after dropping off his wife, who works with the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC). The attackers used swords and other sharp weapons to kill him. The incident was reportedly triggered by a molestation complaint filed by Sushant's family. In April 2023, Sujit Nayak's nephew, Vishal, was accused of molesting Sushant's niece. The complaint was lodged with the Capital Police Station on April 25, 2023. In a retaliatory act, Sujit and his relatives allegedly plotted and executed Sushant's murder. All five accused fled following the incident, but were later arrested during police operations in Cuttack, Nayagarh, and Khordha districts.



Genome Sequencing To Be Conducted If COVID Case Found In Odisha: Health Director

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): Amid reports of the deaths of two COVID-19-infected patients in Maharashtra, State Public Health Director Nilakantha Mishra said on Tuesday that no fresh coronavirus cases have been reported in the state. He added that if anyone is found to be positive for COVID-19, the patient's sample would be sent for genome sequencing to determine the virus variant."

Till now, we have not detected any fresh COVID cases. If we find such a patient, the sample will be sent for genome sequencing to determine the variant," said State Public Health Director Nilakantha Mishra while speaking with reporters. Health authorities in India are closely monitoring the rise in COVID-19 cases in Singapore and Hong Kong. However,



official sources on Monday asserted that the current coronavirus situation in the country is under control. "People,

especially those with co-morbidities, must remain cautious and follow standard precautionary measures," Mishra advised. Meanwhile, Mumbai's civic-run KEM Hospital clarified on Monday that the deaths of two patients at the facility were due to

Cuttack Police Rescue Kidnap Victim Linked To Stock Trading Dispute; 7 Arrested

Cuttack, (DMC): In a swift and coordinated operation, the Cuttack Urban Police District (UPD) of Commissionerate Police successfully rescued a youth, Soumya Ranjan Behera, who was abducted from Baulakuda in Bayalish Mouja on the night of May 18. Seven suspects, including a juvenile, have been arrested in connection with the case.

Addressing the media on Tuesday, Cuttack Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Khilari Rishikesh Dnyandeo said that the abduction was masterminded by gym trainer Rajesh Das, allegedly over a financial dispute involving an investment of ₹60-70 lakh in Behera's Bhubaneswar-based stock trading firm. Das and his associate Divyajyoti, along with other accomplices plotted the kidnapping after repeated attempts to recover their money failed, he added. DCP Dnyandeo



informed that upon receiving the complaint from the victim's mother on May 18 night a special team led by Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Amitabh Mahapatra with Bayalish Mouja IIC was formed. The team used electronic surveillance to track the victim's location. Behera was rescued within 12 hours from a slum area in Kendrapara, Khilari added. The DCP Dnyandeo stated that the victim was subjected to both mental and physical torture by the

abductors, who demanded repayment of the disputed investment. During the operation, police seized a car and three motorcycles used in the commission of the crime, he added. DCP Dnyandeo revealed that this was not the first instance of Behera being targeted. He had previously been abducted in 2022, also in connection with financial disputes. Further inquiries are underway to uncover more details about Behera's business dealings and possible links to other similar cases.

Collector holds GP level joint public grievance under Bhubaneswar Block

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : The Gram Panchayat level joint public grievance hearing camp was held in the premises of Injana Gram Panchayat office under Bhubaneswar block of Khordha district today. The grievance was held under the direct supervision of Khordha Collector Shri Chanchal Rana in the presence of PRI members and other senior officials.

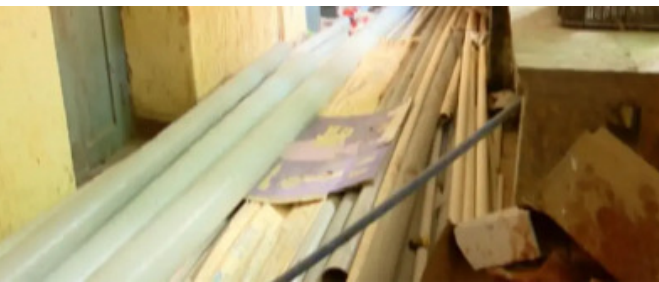
Hearing of public grievances was started at 7AM and all arrangements were made for the public keeping an eye on current heat conditions in the state. The collector along with other officers gave a patient hearing to the people and issued necessary instructions to officers concerned



for early resolution of their problems. A total of 53 grievances were received today. Of these, 33 complaints were individual ones while 17 were community complaints. Three of these grievances were addressed promptly on the spot. Among others, ADM, Bhubaneswar Shri Rudra Narayan Mohanty, Sub-Collector Dr. Manoranjan Sahu,

Zilla Parishad Chief Development Officer Shri Jyoti Sankar Sahu, BDO Shri Debi Prasad Mohanty, Tahsildar Shri Mrutyunjay Tripathy, District Education Officer Sonamika Ray, Deputy Collector Artatran Mallick, Assistant Collector Bhubaneswari Kanhar, Additional DCPs among others were present on the occasion.

Illegal encroachment of government quarters in Bhubaneswar sparks concern



have also been encroached upon and turned into a kitchen. "The government has provided a vending zone, but it does not have a water and drainage facility. As the quarters is lying vacant, we are using it as a kitchen," said the owner of the hotel.

Similarly, quarter number VA 25/3, for instance, has been turned into a private warehouse for construction materials like

people are living here and working in the unit," said a worker. Similarly, quarter number VA 23/4, originally allocated to the Hind Mazdoor Sangh office, is now fully occupied by a woman who uses the space to sell leaf plates and other items. She has allegedly encroached on the entire premises.

As per reports, out of 765 government quarters in the area, 250 lie vacant, and more than a hundred are under illegal occupation. Local sources allege that influential individuals have seized these high-profile government accommodations and are running their own businesses or staying there rent-free. Despite these alarming developments, no official response has been received from the concerned authorities so far.

Timeline For Plus 3 Admission in Odisha Extended

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): In view of delay in announcement of the results of CHSE Plus II Examination-2025, the Odisha government on Tuesday extended the timeline for admission into Plus III courses in degree colleges. According to a notification issued by the Higher Education department, the timeline for e-admission into UG (+3) courses in Degree Higher Education Institutions including self-financing colleges and Sanskrit colleges for the academic session 2025-26 has been extended up to June 1. The last date for submitting the online form was May 21, 2025. Following the extension of timeline, the last date for submission of the online Common Application Form (CAF) through the website www.samsodisha.gov.in has been extended till 11.45 pm of June 1, 2025. For more information, the applicants can visit the official website i.e www.samsodisha.gov.in. Official sources said that the decision came after School & Mass Education Minister Nityananda Gond held discussion with Higher Education Minister Suryabanshi Suraj seeking extension of timeline for admission into +3 courses in colleges.



"Jana Ajana Traffic" book on traffic awareness unveiled in Cuttack

Cuttack, (DMC): A new book aimed at enhancing public awareness on traffic rules and road safety, titled "Jana Ajana Traffic," was officially launched today in Cuttack. The book, authored by former police officer Durgapati Narendra Nath Das, has been published by Nutra

Creations. State Transport Commissioner and senior IPS officer Amitabh Thakur formally unveiled the book at a special event organized in the city. The launch ceremony witnessed the presence of several dignitaries, including author Narendra Nath Das, Nutra Creations director and



publisher Saroj Satpathy, OSD Shrikant Kar, advocates Bibhudatta Das and Debasmita Mishra, and social worker Minakshi Mishra. The publication aims to promote better understanding of traffic regulations among the public and encourage responsible behavior on the roads.

Tiranga Rally held in Samantarapur



Jajpur, (DMC): Tricolour (Tiranga) rally was held in Samantarapur under Bari Constituency in a show of solidarity with the Indian Armed Forces following the recent counter-terror operation against Pakistan. The rally was organised by Debabrata Dash, the State BJP Yuva Morcha Coordinator with the participation of Prafulla Kumar Giri who was the Chief guest along presence of Soubhagya Mishra, Anil Rout, Mithun Kumar Kundu, Chittaranjan Das, Prashant Kumar Maharana, Ashu Barik, Debasisia, Chitta Ranjan Gantayat and more than hundred above members of Rasthriya Surakhya Nagarika Samaj were participated. This Rally was held to honour the bravery and success of the Indian Army and paramilitary forces in Operation Sindoor, Debabrata said on this occasion.

Woman Killed, Husband Critical as Truck Hits Bike in Nuapada

Nuapada/Khariar Road, (DMC): A 45 years woman was killed while her husband sustained critical injuries after a speeding truck violated traffic signals and collided with the bike they were riding at Ekta Chhak in Nuapada on Tuesday. The deceased has been identified as Rukmani Sahu (45), and her injured husband Chhabilal Sahu (50) of village Rengabahal of Komna block in Nuapada District. The couple were travelling towards Khariar Road when the accident occurred. Eyewitnesses reported that the truck hit the bike from behind, causing Rukmini to be thrown off. Tragically, the truck ran over her head, leading to her instant death. Chhabilal was severely injured and was rushed to the district headquarters hospital for urgent medical care. Nuapada police led by IIC Gangadhar Meher, arrived at the scene promptly, rescued Chhabilal and sent Rukmani's body for post-mortem. Both the truck and the motorcycle have been seized by the Nuapada police.

Summer Camp by ISKCON



Paralakhemundi, (DMC): At Dhepa Odia Street for the first time summer camp organized. On 4-day camp last day program held at Town Hall. Sri Pada Pratap Rudra Das, Prabhu of ISKCON from Brundaban, Chairman of Brahmapur ISKCON Sri Pada Pancharatna Das Prabhu & as chief guest Nirmala Sethi Chairperson of Paralakhemundi Municipal Council graced on dias. More than 60 students in between 5-15 years chanted Gita hymns & performed spiritual dance. More than 300 participants attended. Sri Pada Kala Nidhi Hari Das facilitated the program & coordinated by Manidhar Prabhu, Krupa Parbara Prabhu, Adi Kesaba Prabhu, Giridhari Prabhu, Manas Das Prabhu, Ramakrushna Mohan Das Prabhu & Manoranjan Prabhu.

Death Anniversery of Kunja behari Patra

Jagatsinghpur, (DMC): First death anniversary of eminent educationist and social activist Kunja behari Patra organised at his native village Ganailo under Tirtol Constituency. Many disciples, political leaders, villagers and eminent personalities given floral tribute to the noble soul. Ex Minister Pratap Jena, Tirtol MLA Dr. Ramakanta Bhoi, Dist. BJD president & ex-MLA Prasant Muduli, Ex- MP Dr. Rajashree Mallick were present there. Ex- Blick Chairman cum Builder Rajat Patra, Ashok Kumar Patra and all family members, friends, relatives present there.

Industry Minister Sampad Swain paid tributes to late Madan Mohan Swain in memorial meet



Paradip, (DMC): On the departure of Madan Mohan Swain, an renowned social worker, educationist and politician, a memorial meeting was held in his village Nabadia village of Kujang on Sunday. On this occasion, Paradip MLA and State Minister for Industries, Skill Development and Technical Education Sampad Chandra Swain attended the memorial meeting and paid

tributes to him. He expressed his condolences to the family members of the late Swain and said that late Swain was not only a kind-hearted person, but also helped brighten the future of many students of the local area by emphasizing education. The minister mentioned that my personal relationship and memory with him will always be memorable and prayed to Lord Jagannath for the eternal

Summer Sports Camp concludes at IFFCO DAV School

Paradip, (DMC): The 6-day summer sports camp organized by the sports department at IFFCO DAV School in Paradip concluded on Sunday. The camps were organized for Kho-Kho, Netball, Athletics and Football. Sunakar Rout (Kho-Kho), Biswajay Vivekananda Behera (Netball), Vikas Kumar Swain (Athletics) and Pradeep Kumar Mohanty (Football) participated in the training camp as coaches. The school principal Sambit Sukumar Chinara, in his speech, taught the children about the benefits of sports and the need for sports in daily life. Jayant



Kumar Jena, a member of the school management committee, participated as the guest at the inauguration ceremony. The meeting was presided over by Dinesh Pradhan, a student of class 12, and Nihar Ranjan Das, the secretary of the school's student cabinet sports

department, informed everyone about the training camp through his speech. The summer camp was organized under the supervision of the school's sports teacher, Saura Mohan Samal. Finally, Kumar Kritibas Mohan, a student of class 10, proposed the vote of thanks.

District level natural disaster mitigation preparedness meeting held



Puri, (DMC): A preparatory meeting for natural disaster management and mitigation was held by the Puri district administration at Sadbhavana Sabhagriha this afternoon. The meeting was attended by Pipili MLA Ashrit Patnaik, Zilla Parishad Chairperson Swapnarani Swain, Zilla Parishad Vice-Chairman Swatantra Nayak and others. Presiding over the meeting, District Collector Siddharth Shankar Swain advised all departments to be prepared to deal with natural calamities.

In particular, the departments of health, drinking water, livestock, agriculture, etc. advised to take appropriate measures to make the public alert and aware. The district collector directed the water resources department to take concrete steps by forming a joint committee to strengthen the embankments, repair the

embankments, store various materials, clean the teams on behalf of the drainage division and repair the weak bridges. ADM administration Sarat Chandra Behera conducted the meeting as per the schedule of work. As per the decision, the control room for the emergency department will be functional in the district round the clock and the BDO, tahsildar will submit a daily situation or situation report.

The collector advised various departments to monitor and repair all the equipment meant to deal with cyclone floods and report to the district. There are 26 SRC boats in the district. Osdama has 170 cyclone shelters and the Red Cross has nine cyclone shelters. There are also 371 alternative shelters. Mr Swain suggested proper adherence to the guidelines laid down by the government and the SRC. Instructions were given to repair

and make cyclone and flood shelters suitable, store various materials to deal with floods and cyclones, manage control rooms, provide necessary information through contact with public representatives and panchayat representatives, volunteers, food, medicines, cattle feed etc.

The meeting was attended by ADM Revenue Dr Sarat Chandra Mohapatra, ADM Protocol Nilamadhab Bhoi, Chief Development Officer and Executive Officer of Zilla Parishad Priyaranjan Prusty, Sub Collector Raj Kishore Jena, Additional SP Sushil Mishra, representatives of MP MLAs and other district level officials. In the end, deputy collector manisha sarangi of the district emergency department thanked everyone. The meeting was attended by all block presidents, BDOs, tahsildars, executive officers of notified area councils and officials of various departments.

From Railway Gangman to IPS A Journey of Perseverance and Success..

Bargarh, (DMC): A remarkable story of determination and ambition unfolds in the life of Shri Meena, who transformed his dreams into reality. Born on February 7, 1988, in the small village of Avaner, located in the Gambha district of Rajasthan, he faced numerous challenges, particularly due to his family's financial constraints as part of a farming community. Despite these obstacles, Shri Meena excelled academically, securing first-class marks in his 10th and 12th standard exams. He aspired to become an engineer, but after completing his schooling, he moved to Jaipur to pursue higher education while simultaneously seeking employment. Starting his professional journey as a gangman with the East Coast Railway in Bhubaneswar, he meticulously balanced work and



studies. Through this journey, he initially set his sights on a banking career, becoming a bank clerk and later advancing to a bank PO position in Bengaluru. His pursuit of growth didn't stop there; after passing the SSC examination, he secured a

position in the Ministry of Defence in Pune. It was during this time that he discovered his passion for civil services and decided to prepare for the UPSC exams. Although he faced setbacks by not clearing the exam in 2013, 2014, and 2015, he remained undeterred. Drawing inspiration from the writings of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, he continued his preparation with renewed determination. Finally, in 2016, his hard work paid off as he successfully cleared the Civil Services Examination and became an IPS officer in the 2017 batch. Shri Meena's journey is a powerful reminder that resilience, hard work, and an unwavering commitment to one's goals can lead to success. He emphasises that with perseverance and dedication, anyone can achieve their aspirations in life.

Gurandi-Adava Road on Danger

Paralakhemundi, (DMC): At Gosani block of Gajapati district Gurandi to Adava road completely paralyzed for regular communication. Adava to Golagaon for regular road 10 lakhs sanctioned. But from Golagaon to Gurandi that road made rest left. So due to disruption commuters feeling uneasy to go through that road. So area people retorted if that road not completed then they will agitate. Rather that road gone through Gurandi, Tatipeti, Ghorni panchayats with Krushnasagar project. To Gurandi for college & medical daily students & people are going. So Gurandi villagers demanded administration for regular road.



From Page- 1

More 'power' to...

official notification read. Notice for Cabinet Meetings shall ordinarily be circulated, at least five days before the date fixed for the Cabinet meeting. However, in cases of urgency, such a timeline may be relaxed by the Chief Minister. In order to ensure adherence to the provision contained in Instruction No. 17 (i) of Part III, henceforth, the Parliamentary Affairs Department shall not accept any Cabinet Memorandum beyond 5.00 PM of three days prior to the Cabinet Meeting. (Here three days refers to three working days e.g. if the Cabinet meeting is scheduled on 7th of a month then memorandum should reach by 5.00 PM of the 4th of that month and in case the 4th of that month falls on a Government Holiday, it should reach by 5.00 PM of 3rd of that month). Considering urgency/exigency of the matter, all concerned are to take appropriate action for obtaining required approvals from the competent authorities to ensure that the proposals are submitted to the Parliamentary Affairs Department within the stipulated timeline as indicated above. As per Instruction 21, when it has been decided to bring a case before the Cabinet, the Department to which the case belongs shall, unless the Chief Minister otherwise directs, prepare a memorandum indicating with sufficient precision the salient facts of the case and the points for decision. Such memorandum and such other papers as are necessary to enable the case to be disposed of shall be circulated to the Chief Minister, Minister, Minister of State (MoS)-in-charge of a Department, and the Secretary to the Cabinet. After the agenda paper showing the cases to be discussed at a meeting of the Cabinet has been approved by the Chief Minister, copies thereof together with copies of such memoranda as have not been circulated under Instruction 21 shall be sent by the Secretary to the Cabinet to the Chief Minister and other Ministers or Minister of State, as the case may be, so as to reach them two clear days before the date of such meeting.

Matric Supplementary...

concluding at 11:45 am. - The schedule is as follows: - July 1: First Language - July 2: Social Science - July 4: Mathematics - July 7: Second Language - July 9: Science - July 10: Third Language The Odisha Secondary Education Council has also announced the schedule for the Open School Certificate Examination, which will run from June 30 to July 10.

India reports 257

chaired by the Director General of Health Services (DGHS), said sources. According to the information, cases in Singapore and Hong Kong are mostly mild and not associated with unusual severity or mortality.

Nor'wester Alert...

central and nearby southeast Bay. Additionally, an east-west trough is extending from Punjab to north Bangladesh, traversing south Uttar Pradesh, south Bihar, and north Gangetic West Bengal.

In light of these developments, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast thunderstorms with lightning and surface wind speeds reaching 40-50 kmph, gusting up to 60 kmph, across Odisha until May 26. The IMD has also issued an orange warning for several districts for the next five days, excluding Tuesday, and a yellow warning from May 19 to May 24.

Heavy rain lashes...

said. While a red alert has been sounded for the districts of Kasaragod, Kannur, Wayanad, and Kozhikode, an orange alert has been issued for Palakkad, Malappuram, and Thrissur. The remaining districts have received a yellow alert. KSDMA officials warned that extremely heavy rainfall could cause serious problems.

TPSODL Ensures Reliable Power to Key Defence Institution



Berhampur, (DMC): TP Southern Odisha Distribution Limited (TPSODL) has successfully completed the upgradation of a critical 33 KV power line to the Army Air Defence College in Gopalpur, Odisha — a key step towards enhancing power reliability for a strategic defence institution. The Army Air Defence College, located along the coastal belt of Odisha, plays a vital role in India's defence training framework. Strengthening its power infrastructure was crucial to ensure uninterrupted functioning of training and operational activities within the establishment. The project was completed in January and involved a comprehensive upgrade of a 7.0 circuit kilometre stretch of the 33 KV line. The scope included replacement of old conductors, erection of damaged poles, and installation of 120 new electric poles. Additionally, bird guards were installed along the route to minimise the risk of outages caused by bird interference. This infrastructure augmentation has resolved previous reliability issues and ensured a stable, continuous power supply to the Army Air Defence College. The upgraded line is now capable of meeting the power demands of the institution more efficiently, contributing to its operational readiness and performance. Mr. Amit Kumar Garg, CEO, TPSODL, said, "Empowering institutions of national importance through robust and reliable power infrastructure is at the core of our mission. The successful completion of this project reaffirms our commitment to delivering quality power supply to every corner of Southern Odisha, including key defence establishments." This project stands as a testament to TPSODL's focus on building resilient infrastructure and supporting national service institutions. It is part of the company's broader efforts to strengthen the power distribution network across its licensed area, improve consumer satisfaction, and ensure 24x7 reliable electricity.

Youth on Unknown Disease: GAM Request for Treatment

Paralakhemundi, (DMC): At Gumma block of Gajapati district of Kutam village one Jiuram Sabar (22) feeling blood clot in his left hand. So he is unable to move for his earning. Rather family returned without quality treatment from hospital. So after acknowledged his problem Gajapati Adivashi Mahasangha (GAM) members Abhijon Mandal, Masulon Roito, Abadiyo Gomango, Joni Sabar met with Collector Gajapati for his treatment. While interacted Dr. Partho Panda medical officer in charge of Gumma, said need to refer Bhubaneswar at Apollo hospital. So GAM members earnestly requested to take up his case seriously.

"Our Forces Acted Like Expert Surgeons": Rajnath



Lucknow, (HS) : Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday said the Indian armed forces operated with the precision of skilled surgeons during Operation Sindoor, targeting the roots of terrorism across the border with accuracy and discipline. Addressing an event on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of KN Memorial Hospital, Mr Singh said, "Our forces acted just like expert doctors or surgeons. A surgeon uses his instruments precisely where the disease lies, and the Indian forces have done the same, striking at the root of terrorism with unmatched precision."

Drawing a comparison between the work of soldiers and doctors, Mr Singh said both serve the nation in vital ways - one protecting health, the other safeguarding national security. "Both undergo rigorous training, operate under intense pressure, and must take swift, critical decisions during emergencies. This similarity was seen during Operation Sindoor, just as the commitment of doctors was witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic," he added. Referring to Pakistan's response, Mr Singh remarked, "As is its habit, Pakistan did not accept defeat easily and attempted retaliatory attacks on Indian soil. They targeted civilians and even places of worship - temples, gurdwaras, and churches. But our forces gave a fitting reply." He emphasised that during India's counter-strikes, utmost care was taken to ensure only terrorist hideouts were hit, and no harm came to civilian areas. "Our soldiers made sure that while punishing the perpetrators, innocent lives were not affected," he said. Mr Singh also acknowledged the people of his constituency, Lucknow, saying, "When I accepted the invitation for this event last month, I wasn't sure I could attend due to the developing situation. But with Operation Sindoor concluded successfully, I am here to express my gratitude and admiration, both for our armed forces and for the spirit of the people."

Pakistan, India agree to withdraw troops by end May: Security official

New Delhi, (HS) : Pakistan and India have agreed to withdraw troop reinforcements deployed during their recent conflict back to their peacetime positions by the end of May, a senior Pakistani security official told AFP on Tuesday.

More than 70 people were killed in the four-day conflict, which was sparked by an attack on tourists by terrorists in Kashmir last month that New Delhi accused Islamabad of backing. The military confrontation involving intense tit-for-tat drone, missile, aerial combat and artillery exchanges came to an abrupt end after US President Donald Trump announced a surprise ceasefire, which is still holding.

Ashoka University professor sent to 14-day judicial custody

CHANDIGARH, (HS) : Ashoka University associate professor Ali Khan Mahmudabad, arrested for his alleged remarks on Operation Sindoor, claimed that the Haryana Women's Commission had no jurisdiction over the matter and accused authorities of "a new form of censorship and harassment." He was sent to fourteen days' judicial custody by the district court in Sonapat on Monday, with the next hearing scheduled for May 27. Mahmudabad was arrested on May 18 after two First Information Reports (FIRs) were registered against him under stringent charges of "endangering India's sovereignty, unity and integrity." He was produced before the court by the Sonapat police following the end of a two-day police remand. While the police sought an extension of seven more days in remand, the court denied the request and instead sent the professor to judicial custody. Kapil Balyan, Mahmudabad's advocate, said that he was presented by the police this afternoon before the court. "The court has sent him to judicial custody till May 27."



"Troops will be withdrawn to pre-conflict positions by the end of May," the senior security official told AFP on condition of anonymity as he was not authorised to speak to the media. The official said both countries agreed a phased withdrawal of the additional

"Hindus Targeted, Local Cops Inactive & Absent": Murshidabad Violence

Kolkata, (HS) : A leader of Bengal's ruling Trinamool Congress was involved in the violence in Murshidabad that broke out last month, says the report by a probe committee constituted by the Calcutta High Court. The attacks, which took place during the passage of the Waqf Amendment bill and sparked a huge political row, were directed at Hindus and when the beleaguered people called for help, the police failed to respond, the report said. The report also highlighted indiscriminate arson and loot and relentless destruction of shops and malls. "The attacks were directed by the local councillor Mehboob Alam... the local police was completely inactive and absent," read the report, a copy of which was accessed.

The main attack occurred on Friday, April 11, after 2.30 pm, when "Local councillor Mehboob Alam came with miscreants". Residents of Samserganj, Hizaltala, Shiulitala, Digri came masking their face, the report said. "Amirul Islam came, saw which houses were not attacked, and then the attackers set them ablaze... The villagers of Betbona telephoned, but the West Bengal Police did not respond... The MLA was also



present. He saw the vandalism and went away," the report said. The attackers had cut off water connection so the fire could not be extinguished. 113 houses were the worst-affected in Betbona village, the report also said. The homes are destroyed and "would not be habitable without thorough reconstruction... the women of the village are afraid and have taken shelter with their relatives," the report said. On April 12, a man and his son from a Hindu family were killed by their Muslim neighbours, the report said. The violence that followed wiped out shops and markets in the area. Grocery shops,

hardware shops, electrical and textile stores were destroyed. So were the temples - all this happened within a 300-metre radius of the local police station. Twenty-nine shops were affected in Ghoshpara, Murshidabad. A shopping mall-style market was looted and closed, the report said.

The investigation team comprised members from the National Human Rights Commission, the state legal Services authority and the Judicial services. The report was submitted before a division bench of the high court today. The panel had visited the villages and spoke to the victims of violence.

Indian Army denies deployment of air defence guns at Golden Temple

Amritsar, (HS) : The Indian Army on Monday dismissed media reports claiming the deployment of air defence (AD) guns at the Golden Temple, saying that no AD guns or related resources were deployed within the premises of Sri Darbar Sahib in Amritsar. Earlier, in an interview with the news agency ANI, Lieutenant General D'Cunha credited the head granthi, the chief priest of the holiest Sikh shrine worldwide, for enabling the army to deploy air defence guns within the Golden Temple premises.

He claimed that, for the first time in history, the Golden Temple's lights were switched off to enhance the detection and engagement of drones coming from Pakistan.



"It was very nice that the head granthi of the Golden Temple allowed us to deploy our guns. It is possibly for the first time in many years that they switched off the Golden Temple lights so that we could see the drone coming," Lt General D'Cunha said in the interview. "Fortunately, we visualised what they (Pakistan) were capable of doing. Realising that they would target it

Delhi HC Asks Accused in Security Breach Case

New Delhi, (HS) : The Delhi High Court on Tuesday asked those arrested in the 2023 Parliament security breach case the reason for choosing a specific date and place for protests when they were aware of earmarked spots for protests in the capital. A bench of Justices Subramonium Prasad and Harish Vaidyanathan Shankar posed the query while hearing bail pleas of accused Neelam Azad and Mahesh Kumawat, who were arrested in the case. In a major security breach on the anniversary of the 2001 Parliament terror attack, accused Sagar Sharma and Manoranjan D allegedly jumped into the Lok Sabha chamber from the public gallery during Zero Hour, released yellow gas from canisters and sloganeered before they were overpowered by some MPs. Around the same time, two other accused -- Amol Shinde and Azad -- allegedly sprayed coloured gas from canisters while shouting "tanashahi nahi chalegi (dictatorship won't work)" outside the Parliament premises. The court on Tuesday reserved its order on the pleas, but asked the accused, "Why did you choose that date (December 13, which is also the date of the 2001 Parliament attack) for your protest?"

PM to visit Rajasthan on 22nd May

New Delhi, (HS) : Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will visit Rajasthan on 22nd May. He will travel to Bikaner and at around 11 AM, he will undertake darshan at Karni Mata temple in Deshnoke.

Further at around 11:30 AM, Prime Minister will inaugurate the redeveloped Deshnoke Station under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme and flag-off Bikaner-Mumbai express train. Thereafter, he will lay the foundation stone, inaugurate and dedicate to the nation multiple development projects worth over Rs 26,000 crore and also address a public function in Palana. In line with his commitment to constantly improve and enhance the rail infrastructure in the country, Prime Minister will inaugurate 103 redeveloped Amrit Stations in 86 districts across 18 States and Union Territories of India developed at a cost of over Rs 1,100 crore. Over 1,300 stations are being redeveloped with modern facilities, designed to reflect regional architecture and enhance passenger amenities under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme. Deshnoke railway station, serving pilgrims and



tourists visiting the Karni Mata Temple among others, is inspired with temple architecture and arch and column theme. Begumpet railway station in Telangana is inspired by the architecture of the Kakatiya empire. Thawe station in Bihar incorporates various murals and art works representing Maa Thawewali, one of the 52 Shakti Peethas and depicting Madhubani paintings. Dakor station in Gujarat is inspired by Ranchhodrai Ji Maharaj. The redeveloped Amrit stations across India integrate modern infrastructure with cultural heritage, passenger-centric amenities including those for Divyangjan and sustainable

practices to enhance the travel experience. Indian Railways is marching towards 100% electrification of its network, making railway operations more efficient and environment friendly. In line with this, Prime Minister will lay the foundation stone of Churu-Sadulpur rail line (58 km) and dedicate to the Nation Suratgarh-Phalodi (336 km); Phulera-Degana (109 km); Udaipur-Himmatnagar (210 km); Phalodi-Jaisalmer (157 km) and Samdari-Barmer (129 km) rail line electrification.

In a major boost to road infrastructure in the state, Prime Minister will lay the foundation stone for construction of 3 Vehicle Underpasses, widening and strengthening of National highways. He will also dedicate 7 roadways projects in Rajasthan. The roadways projects, worth over Rs 4850 crore, will facilitate smoother movement of goods and people. The highways extend up to the Indo-Pak border, enhancing accessibility for security forces and strengthening India's defense infrastructure. Furthering the vision of electricity for all and green and clean energy, Prime Minister will lay the foundation stone of power projects

including Solar projects at Bikaner and Nawa in Didwana Kuchaman, and Transmission Systems for Evacuation of Power Part B PowerGrid Sirohi Transmission Ltd and Part E PowerGrid Mewar Transmission Ltd. He will also inaugurate power projects including Solar project at Bikaner, Transmission system for Evacuation of PowerGrid Neemuch and from Bikaner Complex, Augmentation of transformation capacity at Fatehgarh-II Power Station which will provide clean energy and reduce carbon emission.

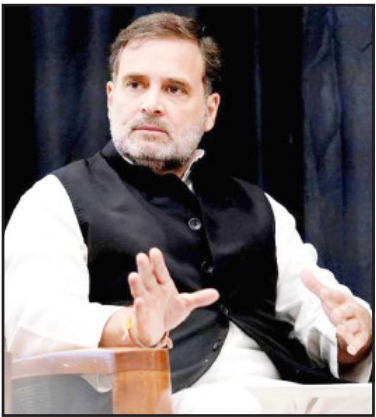
Prime Minister will also lay the foundation stone, inaugurate and dedicate 25 important state government projects across Rajasthan to enhance infrastructure, connectivity, power supply, health services, and water availability in the state. These include laying of foundation stone and dedication to the nation of projects for upgrading and maintaining 12 State Highways covering a total length of over 750 km worth over Rs 3,240 crore; further expansion under the program includes an additional 900 km of new highways.

Why Rahul's Criticism of EAM Jaishankar May be off Target

Sabyasachi K.

New Delhi, (HS) : Rahul Gandhi's recent accusations against External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar have stirred political controversy and strategic concern. Gandhi has alleged that the Modi government warned Pakistan ahead of Operation Sindoor, a military strike on terrorist bases, an accusation that, if true, would imply a major national security breach. More controversially, he has asked how many Indian fighter jets were lost because of this alleged tip-off, a claim the government flatly denies.

But here's the problem: these claims are not just unsubstantiated-they've been officially rejected by both the Foreign Ministry and top military officials. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) issued a statement on May 17 clarifying that Jaishankar never said Pakistan was warned before the strike. Rather, communication happened only after the operation commenced, in accordance with post-strike diplomatic protocol. This protocol is standard to avoid misinterpretation by the adversary and to clarify that civilian or military



installations weren't targeted. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri reinforced this in a briefing to Parliament's Standing Committee. He said that Pakistan was informed only during the early phase of the operation-not before. Similarly, Lt General Rajiv Ghai, DGMO of the Indian Army, explained that the Army tried to initiate contact with Pakistan after the strike began, not before. Pakistan rejected the communication and signaled it would retaliate-a response that underscores there was no advance warning.

This means Gandhi's assertion that

Jaishankar compromised national security doesn't hold up under scrutiny. What appears to be a routine post-strike communication is being framed by the Congress as a pre-strike alert, twisting facts for political narrative. Gandhi has also doubled down on his demand to know how many fighter jets India lost in the operation, including whether Rafales were among them. Air Marshal AK Bharti, when asked, responded with caution, saying that while combat losses are a reality, disclosing specifics during an ongoing operation would only help the adversary. He confirmed all pilots returned safely and emphasized that the mission's objectives were met. So why is the Congress pushing this line? Government sources suggest that Gandhi is attempting to revive the discredited Rafale controversy. The Supreme Court has already dismissed allegations of corruption in the Rafale deal, but by raising questions about fighter jet losses, Gandhi may be trying to reignite public suspicion. Adding fuel to the fire, the Congress recently held a press conference suggesting that Pakistan had time to let terrorists

escape because of this supposed leak. They even cited former U.S. President Donald Trump's claim about trade threats to halt the conflict-another narrative the BJP says echoes Pakistan's line. This is where the politics turns dangerous. BJP leaders have accused Gandhi of mirroring Pakistan's propaganda, calling him a "new-age Mir Jafar." Even Pakistani media has taken note, with commentators suggesting that India's opposition is attacking its own government more harshly than they would expect of their own political rivals.

Critics argue that repeatedly questioning India's military strategy, aircraft performance, and diplomatic conduct not only demoralizes forces but also weakens the country's international posture. In a time of ongoing military operations, such public discourse risks strategic confusion and internal division. Rahul Gandhi's criticism, intended to score political points, might be undermining India's strategic messaging-and playing into the hands of its adversaries.

Delhi court acquits 11 accused in 2020 Northeast Delhi riots case

New Delhi, (HS) : Delhi's Karkardooma Court recently acquitted 11 accused in a case related to rioting, arson, etc. in Northeast Delhi in 2020. The court acquitted the accused persons after finding no credible evidence against them. It discarded the testimony of two police officials who identified the accused persons in a video. The court also noted that the accused persons were identified at a belated stage after their arrest and the filing of a charge sheet. An FIR was filed at the Gokul Puri Police Station. Additional Sessions Judge (ASJ) Pulastya Pramachala acquitted all accused persons after considering the evidence and testimonies of the Prosecution witnesses. "Given my foregoing discussions, observations, and findings, I find that the charges levelled against the accused persons in this case are not proved beyond a reasonable doubt and the accused are entitled to the benefit of doubt."

Hence, all accused Ankit Chaudhary alias Fauzi, Sumit alias Badshah, Pappu, Vijay, Ashish Kumar, Sourabh Kaushik, Bhupender, Shakti Singh, Sachin Kumar alias Rancho, Rahul, and Yogesh, are acquitted of the charges levelled against them," ASJ Pramachala held on May 14. The court noted that the accused persons were identified by the two police officials who claimed to know them prior to the incident. The court noted, "However, both these officials were posted in the same police station, despite that their statement regarding identifying the accused persons was recorded at a much belated time." Moreover, if these accused persons were already known to these two police officials, then there could not have been any need to identify them in any video or photographs," the court further noted. The court observed in the judgement, "It is worth noting here that by the time the Investigation Officer (IO) recorded the statement of these two police officials, all accused were already arrested and chargesheeted in this case."

Therefore, their identification of accused persons, at such a belated time, is not beyond controversy and doubt." The accused were chargesheeted by the police for offences punishable under Section 147, 148, 149, 380, 427, 436 IPC. On March 3, 2020, an FIR was registered at PS Gokalpuri according to receipt of a written complaint filed by one Mohammad Imran Sheikh.

Kuwait Hosts Five-Day Exhibition Celebrating 250 Years of 'Friendship' With India

Kuwait City, (H.S): Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Adarsh Swaika and Director General of Kuwait's National Center for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) Mohammad Al-Jassar inaugurated 5-day exhibition cum talk series, 'Rihla-e-Dosti: 250 Years of India-Kuwait Friendship' on Monday at National Library in Kuwait city.

The exhibition showcases rare artefacts, manuscripts, Indian currency, books, stamps, and photos of leaders from India and Kuwait."At the opening of Rihla-e-Dosti exhibition, Ambassador Adarsh Swaika and DG, NCCAL highlighted the centuries-old rich history of India-Kuwait relations. Fahad AbdulJaleel, President of Kuwait Heritage Society, was the main curator and contributor of the exhibition," Embassy of India, Kuwait posted on X on Tuesday.The exhibition was organised jointly with NCCAL with the support of Kuwait



Heritage Society, National Archives of India, External Publicity Division, Ministry of External Affairs, and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, India.A booklet showcasing select photos was released during the opening of the exhibition.

A panel discussion during the event featured prominent merchant families from Kuwait with deep historical ties to India - Ibrahim Abdullatif Al-Ibrahim, Suliman Abdulmohsen Al-Khames and Abdullatif Abdulrazza shared stories of their families' India connections from

the 19th and early 20th centuries. Addressing the exhibition, DG NCCAL, Mohammad Al-Jassar, said relations with India have been a unique example of deep-rooted understanding and cultural exchange.

He stressed the role of culture and arts in boosting relations among people. Appreciating the growing economic ties between the two countries, he highlighted that in 1775, Kuwait's ship arrived, for the first time, at India's ports, and Kuwaitis after that established a wide trade transport network between the

West and the East, turning Kuwait into a vital trade route.Many Kuwaiti families stayed near Indian ports and worked in exporting multiple vital commodities to the Arabian Gulf ports, like food and wood, he further stated. Meanwhile, Ambassador Adarsh Swaika affirmed that bilateral relations of the two nations are deep-seated and robust, lauding commercial ties that began in the late 18th century when Kuwait's ship carrying dates, houses, and pearls reached Indian ports.

The ambassador noted that the event, co-organised by the Indian Embassy to Kuwait and the Kuwait Heritage Society, marks the cemented relations and boosts awareness of the two countries' youth on their common rich history.The exhibition contains documents on trade at India's ports and Kuwait's books about pearls printed in Arabic or local dialects in India, along with other items.

78th World Health Assembly Opens In Geneva With Focus on 'One World For Health'

Geneva, (H.S): The 78th World Health Assembly (WHA) opened in Geneva, Switzerland, under the theme "One World for Health."Addressing the opening ceremony, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said every WHA is significant, but this year's gathering is particularly historic as member states are expected to consider and potentially adopt the pandemic agreement, Xinhua news agency reported.

Tedros also called on member states to approve the next round of assessed contribution increases to help ensure the WHO's long-term financial sustainability and independence.Lei Haichao, head of China's National Health Commission and leader of the Chinese delegation, delivered a statement during the general debate Monday, highlighting

China's active engagement in global health cooperation.He also said that Taiwan is an inalienable part of China and the WHA has long made clear decisions not to include in its agenda a so-called proposal on Taiwan's participation in the annual assembly as an observer.The remarks made by a small number of countries concerning Taiwan disrupted the agenda and went against the will of the international community, he noted, adding that China urges these countries to stop interfering in its internal affairs.

A major focus of this year's assembly is the deliberation of the much-anticipated pandemic agreement. The WHO announced on April 16 that, following more than three years of intensive negotiations, member states have reached a consensus on a draft of the agreement.Delegates will also

review the 2024 results report and deliberate on around 75 agenda items covering a wide range of topics, including the health and care workforce, antimicrobial resistance, health emergencies, polio and climate change, among other issues.Sustainable financing is another key issue. The Assembly is expected to discuss the proposed program budget for 2026-2027, which may be reduced from \$5.3 billion to \$4.267 billion dollars, alongside efforts to refocus priorities, strengthen core functions, and enhance organisational efficiency.

The World Health Assembly is the WHO's highest decision-making body and is typically held every May in Geneva. Its main responsibilities include setting organisational policies and reviewing and approving the program budget. This year's Assembly is scheduled to conclude on May 27.

India Sends Humanitarian Aid To Afghan Refugees As Pak Continues Mass Deportations

Kabul, (H.S): As Pakistan intensifies its mass deportation of Afghan refugees, India has stepped in with humanitarian aid for thousands of affected families, reinforcing its long-standing commitment to supporting the Afghan people in times of crisis.The Taliban's Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation announced that the Government of India has delivered essential food aid to around 5,000 Afghan families who were recently expelled from Pakistan.

The aid package, consisting of 11 different food items, was distributed through the Kabul office of the Directorate of Refugees to families deemed most in need. India's assistance was formally acknowledged in a public message from Maulvi Abdul Kabir, the Taliban-appointed Minister for Refugees and Repatriation. The message, delivered by Zakirullah Zakir, head of the Prime Minister's Office's Coordination Department, was read during an official aid distribution ceremony in Kabul. Abdul Kabir expressed gratitude to



both the Government and people of India for their continued support and called on other countries and humanitarian organisations to step up their aid for displaced Afghans. "India's help has come at a time when our people are facing extreme hardship," he said."

We welcome all returnees and assure them of their safety and dignity under the general amnesty declared in the country," he added. Kalim al-Rahman Fani, Deputy Minister of Finance and Administration, also acknowledged that returnees face numerous challenges, despite the Islamic Emirate's efforts to provide housing and services. He noted that 58 new townships are being planned across

31 provinces to accommodate the influx. Since April, Pakistan has expelled hundreds of thousands of Afghan migrants, citing national security concerns and ties between the Taliban and India, allegations that remain unproven and have not been addressed by the Taliban.

Amid these regional tensions, India's quiet but consistent humanitarian outreach stands in contrast to Islamabad's crackdown, drawing attention to New Delhi's people-centric approach to diplomacy in the region. India has long maintained that its assistance to Afghanistan is driven by humanitarian concerns and a desire to ensure regional stability.

Kathmandu, (H.S): Nepal's political party leaders, lawmakers, and experts have urged that the Himalayan nation must push for a bigger space in its relationship with India, especially following the April 22 Pahlagam terror attack." We are so tempted that we should create a space in New Delhi out of the partnership that we have had till now, and particularly after the Pahlagam incident," said former minister and Nepali Congress leader, Minendra Rijal.

Speaking at an event in Kathmandu on Monday organised by the Institute for Public Policy and Partnership, former minister said since India's ties with some of their neighbours are facing some difficulties, Nepal has to seize the opportunity.He called for a sincere and open dialogue with India on sensitive issues." No one can substitute Nepal-India relations. Since India is a big country, we definitely have complaints about it. Our relationship goes beyond the Roti-Beti cliché (sociocultural ties), and these relations don't fit in any single framework. But when



engaging with India, most of the time, our leaders only cared about their politics and how to secure their election tickets," Rijal further said, urging for dialogue with India.Additionally, the former foreign minister of Nepal, NP Saud, addressing the event, said that in diplomacy, achieving completely balanced relationships is not possible despite what some people suggest." We have to maintain our relations by keeping national interest at the core. We should be open while dealing with India. Non-alignment has become increasingly irrelevant, and multilateralism is becoming important to us. In this context, we need to fine-tune our relations

with India due to the emerging global and regional context," said Saud. Meanwhile, Vijaya Jolly, former in-charge of the BJP's foreign cell, sought increased support from Nepal in India's fight against terrorism, adding that India does not mind if Nepal conducts its independent foreign policy with any country.He highlighted the long-standing neighbourly relations between both nations and stated that there is no space for terrorism in South Asia."Saarc is dead, and terror and trade cannot go together. After 2025, we have to give new dimensions to our bilateral ties," said Jolly, condemning the terror attack." It was India which responded first when an

earthquake struck Nepal in 2015. Prime Minister Modi visited Nepal for a record five times since 2014, but at the same time, nine Nepali prime ministers have gone on official visits to India. Over 7.5 million Nepali nationals are living and working in India, which makes our relations special and unique. The security forces of both countries are guarding their respective borders," he further added.

India and Nepal share a close and long-standing relationship, characterised by extensive cooperation in various areas, including defence, trade, development, and cultural exchange, according to the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). The MEA also mentioned that Nepal is a priority partner under India's "Neighbourhood First" policy. The frequent high-level visits and exchanges between the two nations have added momentum to the bilateral partnerships and helped the leadership to review at regular intervals the entire gamut of the relationship, the MEA mentioned.

India Gives Proof of TRF Terror To UNSC Sanctions Panel Monitoring Team: Sources

United Nations, (H.S): A delegation from India has met with the monitoring team of the United Nations (UN) Security Council's panel that sanctions terrorists and provided it with evidence of The Resistance Front (TRF) carrying out the massacre in Pahलगam, according to sources. Pressing India's case for imposing sanctions on the front organisation of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT),

the delegation from India shared documentary evidence with the monitors, the sources said on Monday.The Council's panel is known as the 1267 Committee after the resolution calling for action against the Islamic State or Da'esh and Al-Qaida, and groups and people associated with them. Its monitoring team of experts reports on terrorism and terrorists, and makes recommendations for additions to the terrorist list and for imposing sanctions.The sanctions include



freezing their assets and imposing travel bans on those associated with the groups. The 1267 Committee listed the LeT as an international terrorist organisation in 2005 and sanctioned three groups associated with it, including Pasba-e-Kashmir and Jamaat-ud-Dawa. The LeT operates under several names in attempts to evade sanctions, and the list includes 27 names under which it operates.It has sanctioned about a dozen individuals associated with LeT, including its leader, Hafeez Mohammed Saeed.A

source said that India had already reported the TRF's terrorist activities to the UN and the delegation in the meeting with the monitoring team "reinforced that with documentary evidence." India's UN mission did not respond to requests for information about the delegation's push for declaring the TRF an international terrorist organisation. The media relations staff of the Council's current President, Greece, did not respond either on the monitoring team's meeting. As Council

President, Greece heads the 1267 Committee as it does not have a chair because Pakistan wants to head it, and some other members oppose it.They had earlier listed an informal meeting of the 1267 Committee on the day's programme. The delegation from India, which included intelligence officials, met last week with the top UN counter-terrorism officials for a wide-ranging discussion on cooperation in fighting terrorism in the aftermath of the Pahलगam terror attack.

Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov of the Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and Assistant Secretary-General Natalia Gherman of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) discussed with the Indian team cooperation, "particularly in support of implementing key Security Council counter-terrorism resolutions and the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy," the UNOCT said.

Singapore, (H.S): Singapore reported 151 new human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) cases in 2024, with 78 of them diagnosed at a late stage of infection, according to the latest data released by the Communicable Diseases Agency (CDA).

About 62 per cent of the newly reported cases were detected during medical care, with the majority already in the late stage of HIV infection.The fact that more than half of the new cases were diagnosed late is a cause for concern, Wong Chen Seong, head of the national programs for HIV, hepatitis C, and sexually transmitted infections under the CDA, told local media.He said that although both early- and late-stage patients can typically suppress the HIV viral load to undetectable levels after three to six months of treatment, those diagnosed at a late stage often already suffer from serious complications due to weakened



immune systems.Treatment for late-stage patients involves not only suppressing the virus to prevent further immune damage, but also managing these concurrent illnesses, Xinhua news agency reported.He added that once the immune system has been compromised, it can take longer to recover, with the duration varying depending on the patient's overall health, age, and baseline immune status. During this recovery period, individuals are also more vulnerable to other infections.As of end-2024, a total of 7,137 Singapore residents were known to be living with HIV.The annual number of new HIV cases in Singapore has been gradually declining over the years, from 300 to 500 cases annually between 2009 and 2019, to around 200 to 250 cases between 2020 and

2023. According to the World Health Organisation, HIV is a virus that attacks the body's immune system. Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) occurs at the most advanced stage of infection.HIV targets the body's white blood cells, weakening the immune system. This makes it easier to get sick with diseases like tuberculosis, infections, and some cancers.

HIV is spread from the body fluids of an infected person, including blood, breast milk, semen and vaginal fluids. It is not spread by kisses, hugs, or sharing food. It can also spread from a mother to her baby.HIV can be prevented and treated with antiretroviral therapy (ART). Untreated HIV can progress to AIDS, often after many years.WHO now defines Advanced HIV Disease (AHD) as a CD4 cell count less than 200 cells/mm3 or WHO stage 3 or 4 in adults and adolescents.

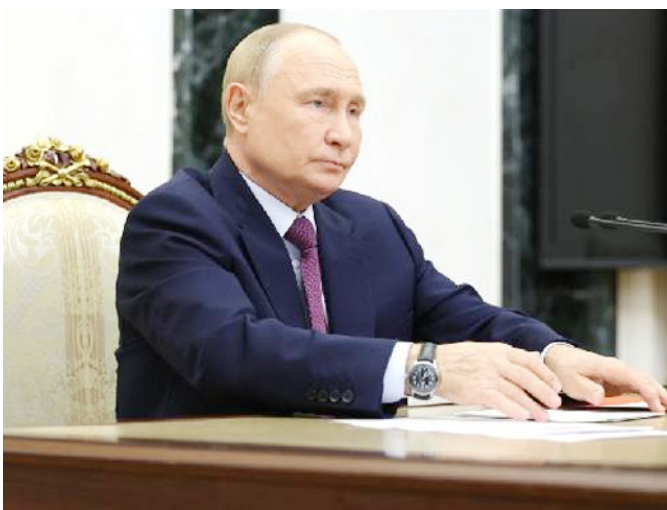
Very Productive Exchange ; Putin on Talks With Trump

Moscow, (H.S): Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday described his two-hour-long phone conversation with former US President Donald Trump as "substantive" and "productive," raising fresh hopes for a potential breakthrough in the prolonged Russia-Ukraine conflict.

The call, which focused on reviving stalled peace negotiations, marks a significant diplomatic development in the three-year-long war."This conversation has effectively taken place and lasted more than two hours. I would like to emphasise that it was both substantive and quite candid. Overall, I believe it

was a very productive exchange," Putin told the media following the conversation.The talks come amid renewed efforts by the United States to facilitate direct negotiations between Moscow and Kyiv.

While discussions between the Russian and Ukrainian sides were initially expected to resume through a high-level meeting between Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in Turkey last week, the Russian leader did not attend. Trump, who was on a tour of West Asia at the time, had signalled he might visit the summit but did not make the trip either.Putin expressed gratitude to Trump for the United



States' support in helping restart direct talks between Russia and Ukraine."The President of the United States shared his position on the

cessation of hostilities and the prospects for a ceasefire. For my part, I noted that Russia also supports a peaceful settlement of the Ukraine crisis. What we need now is to identify the most effective ways towards achieving peace," he said.

The Russian President added that both leaders had agreed Russia would propose and engage with Ukraine on drafting a memorandum for a future peace agreement."This would include outlining a range of provisions, such as the principles for settlement, the timeframe for a possible peace deal, and other matters, including a potential temporary ceasefire, should the

necessary agreements be reached." Putin noted.He also noted that contact had resumed among participants of the Istanbul talks, providing some optimism that "we are on the right track overall."

Putin further reiterated Russia's stance - "eliminating the root causes of this crisis is what matters most to us."Describing the call as "highly constructive," Putin emphasised the importance of both sides demonstrating a firm commitment to peace and compromise."The key issue, of course, is now for the Russian side and the Ukrainian side to show their firm commitment to peace and to forge a compromise that would be acceptable to all parties,"

he said.Trump, in a lengthy post on his social media platform Truth Social, confirmed the details of the call, stating that ceasefire negotiations between Russia and Ukraine would begin immediately, and that the Vatican had offered to host the dialogue."

Just completed my two-hour call with President Vladimir Putin of Russia. I believe it went very well. Russia and Ukraine will immediately start negotiations toward a Ceasefire and, more importantly, an END to the War," Trump wrote.He also conveyed the results of the call to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and various European leaders in separate communications.

RBI Proposes 10 Per Cent Cap on RE Investments In AIFs

Mumbai, (H.S): The Reserve Bank of India proposes to cap a single regulated entity's (RE) contribution to any Alternative Investment Funds (AIF) at 10 per cent of its corpus while collectively, a ceiling of 15 per cent will apply for investment by all REs in an AIF scheme, in the revised draft directions issued on Monday.

Regulated entities like banks, pension funds, and insurance companies often invest in AIFs for diversification. The RBI revised draft directions, aimed at tightening oversight and preventing potential misuse of the investment route, also stipulate that investments by an RE of up to five per cent of the corpus of an AIF scheme will be allowed without any restriction. However, if the investment by any RE exceeds five per cent of the corpus of the scheme, and if the scheme has a downstream debt investment in a debtor



company of the RE (excluding equity shares, compulsorily convertible preference shares, and compulsorily convertible debentures), then the RE will be required to make 100 per cent provisions to the extent of its proportionate exposure.

The proposals further state that the RBI may exempt certain AIFs, in consultation with the government, that have been set up for strategic purposes. The revised directions issued by the RBI will be applicable prospectively. Existing investments or commitments will follow the extant norms, according

to the official statement. Explaining the rationale for the new directions, the RBI said: "On a review, it is observed that the regulatory measures undertaken by the Reserve Bank earlier have brought financial discipline among the REs regarding their investment in AIFs."

Besides, "SEBI has also issued guidelines requiring inter alia specific due diligence with respect to investors and investments of the AIFs, to prevent facilitation of circumvention of regulatory frameworks", the RBI statement added. The comments on the draft directions have been invited from the public/stakeholders till June 8, 2025. Comments may be submitted through the link under the 'Connect 2 Regulate' Section available on the RBI's website or may alternatively be forwarded to the Chief General Manager, Credit Risk Group of the RBI.

India's Digital Economy Projected To Reach \$1 Trillion By 2025 End: DIPA

New Delhi, (H.S): With urban wireless tele-density already at 131.45 per cent and telecommunications contributing over 6.5 per cent to GDP, India has reached a pivotal moment where connectivity transcends its traditional boundaries, the Digital Infrastructure Providers Association (DIPA) said on Tuesday. The digital economy is projected to reach \$1 trillion by end-2025, yet this figure only hints at the profound transformation underway as connected living redefines sectors from healthcare to agriculture, education to transportation."

We're witnessing the birth of ambient intelligence, where connectivity becomes the invisible force empowering every aspect of daily life," said Manoj Kumar Singh, Director General, DIPA. India's tele communications infrastructure is no longer just about communication — it's becoming the neural network of society itself. "The future belongs to connected living environments where automated systems, mesh



networks, and intelligent applications work in symphony to enhance human experience. This isn't incremental improvement; it's a fundamental reimagining of how technology serves humanity," Singh explained. The magic happens in the invisible mesh networks blanketing the nation.

India's telecom operators have deployed an extraordinary 4.78 lakh 5G Base Transceiver Stations by March 2025, contributing to a total of 30 lakh BTSs across all technologies. But the true innovation lies not in the infrastructure itself but in what it enables — a continuous, self-healing web of communication that powers millions of intelligent

devices working in concert. In healthcare, connected living has revolutionised patient monitoring through IoT medical devices that transmit vital data to AI systems capable of detecting anomalies hours or days before they become clinically apparent.

Rural areas previously underserved by medical professionals now access specialised care through high-definition telemedicine enabled by robust connectivity. According to Singh, agricultural productivity has surged through precision farming networks where thousands of sensors monitor soil conditions, weather patterns, and crop health — automatically adjusting irrigation

and nutrient delivery while predicting optimal harvest times. Farmers report yield increases averaging 28 per cent while reducing water consumption by 31 per cent. "Education has been transformed through immersive connected classrooms that erase geographical limitations.

Students in remote regions now engage with the nation's leading instructors through near-holographic experiences, manipulating virtual objects and conducting collaborative experiments across vast distances," said Singh. The Smart City Mission, having completed 7,549 projects at a cost of Rs 1,51,285 crore, showcases how telecommunications enables environments to respond to human needs without conscious interaction. "Connected living represents a paradigm shift from reactive to predictive systems," Singh said. The vision extends to commercial 6G deployment by 2030, which promises to further dissolve barriers between physical and digital realms.

Govt Sees Coal Gasification As Big Step For Cleaner Fuels



New Delhi, (H.S): The Ministry of Coal has stepped up efforts to promote coal gasification as part of the government's policy to switch to cleaner fuels, greener technologies, and a long-term vision for sustainable and inclusive growth. "Coal gasification transforms solid coal into syngas - a mix of carbon monoxide, hydrogen, and carbon dioxide - unlocking cleaner fuels, chemicals like methanol and ammonia, and reducing emissions," the Coal Ministry said on Tuesday.

The Ministry sees coal gasification as "a step toward energy self-reliance and a cleaner industrial future" as it produces cleaner fuels, chemical feedstocks and lower emissions. Coal is one of the most abundant natural resources in the country. Coal gasification technology enables conversion of coal into syngas (synthetic gas), which can be used to produce downstream products like methanol, ammonium nitrate, synthetic natural gas (SNG) and fertilisers, etc. Coal gasification technology provides an alternative use of coal, promoting environmental

sustainability to align with the vision of developed India 2047, a senior official said. The government has approved an outlay of Rs 8,500 crore as financial incentive, for promotion of coal gasification projects for both government PSUs as well as private sector companies. Leading Maharatna public sector companies Coal India Limited and GAIL (India) Limited (GAIL) have signed a landmark joint venture agreement for setting up a Coal to Synthetic Natural Gas plant using surface coal gasification technology.

The plant to come up in the Raniganj area of Eastern Coalfields Limited in West Bengal is expected to produce 80,000 Nm3 per hour of SNG. The annual production is slated at 633.6 million Nm3 per hour, which will require 1.9 million tonnes (mts) of coal to be supplied by Coal India Ltd (CIL). The synergy and partnership of the two corporate giants is a big step towards achieving the goals of the National Coal Gasification Mission, which facilitates the utilisation of the chemical properties of coal. Earlier this

year, the Ministry of Coal announced that it has issued Letters of Award (LOAs) to applicants selected under Category II of the Rs 8,500 crore Coal Gasification Incentive Scheme aimed at reducing the country's carbon emissions and strengthening energy security. Jindal Steel and Power Limited's 2MMTPA coal gasification project at Angul in Odisha, has been awarded Rs 569.05 crore in financial incentives.

The Rs 3,793 crore project will convert coal into Direct Reduced Iron (DRI) through coal gasification while also setting up a carbon capture and utilisation plant designed to capture 30 TPD of CO2 for conversion into valuable products. New Era Cleantech Solution Private Limited has been given a financial incentive of Rs 1,000 crore for its coal gasification project in Bhadravati, Chandrapur, Maharashtra. Greta Energy Limited has also been awarded Rs 414.01 crore of financial incentive for its coal gasification project at Bhadravati with a total investment of Rs 2,763 crore.

New Delhi, (H.S): As part of an overall effort to bring in greater consistency between import tariffs and customs regulations, the government on Monday (May 19, 2025) allowed the import of certain types of unwrought, semi-manufactured and powdered gold under particular conditions. On the other hand, it has imposed similar conditions on the import of some silver products that were earlier freely importable. According to the new restrictions, imports of these items will only be allowed through agencies nominated by either the Reserve Bank of India or the government, qualified jewellers,

and particular traders authorised under the India-UAE free trade agreement. These new rules were notified by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) on Monday (May 19, 2025) as a modification of its import policy chapter pertaining to precious metals, stones, and pearls. When it comes to gold, several items that earlier faced a blanket restriction have now been allowed for imports under particular conditions. For example, the import of unwrought, semi-manufactured, or powdered gold containing 99.5 or more by weight of gold used to be restricted. Under the new rules, these items



can be imported by agencies nominated by the RBI, in the case of banks, or nominated by the DGFT, or by qualified jewellers as notified by the International Financial Services Centres Authority and only through the India International Bullion Exchange, or valid tariff rate quota (TRQ) holders under the India-UAE free trade agreement. On the

other hand, the import of unwrought, semi-manufactured, or powdered gold in bar form used to be freely importable. Now, the notification says the import would be "subject to RBI regulation". Govt. blames double-counting of SEZ shipments for overestimating Gold, Silver import bills. According to a note by the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), these changes "ensure consistency between customs duties and import regulations" and bring the rules into alignment with the changes made in Budget 2025 to enhance the transparency in the import of precious metals.

Delays & opacity in regulatory clearance can impact timely conclusion of FTAs: Nirmala Sitharaman

New Delhi, (H.S): Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday (May 20, 2025) cautioned that delays in regulatory clearance and opacity in processes can create uncertainty and erode deal value, and has serious connotations for the timely conclusion of free trade agreements (FTAs). This comes at a time when Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal is currently in the U.S. for negotiations on a FTA with that country.

Negotiations with the EU and New Zealand are also ongoing in parallel. Notably, during her speech at the 16th Annual Day function of the Competition Commission of India, Ms. Sitharaman also highlighted the importance of a free and fair market in India and how this benefits the entire economy. Her comments come



against the backdrop of several customer-centric sectors such as aviation, telecommunications, and food delivery are either already in a duopoly structure or in danger of falling into one. "In today's interconnected and fast-paced economy, delays in regulatory clearance can lead to uncertainty, disrupt commercial timelines and potentially erode the intended value of transactions and globally it has an impact, even as we negotiate

free trade agreements with different countries," Ms. Sitharaman said. "The ability, nimbleness and readiness of the regulators is very keenly watched by investors." These aspects of the regulatory framework, she added, have "very serious connotations" when trying to complete FTAs "within a reasonable time".

"So, whether it is litigation, time consumed in litigation, or when regulators are less transparent, negotiations can get complicated," she noted. "It is therefore imperative that regulatory frameworks, while maintaining rigorous oversight, also facilitate swift and seamless approvals for combinations that pose no harm to competition." The Finance Minister also spoke at length about the importance of fostering competition in India, with a key principle being that

"markets must work for the many and not just for the few". "A free and fair market ensures no single player can corner resources, suppress choice, or to distort price discovery," she noted. "Competition ensures the voice of consumers, that is the voice of the common people matters and therefore businesses are forced to listen."

Ms. Sitharaman's comments come at a time when several sectors are increasingly becoming dominated by just a few players. In aviation, for example, Indigo and the Air India Group together account for about 85-90% of the market share. In telecom, Reliance Jio and Bharti Airtel together make up about 77-80% of the Indian market. In food delivery, Zomato and Swiggy are the only two large players operating at a nation-wide level.

India Leads Call for Inclusive Energy Governance at BRICS Energy Ministers' Meet in Brazil

New Delhi, (PIB): Shri Manohar Lal, Union Minister for Power and Housing and Urban Affairs led the Indian Delegation for the BRICS Energy Ministers' Meeting hosted in Brasilia on 19 May 2025 under Brazil's Presidency. The Union Minister highlighted energy security as one of the most pressing current challenges and emphasized the need to strengthen BRICS cooperation to ensure economic stability and sustainability, as well as to promote equitable access to energy resources globally.

He reaffirmed India's unwavering commitment to building a sustainable and inclusive energy future and lauded Brazil's leadership under the theme, 'Strengthening Global South Cooperation for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance.' He further emphasized the critical role of energy security, access, and affordability in advancing global development goals. A 90% increase in electricity capacity over the past decade, reaching 475 GW in 2025 and targeting 900 GW by 2032. Becoming the world's third-largest producer of



solar and wind energy. Marching fast towards achieving Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Achieving a 20% ethanol blending milestone, advancing biofuel adoption and emissions reduction. Investing in smart grids, advanced metering infrastructure, and an expanded transmission network, including the Green Energy Corridor.

Setting ambitious goals for green hydrogen and nuclear energy, including a 100 GW nuclear capacity target by 2047. Launching a domestic Carbon Credit Market, inviting global collaboration. He also emphasized the role of the Global Biofuels Alliance in advancing cooperation in the biofuels sector and underscored India's commitment to energy efficiency through innovative programs such as the Energy Conservation Sustainable Buildings Code,

rooftop solar initiatives, and efficient appliance standards. He underscored the vital role of fossil fuels in the global energy mix - especially for developing countries - and urged greater cooperation to promote their cleaner and efficient use through technologies such as coal gasification, carbon capture and storage, and green chemical innovations.

In conclusion, Sh. Manohar Lal extended an invitation to the BRICS nations to participate in the next BRICS Energy Gathering, scheduled for 2026 in India, reaffirming the country's commitment to leading the energy agenda for the Global South. The BRICS Energy Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening energy security and advancing UN Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG 7), focusing on universal electricity

access, clean cooking, and tackling energy poverty. They emphasized the need for just, inclusive, and balanced energy transitions in response to climate change. While acknowledging the continued role of fossil fuels - particularly in developing countries - they stressed the importance of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in alignment with SDG 7 and global climate targets guided by technological neutrality and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC).

The Ministers called for stronger partnerships, supported open, fair, and non-discriminatory international energy markets, and encouraged the use of local currencies in energy trade. They recognized the fundamental role of the BRICS Energy Research Cooperation Platform and welcomed the updated BRICS Roadmap for Energy Cooperation (2025-2030) as key to deeper collaboration. Affirming each country's right to determine its own energy transition path and pace, the

Ministers advocated efficient use of all energy sources and called for increased concessional and low-cost financing from developed to developing nations. They highlighted the role of the New Development Bank (NDB) in promoting sustainable energy infrastructure, especially through local currency financing. The Ministers advocated for adoption of fair, transparent, and consistent guidelines for assessing carbon intensity, energy classification, and mutual recognition of taxonomies and certifications.

Underscoring energy security as vital for socio-economic development, they highlighted the importance of market stability, resilient infrastructure, diversified energy sources, and critical minerals for clean technologies. They reaffirmed the goal to double energy efficiency by 2030 and emphasized enhanced cooperation and knowledge sharing among BRICS nations. Lastly, they committed to elevating BRICS' global energy role and advancing shared priorities under India's Chairship in 2026.

UIDAI Shares Non-personal Aadhaar Dashboard Data To Promote Transparency

New Delhi, (H.S): The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) on Monday said it has begun sharing non-personal, anonymised data from the Aadhaar Dashboard on the open government data platform called data.gov.in. The move aims to further promote transparency, research, and data-driven policy making, said the Ministry of Electronics and IT in a statement. The datasets, released by Chief Data Officer (CDO) and Deputy Director General of UIDAI, include aggregated insights on Aadhaar enrolment, updates, and authentication patterns, categorised by geography, age-group and other relevant parameters.

According to the IT Ministry, by making these non-personal and anonymised datasets accessible, UIDAI aims to support academic research, innovation in digital services, and collaborative developments. "This initiative opens new avenues for evidence-based policy-making and technological innovation, furthering UIDAI's commitment to transparency, public good, and secure data governance," it added. It also aligns with the broader government vision of fostering



evidence-based policy making and maximising the value of open data for the public good. It is expected to further boost digital inclusion and governance efficiency. Meanwhile, the total number of Aadhaar authentication transactions have crossed the 150 billion (15,011.82 crore) mark. Moreover, the total number of eKYC transactions (37.3 crore) carried out during April is 39.7 per cent more than the numbers during the same period last year. The cumulative number of e-KYC transactions has crossed 2,393 crore as on April 30, according to the Ministry of Electronics and IT. In April alone, almost 210 crore Aadhaar authentication transactions were carried out, nearly 8 per cent more than the same month in 2024, informed the ministry. More than 100 entities, both in the government and private sectors, are using face authentication for the smooth delivery of benefits and services.

Priyanka thanks crowd with namaste at Italy event, poses with Lisa, Liu Yifei

Actors Priyanka Chopra and Liu Yifei, as well as BLACKPINK member Lisa, attended an event of Bvlgari held in Sicily, Italy, recently. Many pictures and videos of the celebrities at the event emerged on social media platforms. For the event, Priyanka wore a beige outfit and paired it with matching jewellery. Liu Yifei was seen in a shimmery off-shoulder dress. Lisa opted for a white and yellow outfit.

In several pictures, Priyanka was seen posing with Liu and Lisa for the paparazzi. As the camerapersons finished clicking

photos, Priyanka thanked them with a namaste (folded hands). Priyanka was also seen having a conversation with Bulgari CEO Jean-Christophe Babin as she sat for dinner with other celebrities at the event. In a clip, Priyanka and Lisa were seen having a conversation as they posed for the camera. Seemingly Priyanka asked Lisa to switch places with her, which she agreed. Both of them were seen laughing at this. Last year, too, Priyanka attended the Bvlgari event in Rome, Italy. For the event, she wore an off-shoulder

cream and black dress. She chose a short hairstyle with the outfit. Priyanka also wore the Serpenti Aeterna necklace. She had posed for pictures with Anne Hathaway, Liu Yifei, and Shu Qi. Priyanka has been the brand ambassador of Bvlgari for quite some time now.

Priyanka will star in Heads of State alongside Idris Elba and John Cena. She is set to play a 19th-century Caribbean pirate in The Bluff. Reportedly, Priyanka will star in SS Rajamouli's upcoming film alongside Mahesh Babu. Fans

will also see Priyanka in the highly anticipated web series Citadel 2. The second season, which was scheduled to release this year, has been postponed "to a spring 2026 debut". Actor Priyanka Chopra attended a Bvlgari event in Sicily, Italy, on Monday, along with other celebrities from around the world. She took to Instagram to give an inside glimpse of her work trip, which was filled with lush outfits, stunning views, and delicious food. Eagle-eyed fans, however, spotted that her name was misspelt on a placecard.

Priyanka might have gone to Sicily on work, but it doesn't mean she didn't have a ball while there, if her pictures are anything to go by. She posted pictures and videos of the Christian Dior beaded outfit she wore to the event, paired with Bvlgari jewels. She also posted a picture of the sit-down dinner they had at the event, giving a glimpse of her placecard reading 'Priyanka Chopra Jonas'. More pictures featured a flute of champagne, a hearty plate of pasta, and the beautiful view she soaked in from her room.

War 2 Teaser: Hrithik, NTR's Double Internet on Fire, Can You Beat Heat?



In 2019, we witnessed history being made when Greek God Hrithik Roshan shared the screen with his mentee, muscle man Tiger Shroff in War. It was a double treat for audiences because the two very handsome men not only made a deadly duo on the dance floor but also aced high-octane action sequences like nobody in Bollywood could have imagined. So when it was announced that Tiger won't be returning in the sequel, many hearts were broken. But the excitement was ten fold when Telugu heartthrob Jr NTR was roped in to lock horns with Hrithik in War 2. Today, on

Tarak's birthday, makers released the teaser of the much-awaited Ayan Mukerji directorial, also starring Kiara Advani.

This time, Hrithik Roshan returns to our screens as Major Kabir Dhaliwal, RAW's best agent. What has changed in all the years? He's even more good looking than you remember with much bigger triceps than the last time. Aging like fine wine indeed. Speaking of fine, Kiara Advani sizzles next to Hrithik in War 2, setting the internet on fire with a quick glimpse of her first ever bikini shot. In real life, Kiara is enjoying her adorable baby bump and pregnancy glow. But in the

teaser, she is slaying like never before in her bikini bod. Meanwhile, birthday boy Jr NTR proves yet again that no one can match his aura as he challenges Kabir to an epic face off. But is he the hero, the villain or both? We will have to wait and watch. The show-stealer is Jr NTR and Hrithik's action sequences, which are on a whole other level, promising audiences a crazy unforgettable ride of a lifetime. Welcoming his co-star with open arms and a challenge, Hrithik tweeted, "And so it begins, @tarak9999. Be prepared, there is no place for mercy. Welcome to Hell. Love, Kabir." Teasing fans with a glimpse of the upcoming 'war', Jr NTR replied, "Mercy doesn't exist where I come from Kabir. I am ready for the WAR @iHrithik sir!!!" Well, the teaser of War 2 as well as Hrithik, Jr NTR and Kiara's first looks has taken the internet by storm. Gushing over the same, a fan shared, "When Hrithik walks, it's style. .The teaser was launched today, marking Jr NTR's birthday. The film will release in theatres on August 14.

Priyadarshan on Akshay suing Paresh for sabotaging Hera Pheri 3: 'Paresh didn't inform'

Filmmaker Priyadarshan is surprised by actor Paresh Rawal's decision to walk out of his film Hera Pheri 3, which was set to reunite the original cast from the 2000 hit Hera Pheri - Akshay Kumar, Suniel Shetty, and Paresh. On Tuesday morning, HT City exclusively learnt that Akshay, who is also the producer of Hera Pheri 3, has sent a legal notice to Paresh, suing him for 25 crore for abandoning and sabotaging the film.

When we reached out to Priyadarshan, he said that Akshay has the right to take this legal step as his hard earned money is invested in the film, adding that the actor legally bought the rights for it from producer Feroz Nadiadwala. "I don't know why this happened



because Paresh didn't inform us. Before starting the film, Akshay asked me to check with both Paresh and Suniel and I did and both were onboard," says Priyadarshan, who has also directed Paresh and Akshay in the upcoming film Bhoot Bangla. The filmmaker adds, "I don't have anything to lose but Akshay has invested money and that could be the reason why he is taking this action. Paresh Rawal hasn't spoken to me till date." Earlier a source familiar

with the legal proceedings in the matter told us, "Paresh displayed a blatant disregard for professional integrity or commercial morality. If he wanted to not do the film, he should have said so before signing the legal contract, accepting the signing amount and making the producer spend so much money on the shoot." When we reached out to Paresh Rawal for a comment, he said, "I am not aware of this yet."

Suriya 46 Goes on Floors, Mamitha Joins as Female Lead



Director Venky Atluri's tentatively titled Suriya 46, starring Suriya and Mamitha Baiju in the lead roles, was launched officially on Monday. The film, produced by Naga Vamsi of Sithara Entertainments, will see the 23-year-old actor work with the 49-year-old Retro actor for the

first time. But this isn't the first time they almost acted together.

Director Bala's film Vanagaan was released in theatres in January this year. However, the film was initially launched in 2022 with Suriya as the lead. He was also supposed to produce it under 2D Entertainment, but later withdrew

from the project due to creative differences. Krithi Shetty and Mamitha also shot for the film, but Arun Vijay, Roshni Prakash and Ridhi eventually starred in it. Mamitha also shot with Suriya for 40 days before exiting the project, something she revealed while promoting her 2024 hit Premalu. Through the years, Mamitha has also been quite vocal about how big a fan she is of Suriya. In 2022, she spoke to Ginger Media and said, "Suriya is my favourite person. I respect him so much because he is such a wonderful person. We have a lot to learn from him, like the way he talks and the way he treats people."

In 2024, she spoke to Rednool and gushed about being a Suriya fan since she was a kid. She said, "Someone whom I like very much, even from when I was a child, has been Suriya sir. I also like Ajith sir a lot. I've watched all their films."

Not Kolkata, Ahmedabad to host IPL Final



Ahmedabad, (HS) : The final of the 2025 Indian Premier League will be held at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on June 3, says a report. According to a Cricbuzz report, Ahmedabad will also play host to Qualifier 2 on June 1, while Mullanpur in New Chandigarh is expected to host

the first two playoff games- Qualifier 1 on May 29 and the Eliminator on May 30. The decision is said to have been taken after following a series of high-level meetings conducted by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

These scheduling and venue changes were implemented

primarily due to the onset of the rainy season and the recent one-week suspension of the tournament amid heightened cross-border tensions between India and Pakistan. The league was temporarily suspended on May 9 and resumed only on May 17. The final, originally scheduled for May 25, was consequently

pushed back by over a week to June 3. This will potentially be the third time that the Narendra Modi Stadium, the world's largest cricket arena, will host an IPL final. The iconic ground previously hosted the finals in 2022 and 2023. Notably, during Gujarat Titans' debut season in 2022, Ahmedabad was limited to just two matches owing to COVID-19 protocols- those two being Qualifier 2 and the final. The Titans won the title that year, and the venue retained the final in 2023.

With monsoon patterns impacting several parts of the country in late May, the board opted for cities with historically drier climates to ensure uninterrupted knockout matches. As of now, three teams have confirmed their places in the playoffs: Gujarat Titans, Royal Challengers Bengaluru, and Punjab Kings. The final spot remains up for grabs, with Mumbai Indians and Delhi Capitals locked in a close fight for qualification.

Indian Star Javelin Thrower Olympics Fails Dope Test, at 8-Year Ban

Tokyo, (HS) : Olympian javelin thrower Shivpal Singh has failed a dope test for the second time in his career, a development which may see him being banned for a maximum period of eight years if found guilty. The 29-year-old, who competed at the Tokyo Olympics, is learnt to have returned positive for a banned substance when his urine sample taken out of competition earlier this year was tested. He was training at the NIS Patiala then. He has been provisionally suspended by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA). "Yes, he has tested positive for a banned substance. It's his second dope offence," a source privy to the development told on conditions of anonymity. The Appeal Panel, in January 2023, accepted his contention and reduced the ban period from four years to just one. He returned to action in April 2023 and won a bronze at the National Inter-State Championships in Bhubaneswar in June that year. He also won gold in the 2023 National Games in Goa.



New Delhi, (HS) : Former India cricketer Yograj Singh said that Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, who retired from Test cricket earlier this month, must revoke their decision to save the country's red-ball cricket. The retirements of Rohit and Kohli leave the side without its most senior batters on the upcoming England tour, where India are scheduled to play a five-match

Test series starting on June 20. The 67-year-old former cricketer, who has coached current players like Shubman Gill and Abhishek Sharma besides his son Yuvraj Singh, added that Kohli still has more years to give to cricket.

"Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli must return from retirement to save Indian Test cricket. This is not the time to think about themselves - it's about the nation,

the fans, and the deep emotions people have for the game. Virat still has at least ten years of cricket left in him. As for Rohit, if he comes to me, I will make sure he gets back in peak fitness," Yograj told IANS on Tuesday. The veteran cricketer said the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) must support players during their tough times so that players don't bow down to mounting pressure. "Back in 2011, players like Yuvraj Singh, Harbhajan Singh, and Virender Sehwag were dropped without any clear reason. When Yuvraj retired, I scolded him - I told him not to give in to pressure. He was, and still is, incredibly fit. Cricketers should fight for their place in the team instead of surrendering to external pressures.

Digvesh Suspended for 1 Match; Abhishek Fined for Code Breach

Lucknow, (HS): Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) player Digvesh has been fined 50% of his match fees and handed a one-match suspension for breaching the IPL Code of Conduct during the match against Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) at the Ekana Stadium. This marks Digvesh's third Level 1 offence under Article 2.5 this season. He received Two Demerit Points for Monday's breach, adding to the Three Demerit Points accumulated earlier - One against Punjab Kings on April 1 and Two against Mumbai Indians on April 4. Having reached a total of Five Demerit Points, Digvesh will be suspended for LSG's upcoming fixture against Gujarat Titans on May 22 in Ahmedabad. For Level 1 breaches, the Match Referee's decision is final and binding.

Hockey India Official Pakistan's Asia Cup Participation to Follow Guidelines



New Delhi, (HS) : A top official of Indian hockey federation on Tuesday made it clear that it will follow government guidelines on Pakistan's participation in Asia Cup, which the country is hosting later this year, in the wake of the

recent military conflict between the two nations. A ceasefire was agreed upon between the two countries after days of intense cross-border hostilities in the wake of the Pahalgam terrorist attack that killed 26 people, following which the IPL too

remained suspended for a brief period.

When asked about Pakistan's participation in the upcoming tournament, Hockey India's (HI) secretary general Bholanath Singh said, "Whatever the government decides we will abide by it. Till now we didn't have talks with the government on this. "The country comes first for us. Asia Cup is happening in India, and whatever the government advises us, we will abide by that." The Asia Cup is scheduled to be held in Rajgir, Bihar from August 27 till September 7. Two days ago, a senior official in the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) said it has asked the sport's

continental body to guarantee visas for its contingent to participate in the Asia Cup, which is a qualifying tournament for next year's men's FIH World Cup to be held in the Netherlands and Belgium.

Bholanath added, "I am AHF (Asian Hockey Federation) vice-president, I am secretary general of Hockey India, but first I am a citizen of India. Whatever the country and the government decides, Hockey India will follow that. Posts are different, but country's honour comes first." Serious doubts though remain over Pakistan's participation in the Asia Cup because of the tensions between the two countries.