



# DUMANI MAIL

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English Daily



## Telangana Explosion

# Death toll rises to 35, rescue ops continue



**Hyderabad, (HS) :** The toll in the explosion at the Sigachi Industries' pharma plant in Pashamylaram has rose to 35. "Several bodies have been found under the debris while removing it. As many as 31 bodies have been extricated from the debris

while three died in hospital while undergoing treatment. The last leg of the rescue operation is still going on," district Superintendent of Police Paritosh Pankajsaid.

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy would visit the accident site Tuesday morning, Health

Minister C Damodar Rajanarasimha said. The fatal accident on Monday is suspected to have been caused by a chemical reaction. Sigachi Industries Limited is a pharmaceutical company dedicated to pioneering

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## Rs 1 cr to families

The State government has ordered a full probe into the incident and temporarily shut down Sigachi Industries' operations at the Pashamylaram plant for a minimum of 90 days. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, who visited the site, promised that all safety lapses would be investigated and said compensation would be disbursed to victims' families. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also announced Rs2 lakh each. Directions were issued to give Rs10 lakh to those several injured.

## Odisha sends 2 officers

Odisha Government on Tuesday sent two officers to Telangana to coordinate the rescue operations for Odia workers working in Sigachipharma company's factory. The two officers are OSD, Directorate of OdishaParibar, Pritish Panda and OPS Dr Chandra SekharHota. "In view of the fire accident at SigachiPharma Company of Sangareddy District in Telangana on 30-06-2025, ShriPritish Panda, OSD, Directorate of OdishaParibar and Dr. Chandra SekharHota, O.P.S., are hereby directed to travel to Telangana to coordinate the rescue operation for the Odia workers working in SigachiPharma Company," the government order said.

## CM reviews security for Rath Yatra rituals



**Puri, (DMC) :** Chief Minister Mohan CharanMajhi Tuesday presided over a crucial security meeting at the Special Circuit House in Puri to ensure robust arrangements for the upcoming BahudaYatra, SunaBesha, and NiladriBije festivals of the Puri Rath Yatra.

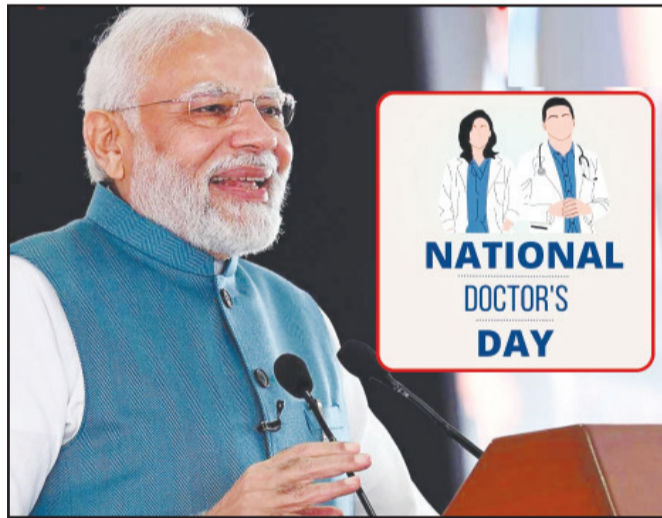
With favourable weather expected to draw massive crowds, the meeting focused on enhancing safety measures, crowd management, and operational efficiency to make the festivals seamless and secure for devotees. The Chief Minister emphasised three key aspects of security: safe chariot operations and devotee protection, effective traffic management, and

strengthened fire safety measures. He directed the police administration to implement real-time, accurate advance crowd estimation to prepare for the influx of devotees, particularly during Sunabesha. "Accurate crowd estimation is the first step to ensuring safety," CM Majhi stated, underscoring the need for proactive planning to handle large gatherings during these significant events. To maintain order, the Chief Minister instructed strict adherence to the Standard Operating Procedures (SoP) for security. He advised limiting cordon passes to reduce overcrowding in restricted areas and consulting Maharana and

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## National Doctors' Day

# PM hails doctors as 'pillars of humanity'



**New Delhi, (HS) :** Prime Minister NarendraModi on Tuesday extended his greetings to doctors on the occasion of National Doctors' Day, describing them as true protectors of health and pillars of humanity. In a post shared on X, the Prime Minister said, "Our doctors have made a mark for their dexterity and diligence." He further added, "Equally notable is their spirit of compassion. They are

truly protectors of health and pillars of humanity. Their contribution in strengthening India's healthcare infrastructure is indeed exceptional." National Doctors' Day is observed to commemorate the contribution of doctors to society. The day also marks the birth anniversary of renowned physician Bidhan Chandra Roy, who also served as the chief minister of West Bengal.

## Goddess Lakshmi visits Gundicha on Hera Panchami



**Puri, (DMC) :** It has been four days since Lord Jagannath and his siblings embarked on their annual sojourn to Shree Gundicha

Temple in Odisha's Puri. Unable to bear the pangs of separation, Goddess Lakshmi on this day visits Gundichabadi in a beautifully palanquin carried by the servitors but is unable to see Him. Instead, the PatiMahapatra offers an 'Agyan Mala' (a consent garland) on behalf of Lord Jagannath, assuring her that he will return to the main temple in

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## BMC Official Assault Case

# Two more arrested, 5 suspended from BJP

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC) :** The Commissionerate Police on Tuesday arrested two more persons linked to the barbaric assault on Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Additional Commissioner Ratnakar Sahoo, bringing the total number of arrests to five.

They have been identified as Sanjeev Mishra of Jharpada and Sachikant Swain of Laxmisagar, both earlier affiliated to the BJP. On Monday, CorporatorJeevan Rout, RashmiMahapatra, and DebasisPradhan were arrested in connection with the incident. They have been booked under Sections 333, 132, 121(1), 121(2), 109, 351(2), 62, 140(2), 304, 54, 61(2), 189(2), 190, and 3(5) of multiple sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). Meanwhile, Odisha BJP president ManmohanSamalhas suspended all five from primary membership of the party this afternoon for their alleged involvement in the assault case. "Based on allegations of their involvement in a violent incident at the BMC office on June 30, the following five individuals have been suspended from their primary membership of the BJP by state president ManmohanSamal," the office order said. Sahoo, an OAS officer, was allegedly dragged from his office and assaulted in full public view by some alleged supporters and workers of a local BJP leader, JagannathPradhan, while he was conducting the weekly public grievance hearing session in his chamber at the



## OAS officers in 14 dists to go on mass leave

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC) :** Escalating their protest against the assault case, OAS and ORS officers in 14 districts of Odisha on Tuesday decided to go on an indefinite mass leave. These districts are Cuttack, Mayurbhanj, Jagatsinghpur, Bhadrak, Rayagada, Balangir, Sonepur, and Ganjam. This came a day after the Odisha Administrative Service (OAS) Association decided to defer their mass leave agitation after Chief Minister Mohan CharanMajhi assured strict action against those involved in the incident.

## Ceasework by BMC officials

BMC office staff wore black badges and staged a cease work agitation, demanding swift justice. "Yesterday's incident has hurt our staff and officers. We will take necessary steps to beef up security and strengthen office protocols," said BMC Commissioner Rajesh Prabhakar Patil. On Tuesday, the BMC staff staged a day-long dharna at the corporation office, demanding immediate action against the culprits. The staff and corporators also blocked the Janpath road in the evening.

BMC office on Monday morning.

In his FIR, the Additional Commissioner mentioned that six to seven unknown individuals physically assault me without any provocation in front of the

corporator of ward 29, Jeevan Rout. He further stated that they threatened him and attempted to forcibly drag him into a vehicle, saying that he must "come to Sri JagannathPradhan and apologize".

## BMC official denies allegations



**Bhubaneswar, (DMC) :** The controversy over the alleged assault on BMC Additional Commissioner RatnakarSahoo intensified on Tuesday with a 'SwachhSathi' and BJP leader JagannathPradhan making several allegations. A day after the senior OAS officer was dragged, kicked and punched by six men at BMC office, BJP's JagannathPradhan alleged that Sahoo had misbehaved with a female sanitation worker - SwachhSathi.

Pradhan said he had called up the BMC official after receiving a complaint from the sanitation worker from Ward No. 34, accusing Sahoo of having misbehaved with her and putting undue pressure over her participation political activities. The officer had spoken harshly to the woman and questioned her for joining a BJP rally, Pradhan claimed. The BJP leader said when he asked Sahoo as to why he had allegedly humiliated the sanitation worker, the officer responded rudely, and sought to know, "Who are you to ask me?" Following this, Pradhan reportedly posted on social

media, saying, "Clapping needs two hands," implying that allegation in the matter is not one-sided. Pradhan also claimed that he had already raised this matter with the BMC Commissioner earlier. The female worker has since lodged a formal complaint at the Kharavela Nagar police station in this connection.

Meanwhile, RebatiRaut, SwachhSaathi from Ward No. 34, has brought serious allegations against Sahoo. She alleged that she was subjected to intimidation and threats of job termination for mobilising 60-70 people to attend Prime Minister NarendraModi's rally held in the city recently. She further alleged that Sahoo, in collusion with her local corporator and husband, had warned her that participating in BJP activities could cost her the job. She further added that after she raised the issue with BJP leader JagannathPradhan, the latter called the BMC officer, which reportedly led to a heated exchange. Refuting the allegations made by the woman and Pradhan, Sahoo said the

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## RAIN PAIN

# Flood situation grim as Subarnarekha breaches danger mark

**Bhubaneswar (DMC) :** Amid incessant heavy rain, the flood situation turned grim in northern Odisha, especially Balasore and Mayurbhanj, where thousands of people were affected and many villages cut off from the outside world. Subarnarekha river crossed the danger mark at Rajghat in Balasore district, where the water level touched 10.83, well above the danger level Tuesday morning. As per

information, floodwaters submerged parts of Bhograi block in Balasore, affecting over 30 villages across 15 panchayats. Inundation has led to the disruption of daily life, marooning several households and damaging roads and crops. Similarly, Jalaka river in the Basta block was flowing just below the danger level. At Mathani, the water level stood at 6.50 metres against the danger mark of 6.59



metres. Ten villages in the area are reported to be partially submerged. Following incessant

rains and rising river water levels, over 2,900 people have been evacuated as floodwaters

submerged thousands of acres of farmland.

Officials said 46 panchayats have been impacted - including 14 in Basta block, 10 in Jaleswar, 2 in Baliapal, 13 in Bhograi, and one each in Remuna and Soro. Jaleswar's urban area, comprising 7 municipal wards, also reported waterlogging. Balasore is witnessing massive crop damage, with floodwaters continuing to

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## Heavy rain to continue till July 5

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC) :** Odisha is likely to experience heavy to very heavy rainfall till July 5 under the influence of a low-pressure area over Jharkhand and neighbourhood, which is expected to slowly move west-northwestwards across Jharkhand during the next 24 hours, and active southwest monsoon. In its midday bulletin, the weather agency had warned of heavy to very heavy rain and thunderstorm/lightning with gusty surface wind speed reaching 30-40 kmph at one or two places in Sundargarh, Sambalpur and Jharsuguda till Wednesday morning. Heavy rain may also occur at one or two places in Bargarh, Sonepur, Boudh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Keonjhar, Deogarh, Kalahandi, Nabarangpur, Koraput, Malkangiri, Mayurbhanj, Balangir and Nuapada. The orange warning continues for two more days.

## Asian Economy

It's now well known that though climate change affects all parts of the world, some regions are more vulnerable than others. Asia, for example, is prone to almost all the consequences of global warming - heatwaves, floods, erratic monsoons, melting glaciers, and sea-level rise. A new report by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) released this week has found that the continent is warming twice as fast as the global average. Asia's vulnerability is exacerbated by its geology. The continent has the largest landmass, 44.58 million square kilometres. Temperature increases over land are greater than those over the oceans. The exceptionally high temperatures then cause oceans to warm up. That's why the continent experienced marine heat waves last year, the WMO report points out. The surface temperatures of the Indian and Pacific Oceans touched a record high last year. Ocean temperatures around Asia have risen at 0.24 degrees Celsius per decade over the past 10 years - nearly double the global average of 0.13 degrees. As natural disasters over the past 10 years have underlined, communities in South and Southeast Asia are particularly vulnerable to sea-level rises. The WMO report also draws attention to floods in Pakistan and Kazakhstan, heatwaves in China and Central Asian countries, typhoons in Southeast Asia and the landslide that struck Wayanad in Kerala last year. Outdoor work is important to the labour-intensive economies of most countries in the region, making people vulnerable to heat, rain and cold. Studies have also shown that, though overall agricultural productivity has increased in Asia, climate change has slowed down progress. Research now indicates threats to food and water security in the world's most populous continent. For instance, the vulnerability of rice - a key staple in the region - to droughts, increasing salinity and soil damage has been underscored by several studies, including those by the IPCC.

Almost every Asian country has a plan in place to mitigate global warming. Increasingly, however, it's becoming clear that people will need to adapt to erratic weather. The WMO report underlines the need to put in place early warning systems. Such systems should help people deal with multiple hazards. For instance, intense spells of rain can trigger floods and landslides, while high temperatures can spark wildfires or make them more severe. If there's one message in the WMO report, it's this - policymakers in Asia will need to invest in increasing people's resilience and weatherproofing economies.

2nd July

## Disco Day



National Disco Day is celebrated in New Zealand every year on July 2. The day is a salute to all things disco, from the music and dancing to the entire culture of the 1970s. National Disco Day is an unofficial observance that focuses on the genre of dance music that wielded significant influence on modern music, developing into an entire subculture over the 1960s and 1970s in America. While the popularity of disco declined in America around the 1980s, it only gained popularity in the rest of the world, including New Zealand.

National Disco Day is held in New Zealand every year on July 2. This annual observance is an unofficial day where everyone gets together to celebrate the fun music, dance, and culture that evolved from disco. Disco developed from several influences. Philadelphia soul, funk, psychedelic soul, and pop all inspired dance music in American nightlife. Disco started as a reaction to the popularity of rock music in the 1960s and emerged as a subcultural response to how current dance music was ignored and dismissed by music fans. The music was a mixture of the melodies and rhythms played at venues popular with Italian, Hispanic, Latino, and African Americans. Artists in America. Europe expanded the genre further, and well-known bands of the time include Boney M, ABBA, the Bee Gees, Thelma Houston, Chaka Khan, and Donna Summer, to name a few.

Discos, derived from venues known as discotheques, began in Europe and were popularized by the American press to become centers of disco culture. Disco music is characterized by synthesized sounds and reverberating, bass-heavy style. It created a beat-driven ambiance that attracted people to the illuminated dance floors where they could groove through the night. It also gave rise to a fashion style distinguished by bold, clashing colors, dramatic designs, and fabrics that shimmered on the dancefloor. Clubs started playing phonograph records rather than live music. Disco brought a sense of collective euphoria, emanating through the music, the dancing, and the culture surrounding it, and the essence of why the genre is so important even today. The sense of unified joy is worth celebrating, which is why New Zealanders join in the fun by enjoying the music and the dancing of disco culture every year on the unofficial National Disco Day.

The first discotheques emerge, playing swing music and serving as the hot spot for dance and dance music. As a reaction to the dismissal of dance music, disco develops, taking inspiration from the dance music popular among Italian, Latino, and African Americans. With artists like ABBA and Boney M, disco is the mainstream music popular across the world. Nu-disco emerges and the stage is set for disco and disco-influenced music to come back into the mainstream.

# Tax Raids and Digital Arrests



Subash Ch. Mishra

## Economic Diary

A group of seven persons calling themselves as income tax officials accompanied by two police men conducted a raid on a house. They seized the mobile phones of the people, confined them to one corner of the house guarded by the police men and searched the house. They seized the cash, gold ornaments and made a list, obtained signature of the household on the list and took away the same telling the household that they will get notice from the court. Nothing was heard about it afterwards and subsequently it was found that the raid was fake, the police was fake and the tax officers were fake. A senior citizen was put under digital arrest for a month and he lost one crore rupees to the fraudsters. He later admitted that the fraudsters created an ambience of fear, loss of reputation and blackmailed him to such an extent that at that point of time it appeared that paying the money demanded by them was the best option. Several such incidences of digital arrests keep appearing in

the media and despite clarifications by the government and police that there is no such thing as digital arrest and government departments do not make video call to people over whatsapp or skype and propose to settle cases over payment of a fine or penalty such incidents are still taking place.

Such cyber frauds are not happening in India alone. Several individuals in USA and Europe have also been victim to similar frauds. The call centres doing the frauds are operating from India, Myanmar, Thailand, Philippines, Cambodia, Laos, China and a few other South East Asian nations. They call individuals in USA and tell them in American accent that the call is from the tax department and there is a discrepancy in the tax return filed by the person for which he could be penalized or even imprisoned. The call centre person also asks the individual - "Do you want the IRS to broadcast your case on news channels or radio or publish in newspapers notifying how you have committed this crime with IRS?" The unsuspecting individual believes the person on the other end as genuine and seeks a way out. The call centre man asks the victim to hold and says he will consult his senior and come back in a minute. Then he resumes the call and suggest the victim to buy Amazon or Apple Gift cards for a specified amount from the near by store and inform the code number on the card towards payment of fine. Once the victim inform the code, the call centre collects the money and closes the case. It is estimated that more than 75% of such scam calls originate from call centres in India and quite a number of Indians are forcefully



detrained in Myanmar and Thailand to commit similar scams. The scammers are educated men and women, fluent in English and various Indian languages. Some of them are engineering graduates, cyber security experts, and banking professionals. Some of them have undergone training in speaking with US or European accent. Some of the people operating in such call centres have admitted that they earn more than what even MBA graduates earn. When Indian professionals lured by good technical jobs reach Myanmar, their passports are taken and they are forced to operate in call centres doing international frauds. The annual value of such call centre frauds is estimated to be more than USD 10 billion. Some call centre bosses are reported to be earning \$50000 per month in India. Cases of digital arrest are peculiar to India. The digital arrest starts with either a phone call or a video call from a scammer acting as a police officer / CBI officer or a Tax department officer who mentions that the Aadhar card of the victim has been used in opening a bank account and the account is used for money laundering. In some cases, the victim is told that a parcel has

been sent in the name of a victim to a foreign country and the parcel contains drugs or fake passports. The scammer often appears in a police uniform in the video call and also shows his office which looks like a police station. The victim is sometimes shown a judge delivering a judgment for arresting the victim. Most of the victims are senior citizens or business men. Since there is a possibility that some mistake might have happened somewhere in tax filing or somebody has made them a victim without their knowledge, the victim is scared of losing his reputation and falls a prey. The scammer tells him that he is under digital arrest and he should not leave the mobile phone. In some cases the victim is asked to download Skype and remain on the screen all the time. He is not allowed to go out of his house or contact any body for help. Then a demand is made to pay money to close the case. Sometimes the demand is made in several instalments and after one instalment is paid a second demand is made. The demand goes on till the victim is willing to pay to escape action. In most of the cases, the bank or a close relative finds out the change in the

behaviour of the victim, finds out the facts and lodges a police complaint.

The police and the government agencies have issued advisory in the matter and have clearly stated that there is no such thing as digital arrest and court orders are not given without hearing the victim side. Further the chance of recovery increases if the complaint is made to the police/ cyber crime cell at the earliest. With passage of time, the money travels to different accounts and even abroad and may become difficult to recover. Kolkata police recently arrested one of the kingpins and some of his associates engaged in the digital arrest frauds and put them behind bars. The crime boss is reported to be a software engineer from Bangalore. The National Payments Corporation of India issued some tips to avoid digital arrest frauds. These tips state that (a) one should be cautious if an unexpected call is received from somebody stating that he is from a government agency (b) urgency to make a video call to connect is a strong signal of a fraudulent call (c) request for personal information like Aadhar card or PAN card details, bank account details should be viewed with suspicion and should not be shared (d) verify the identity of the caller and keep cool if the caller asks for urgent legal action and consult your sources like banker, lawyer or inform the local police (e) report to the National Cyber crime cell on 1930 and (f) do not remit money immediately.

*The author is a retired Chie Israelf General Manager of Reserve Bank of India*

## Russia-Ukraine War: Global Lessons and India's Way Forward



Dr. Debidutta Pattnaik

On February 22, 2022, the European Union imposed sweeping sanctions on Russia, blocking its major banks, removing it from the SWIFT payment system, and cutting key services linked to dollar trade. The goal was clear: to cripple the Russian economy. But just two days later, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Rather than break down, Russia's economy adapted-marking what some now call a "wartime boom." Despite a 2.1% economic contraction in 2022, Russia's GDP bounced back with 3.6% growth in 2023 and continued to grow through 2024. This recovery was powered by energy exports redirected to India, China, and others, growing military production, and trade deals with friendly countries. Inflation, which spiked to over 13% in 2022, dropped to 5.9% by mid-2024 before inching up again to around 9%. Meanwhile, the EU struggled with high energy prices and inflation after cutting Russian oil and gas. The resulting energy crisis hit industries and households hard, pushing several European countries close to recession.

Ukraine became independent from the Soviet Union on August 24, 1991, confirmed by a public vote later that year. Long tied to Russia in trade and culture, Ukraine is also a major steel exporter. In 2023, it exported over 600,000 tonnes of hot-rolled coil



to the EU, a sharp increase from the year before. Over 60% of Ukraine's steel output was exported-most of it to Europe. The country also serves as a key route for Russian gas flowing to Europe, earning hundreds of millions of dollars annually in transit fees. Notably, Russia has continued to pay these fees even during the war. Ukraine's west has leaned toward Europe, while its east has remained more aligned with Russia. Tensions grew when NATO began showing interest in Ukraine's membership. In 2014, Ukraine's then-president Viktor Yanukovich rejected an EU trade deal in favour of Russia, sparking protests and his eventual ousting. His successor, Volodymyr Zelensky-a former actor-shifted Ukraine firmly toward the West, backing NATO and EU ties. Russia saw this as a serious threat, especially with NATO potentially at its doorstep.

Since the war began, Western nations have poured billions of dollars aid into Ukraine. According to the Kiel Institute, Europe and the U.S. have pledged over \$250 billion in military, financial, and humanitarian support. NATO alone delivered over \$20 billion in the first three months of 2025. Ukraine's economy took a heavy hit, shrinking by nearly 29% in 2022 but rebounded with growth of 5.3% in 2023 and about 3% in 2024. Its recovery has largely depended on Western aid and the resilience of its core industries. Russia, on the other hand, leaned on oil, gas, and military spending to power its economy. By finding new buyers

in Asia and forming trade ties with nations outside the Western bloc, it kept supply chains going and offset sanctions. Its economy has been propped up by heavy government spending-though experts warn that this may not be sustainable in the long run. Interestingly, sanctions designed to hurt Russia have also backfired on Europe. Cutting Russian energy led to price spikes, inflation, and slowed growth across the EU.

Global Lessons: The war has highlighted the importance of economic flexibility and the risks of overdependence. Russia survived by adapting quickly, while the EU suffered from its reliance on Russian energy. The conflict also shows how regional disputes can quickly turn global when alliances and rivalries come into play. Most importantly, it underscores that peace-however difficult-is the only viable solution. Without it, the cost in human lives, economic loss, and global instability will only keep rising.

India's Way Forward: India's balanced approach-maintaining relations with Russia while engaging with the West-has helped it secure discounted energy and avoid economic shocks. But like Europe, overdependence is risky. India should continue diversifying energy sources, boosting local industries like defence and steel, and investing in renewables. Staying neutral and calling for peace remains its best strategy in a deeply divided world. Jai Hind!

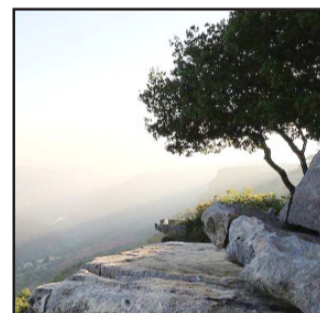
*Assistant Professor and Area Chair (Finance and Economics), IMI Bhubaneswar*

## Nature is the effect and God is the cause

Puspamitra Mohapatra

Nature is the effect and God is the cause. God and Nature are not distinct entities; they are one unified whole. When we observe Nature, we see the divine manifestation of unity and purity, a giving and receiving between all beings amid the cycle of Earth's life-sustaining processes. Life is given to us humans for the ultimate goal of realising God. Nature helps us to do so. Hence, we must make careful use of Nature, with no thought of harm but rather a gratitude, reverence, and pure, selfless Love. Through the five elements from which Nature emanates, all necessities of life are provided. Earth, water, fire, air, and space are pure in their original form, but impure human activities can defile them and result in harm to humans and other beings. It is our responsibility to show respect and gratitude for the purity in Nature and do our best to uphold it.

Within Nature, trees are perfect role models for unity and purity, while also teaching us selflessness and sacrifice. In all their rich variety and beauty, trees have been revered by humans since ancient times and they continue to deserve our reverence today, not only for the physical benefits they provide but for the spiritual ones too. They are an essential part of Nature through which we may realise God. Trees are the ultimate bearers of silence. They radiate silence while at the same time absorbing sound. They stand resolute, poised, in a state of equanimity, ready for whatever comes their way. When we walk into a forest, we may feel a sense of awe and peace as the collective hush of the trees draws us into our own inner world. The silence can be so strong it is palpable. Forests provide this rare opportunity to encounter deep stillness in the outer world. In that sacred space, we may sense the changeless 'beingness' of all things, the presence of God. Trees age slowly ... their life



unfolds at a much slower rate than our own. We humans, however, are often hurried. We connect best with forests when we take slow, contemplative walks beneath their canopy. And, if we want to deepen our spiritual connection, we simply need to stop, listen, and let the trees teach us. If we cannot go into a forest, we can connect with an individual tree close to home. It could be one struggling to thrive in a congested urban environment or an old one comfortably situated in a sprawling park, or it could be a shade tree in our backyard.

We can sit and speak to a tree, as if talking to a friend, remembering that some trees have lived for hundreds of years and have weathered many storms. We may share our concerns about life and the state of the world, and let the tree know we are grateful for their presence and all they provide. We can even give our tree a hug, as if we are hugging someone we especially love, really feeling it. We may then sit in silence, even meditate, and end with a prayer for our tree and all trees. Through these acts of silence, communion, love, and prayer, we may experience not only God's presence but also a knowing that everything is in its place and, despite life's challenges, all is as it needs to be. This acknowledgment of the valuable physical and spiritual roles of trees and our love for them will help protect life on Earth while also transforming us, thereby serving Sri Sathya Sai Baba's ongoing Divine mission.

Advocate, Orissa High Court, Cuttack

# Boost loan disbursement to poor: CM to banks



**Bhubaneswar (DMC):** In a move aimed at enhancing financial inclusion, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Tuesday urged representatives from ICICI, HDFC and Axis Banks to increase loan disbursements to economically disadvantaged individuals under various government welfare schemes. This call to action follows a recent decision by the state government to remove these banks from the empanelled list for government

departments' deposits due to their poor performance in implementing welfare schemes. During a meeting at Lok Seva Bhavan, Majhi highlighted the critical role banks play in the success of government welfare initiatives. He emphasised the need for these financial institutions to actively participate in schemes such as agricultural loans, the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), PM SVANidhi

Scheme, Stand Up India Scheme, as well as housing, educational and export loans. The CM expressed concern over the banks' poor performance in Odisha, which led to their removal from the empanelled list on June 21. He stressed the importance of involving the poor in economic activities through accessible loans, thereby boosting employment and economic growth. In response, representatives from the three banks assured the CM of their

commitment to improving loan disbursement under these schemes. They pledged to enhance their performance and support the govt's efforts to uplift the economically weaker sections of society. The meeting was attended by key officials, including Axis Bank's Executive Director Munish Sharda, HDFC Bank's Country Head (Govt and Institutional Business) Smita Bhagat, and ICICI Bank's Sumit Mehrotra. The CM's principal secretary, Shashwata Mishra, provided insights into the banks' current performance. The govt had on June 21 removed these banks from those authorised to handle business and deposits of state government organisations. This decision had come in response to the banks' persistent poor performance in key government schemes over the last two fiscal years, besides unsatisfactory general banking parameters. Sources added that the banks' representatives responded positively, committing to improve their performance and expedite loan disbursal under the schemes.

# City airport conducts mock drill



**Bhubaneswar (DMC):** The Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) on Monday conducted a comprehensive full-scale emergency exercise, demonstrating its preparedness in handling major aviation incidents. The drill, held in the aftermath of the Ahmedabad air crash that killed 260, including 241 flyers, simulated a critical emergency scenario involving an A321 commercial aircraft with 222 passengers. Airport officials said the exercise depicted an aircraft reporting an engine fire warning before crash-landing within the airport premises, resulting in multiple fire locations and casualties scattered across a 500-metre radius. The simulation tested the airport's emergency response capabilities and multi-agency coordination. Over 200 personnel from 11 various agencies participated in the drill, including Airport Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF), Odisha Fire Service, CISF, State Police, NDRF, airlines, and medical services. The exercise featured realistic elements such as crash fire tenders, ambulances, and volunteer 'victims' on stretchers, with

temporary medical facilities enhancing the training's authenticity," airport director Prasanna Pradhan said. Emphasising the importance of such exercises, Pradhan said, "Today's exercise demonstrated the strength of our partnerships and the high level of readiness across all emergency response teams." Representatives from regulatory agencies and aviation safety organisations were present to evaluate the drill and provide feedback for future improvements. The exercise highlighted the airport's commitment to passenger and staff safety while testing the effectiveness of its Airport Emergency Plan (AEP). "Lessons learned and observations from the

drill will be incorporated into the airport's emergency response protocols to enhance future preparedness," Pradhan added. Similar exercise was carried out at Veer Surendra Sai Airport, Jharsuguda. The drill was part of the periodic testing of the AEP and was aimed to assess the airport's preparedness and inter-agency coordination in responding to a major aircraft accident scenario within the aerodrome vicinity. The drill simulated the crash of a commercial aircraft carrying 80 passengers and 4 crew members just before landing. The emergency scenario was triggered through a mock distress call received by the Air Traffic Control, activating a swift response from airport fire services and support agencies.

## SNIPPETS

**IBCS organises workshop on research**



**Bhubaneswar :** The Institute of Business and Computer Studies (IBCS), faculty of management sciences of Siksha 'O' Anusandhan Deemed to be University (SOA) organised an international workshop on 'Application of Multi-Criteria Decision Making (MCDM) Tools in Research' recently. The workshop was organised in collaboration with the Papua New Guinea University of Technology, Lae, Papua New Guinea. Inaugurating the event, Prof. (Dr.) Jibitesh Mishra, Professor of Computer Science and Applications and Dean (Students' Welfare) at the Odisha University of Technology and Research (OUTR), Bhubaneswar, underscored the rising significance of MCDM tools in navigating the complexities of the present volatile global business environment. Prof. Ayasa Kanta Mohanty, Dean of IBCS, presided over the program while Prof. Manoranjan Dash, Associate Dean, IBCS, delivered the keynote address. The workshop was coordinated by Dr. Bibhuti Bhushan Mishra, Associate Professor and Dr. Preeti Y. Shadang, Assistant Professor in the institute.

**Bank of Maharashtra opens its 59th Branch**

**Bhubaneswar:** The Bank of Maharashtra, one of premiere public sector banks, has opened a new branch at Mungapada, Jharsuguda. Now Bank of Maharashtra has 2 branches in Jharsuguda District & 59 branches in the state of Odisha. The bank also announced its plans to further strengthen its presence and customer reach in Bhubaneswar Zone. The new branch was inaugurated by Biswaranjan Naik, Chief Development Officer cum Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad, Jharsuguda, Zonal Manager Dilip Kumar Raulo and Branch Manager Kotay Biruli. This would be a step ahead to support our commitment to provide banking services to customers through a fast-expanding network of branches and other channels. This will facilitate smooth and timely delivery of customer service, improve credit delivery and reduced turnaround time for Retail, Agri and MSME sectors in the area, will further enhance customer satisfaction, said Raulo.



## +3 Admission in Odisha: 3rd selection list of UG courses released

**Bhubaneswar (DMC):** The Higher Education Department of Odisha government on Tuesday released the third selection list of Plus Three Admission on the Student Academic Management System (SAMS) website. As per the data shared by the Department, a total 49,818 students have been selected in 3rd round. This includes 21,023 male, 28,792 female and 3 Transgender candidates.

In the 3rd round of selection process, all the selected applicants are bound to click on the "Freeze" option, will have to pay the admission/differential fees (if required) in online mode from July 1 (12 PM) to July 4 (3 PM), download the intimation letter and have to report at the allotted HEIs from July 2 to July 4 (from 10 AM to 5 PM) to complete the admission related activities. As this is the final round, the slide & float option will not be available to the selected applicants. The stream-wise highest



cut-off marks for 3rd round are Arts Stream: Ravenshaw University, Cuttack with 90.83 % (Political Science), Science Stream: Physical Science: Ravenshaw University, Cuttack with 92.33 % (Physics), Biological Science with 91.83 % (Zoology), Commerce Stream: Ravenshaw University, Cuttack with 89.83 % (Commerce), Shastri Stream: Sanskrit (Degree) College, Badakia with 52.72% (Sahitya), Self-Financing Stream: Buxi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar (Autonomous) College, Bhubaneswar with 87.33 % (Computer Science); and Law Stream: University Law College, Utkal University with 82.83 (5 Year Integrated BALLB).

### PRESENT STATUS

**2,74,365:** Seat Strength  
**2,65,590:** Applied in Phase-I  
**79,752:** Admission taken in 1st round  
**29,648:** Admission taken in 2nd round  
**1,09,400:** Total Admission so far

# Govt deploys special teams to combat flood health risks

**Bhubaneswar (DMC):** In view of the post-diarrhea care and health conditions arising out of flood situation, the Odisha government has taken prompt and proactive steps to address public health concerns.

Two specialized health teams have been deployed in Keonjhar, Balasore, and Mayurbhanj districts to monitor, manage, and support the local response efforts. A dedicated team under the leadership of Dr Prameela Baral, Additional Director of Public Health, has been deployed to Keonjhar district to oversee the post-diarrhea situations. Dr Baral is closely monitoring the situation on the ground, particularly focusing on



water- and food-borne diseases. She is working in close coordination with the district administration to analyze the current health scenario, implement appropriate prevention and control measures, and ensure effective communication to the public on diarrhea prevention. She is also reviewing the stock position and availability of essential logistics and consumables such as ORS, IV fluids, antibiotics, disinfection of all drinking water sources, distribution of halazone

tablets, and other critical items to ensure uninterrupted support to the affected population and monitoring laboratory activities. Meanwhile, another team led by Dr Binay Das Mohapatra, Joint Director, has been deployed to Balasore and Mayurbhanj districts to assess the impact of the ongoing flood situation and to help prevent the emergence of water-borne diseases.

This team is working closely with district authorities to monitor for any unusual health events, issue advisories to prevent outbreaks, and implement measures to address and manage snake bite cases. As part of the preparedness strategy, Dr Mohapatra is also ensuring that

Anti-Snake Venom (ASV) is available in all health facilities, in accordance with government guidelines, and verifying the availability of necessary emergency logistics and medical supplies and availability of essential logistics and consumables such as ORS, IV fluids, antibiotics, disinfection of all drinking water sources, and distribution of halazone tablets.

The Health & Family Welfare Department of the Odisha government, remains fully committed to safeguarding public health and ensuring a timely, coordinated, and effective response to any health emergencies arising out of the current situation, the release added.

## Training programme for accountants of ULBs

**Bhubaneswar (DMC):** The Odisha Housing and Urban Development Department has launched a 40-day residential Induction Training Programme for newly appointed Accountants of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) at the Madhusudan Das Regional Academy of Financial Management (MDRAFM) in Bhubaneswar. The programme was formally inaugurated by Arindam Dakua, Director, Municipal Administration. In his address, he emphasised the critical role of ULB accountants in ensuring transparent and accountable urban financial systems.

The training aims to strengthen participants' capacities in financial management, urban governance, and practical field operations, enabling them to contribute effectively to the functioning of Urban Local Bodies. Sikha Biswal, Financial Advisor, H&UD Department, Bibhudutta Acharya, Course Director of the training programme, and senior officials from the Department and MDRAFM were present on the occasion and interacted with the trainees. The comprehensive training schedule includes classroom sessions, field exposure visits, and hands-on exercises, ensuring holistic capacity building of the participants. This initiative reflects the Department's commitment to building a professional and responsive urban administration system in Odisha.

# Scientists unlock secrets of Martian weather systems

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC):** Researchers from NIT Rourkela, in collaboration with scientists from UAE University and Sun Yat-sen University in China, provided new insights into the complex atmospheric phenomena of Mars through a comprehensive study spanning two decades with data collated from multiple Mars missions. The research, published in the journal New Astronomy Reviews, examines three crucial elements of Martian weather — dust devils, large-scale dust storms, and water-ice



clouds. The study was co-authored by Professor Jagabandhu Panda and research scholar Anirban Mandal from NIT Rourkela's Department of Earth and Atmospheric

Sciences, along with international collaborators. The team analysed data from various Mars missions, including India's Mars Orbiter Mission (MoM), to understand how dust and

water-ice interact to influence the planet's climate and temperature. Their findings revealed that dust devils, which are small spinning columns of air, are more prevalent during

summer in the northern hemisphere and play a vital role in keeping dust suspended in the atmosphere." Advancing weather prediction on Mars is not just a scientific pursuit; it's crucial for ensuring the success of future missions and understanding the planet's habitability," said Panda. He emphasised the need for more ISRO missions to Mars and increased investment in university research to further advance scientific understanding. The research also sheds light on Mars' notorious

dust storms, which can escalate to cover entire regions or even the whole planet. These storms operate in a feedback loop where sunlight heats the dust, warming the atmosphere and strengthening winds, which in turn lifts more dust into the air. The study's findings are particularly significant as they could help protect future spacecraft and support astronaut missions to Mars. "By tracking seasonal changes and their impact on dust and cloud formation, researchers refined our

understanding of the Martian climate system, potentially enabling more accurate weather predictions on the Red Planet," Panda said. A significant focus of the study was on Mars' water-ice clouds, which form in two distinct types — the aphelion cloud belt during summers when Mars is farthest from the Sun, and the polar hood clouds that form during winter. These delicate, wispy formations are particularly visible near the equator, around massive volcanoes like Olympus Mons, and in polar regions.

NEW INSIGHTS

## Chemical and Industrial Disaster Preparedness meeting held

**Paradip (DMC):**The Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA), in coordination with the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), Jagatsinghpur, successfully conducted a high-level meeting on Chemical and Industrial Disaster Management at Paradip on Tuesday. The objective was to enhance emergency preparedness and strengthen risk mitigation strategies across the Paradip industrial zone, which houses several major hazardous installations.

The meeting began with inaugural remarks from key dignitaries, including J. Sonal, IAS, Collector & District Magistrate, Jagatsinghpur; Dr. Kamal Lochan Mishra, IAS, Executive Director (CB), OSDMA; Malaya Kumar Pradhan, GM (ID & CBRN), OSDMA, Sunil Kumar Sahoo, GM (T&C), OSDMA, P.K. Mahapatra, Unit Head, IFFCO,



Manoj Kumar Panda, Deputy Director, Factories & Boilers, Cuttack Division; Chandra Sekhar Behera, Assistant Director, F&B, Paradeep Zone and Pushkar Chandra Behera, Regional Officer, SPCB, Paradip. In his address, the collector J. Sonal emphasized the importance of coordinated evacuation planning, operational readiness of green corridors, and establishment of Emergency Trauma Care Centres. He also stressed leveraging multi-modal evacuation routes and the State Emergency Control Room for real-time coordination. Malaya Kumar Pradhan assessed mitigation equipment and

highlighted the importance of public awareness and inter-agency coordination. Chandra Sekhar Behera presented on the current status of onsite and offsite emergency plans and the role of crisis groups. Pushkar Chandra Behera detailed the Pollution Control Board's emergency protocols, particularly for oil spill scenarios.

Representatives from major industries and emergency services of Odisha Govt- including ODRAF, Fire & Emergency Services, Indian Coast Guard, IOCL, IFFCO, PPL, BPCL, HPCL, and Paradip Port Authority shared their disaster management practices, safety infrastructure, and mutual-aid agreements. The event concluded with an interactive session and a vote of thanks by Manoj Kumar Panda, reaffirming the collective commitment to enhanced disaster resilience through joint planning, regular mock drills and community engagement.

## Sabuja Ratha flagged off in Bolangir



**Bolangir, (DMC):** Divisional Forest Officer Ajit Bisi formally flagged off the Sabuja Ratha to generate awareness among masses about plantation of trees in the district. Today is the first day of Bannohostov. We would distribute around 11 lakhs seedlings among the people to develop a green cover in the Bolangir district, says Ajit Bisi speaking to media men here on Tuesday.

## Alligation of Contaminated water supply by PHD

**Jagatsinghpur, (DMC)** As the pipe line of PHD going through Drain and canal, people of Jagatsinghpur Municipality apprehending contaminated water supply by PHD. Practically the old water supply structure of PHD not renovated after more than twenty years. After practical survey it is found that PHD pipe line passing through Panisalia Drain and Nagapur Drain. In some places the submerged pipe line of PHD extracting contaminated water from Drain and inside canal.

Even some times the PHD pipe line found leake and repairing of pipe line made war footing manner without mentioning hygienic method. The Pump house of PHD in a unhygienic atmosphere and no over head tank found inside municipality area. Besides that public taps are not mentioned properly and causing pollution. Water purifying method failed at Jagatsinghpur. In such situation people apprehending out break of diarrhoea due to contaminated water. Intellectuals demand renovation of PHD pipe line in municipal area.



## Inauguration of Van Mahotsav Week at Belpahar English Medium School



**jharsuguda (DMC):**The Van Mahotsav Week was inaugurated at Belpahar English Medium School on July 1st, Tuesday. The program was organized by the school's Eco Club. Pradeep Kumar Nayak, Range Officer of Belpahar Forest Range, was the chief guest. He planted a sapling to mark the beginning of the program. School Principal Sanjay Kumar Mishra, Deputy Principal Prafulla Kumar Mahapatra, senior teachers Ashok Dhir Samant, Sunant Kumar Panda, and Kavita Patel were present. Hamid Kumar Mahapatra, teacher-in-charge of the Eco Club, briefed about the purpose of celebrating Van Mahotsav Week and this year's theme, "A Tree for Mother". Deputy Principal Prafulla Mahapatra appealed to the students to plant one tree each. The chief guest explained the benefits of trees and requested the students to plant a tree in their mother's name and take care of it. Almond and baul saplings were planted in the school premises. Various competitions and programs will be organized throughout the week.

## Dibyasha wins Gold in Open State shooting championship

**Angul (DMC):** Golden Girl of Angul District, Dibyasha priyadarshini chopdar who was born at Talcher, a coal town in Angul district, has brought the name of the region to light by winning a gold medal in shooting sport. Ms. Dibyasha has lit up the name of the entire district by winning this gold medal in the prestigious 2nd State Open Shooting Championship held in Bhubaneswar.

After the news spread, he received many greetings and greetings from the industrial city. Talcher Naresh Shri Vijayendra Chandra Deb Birbar Harichandan felicitated him by awarding him a gold medal with a certificate at Bhubaneswar. Odisha Olympic Association president Sameer Mohanty and sports guru Hariprasad Patnaik have praised Dibyasha's shooting style and

wished her further progress. It is worth noting that when Dibyasha was in class 6th continuously she has been winning five times gold medals upto till date. Now she, by playing at the national level Pistol shooting in the ISSF category and qualifying for the selection trials to join the Indian team.

Dibyasha says that shooting is an expensive sport. It costs a lot to training and also to participate in competitions. Till date my coach is my father, he trained me to play both in rifle and pistol and took me to national level. But now I need high level training, so I request Odisha government and many private corporate institutions to arrange a high level training for me, so that my dream of winning a medal for the country in the



Olympics in the coming days will be fulfilled. However, Angul Collector & District Magistrate Mr. Abdal M Akhtar has recommended my request to NTPC, Kaniha, but more than a year has passed and no response has been While, three years ago

## Cleanliness & Plantation Drive Program Organised in Parkod GP

**NUAPADA/KHARIAR ROAD, (DMC):** A mega cleanliness and plantation drive program was organised in Parkod Gram Panchayat in Nuapada District on Tuesday. A rally was also taken out to mark cleaner and greener environment. The rally aimed to raise public awareness about the importance of cleanliness, hygiene and environmental protection.

Sarpanch Devendra Dewangan, PEO Balak Ram Majhi, PLV of District Legal Services Authority Nuapada Krishna Kumar Dewangan, Monalisa Dewangan, HM Tejrai Satnami, Ward Members of the Panchayat, Anganwadi workers, Mahila Mandals and students of different schools were actively participated in this rally.

They also planted saplings at the campus of Nodal Primary School. It is to be noted that Nuapada has become the first district in Odisha to be officially declared single-use plastic (SUP) free. The announcement was made on World Environment Day by collector Madhusudan Dash.



## Kujang Forest Department celebrated Van Mahotsav Week-2025

**Paradip, (DMC):** The Van Mahotsav-2025 was celebrated by the Kujang Forest Department on Tuesday. As part of the Van Mahotsav celebrations with the campaign "Ek Ped Ma Ke Naam" (One pl. mother's name), Forest Officer Kartikeshwar Khandei along with Sushant Sekhar Swain, Chairman, Narayan Birabar Samant Charitable Trust, Bidyulata Rout, Sarapanch, Japa panchayat, social activist Santosh Dash, Nishakar Rout, Forest Committee member Ramesh Puhan, Dhruv Swain, Nityanand Mallick and villagers Ranjan Swain, Pradip Puhan, Subha Narayan Swain, Bichi



Swain and others were planted saplings near Iribina village under Erasama block of Jagatsinghpur district. The event was coordinated by forest officials Padmanav Rout, Babuli Sethy and others. It is noted that the Van Mahotsav is celebrated during first week of July every year to highlight the importance

of trees and forests in preserving ecological harmony and ensuring ecological integrity, the Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India launched the program in the year 1950. Since then, it is being celebrated in the whole country by participating in tree plantation by Government organisations and the general public.

## IREDA Offers Bhojan and Jal Seva to Rath Yatra Devotees; CMD Visits Stall

**Puri (DMC):** Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd. (IREDA) is serving devotees of Mahaprabhu Shri Jagannathji through its Jal & Prasad Seva at the Rath Yatra in Puri, Odisha. The initiative will continue till 5th July 2025, offering drinking water to thousands of pilgrims. A group of people standing in a line. AI-generated content may be incorrect. Shri Pradip Kumar Das, Chairman & Managing Director, IREDA joined the Seva, interacting warmly with devotees and volunteers. On the occasion, he said, "It is by the infinite grace of Mahaprabhu Shri Jagannathji that IREDA gets this sacred opportunity to serve devotees for the second consecutive year. Alongside our mission in renewable energy, such social



initiatives reflect our commitment to community welfare." IREDA's Government Nominee Director Shri Padam Lal Negi, Independent Directors Shri Shabdsharan N. Brahmabhatt, Dr. Jaganath CM Jodhidhar, Smt. Rohini Rawat, and

senior officials also visited the company's stall and extended their support to the initiative. Earlier in the day, Dr. Bijay Kumar Mohanty, Director (Finance), IREDA also visited the company stall to support this noble cause.

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## CM reviews...

Bhoisevaks for streamlined chariot-pulling protocols. Recognising the scale of the festivals, he ordered the deployment of additional police forces at critical locations to safeguard devotees. Special attention was given to traffic control to ensure smooth movement and to fire safety, with the Fire Services Department directed to coordinate with the police to secure the beach area, where thousands are expected to gather.

## Death toll...

advancements in Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs), Intermediates, Excipients, vitamin-mineral blends, and Operations and Management (O&M) services, according to the company's website. Many victims were migrant workers from Odisha, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, reports claimed. At the time of the blast, around 108 workers were reportedly inside the facility. "There was a loud sound and I saw my colleagues flying into the air... some fell into nearby bushes, others landed far away," an employee at the Sigachi Industries plant told reporters as he stood outside Patancheru Area Hospital, where many of the injured were being treated. The factory worker was among the few who survived the catastrophic explosion that tore through the microcrystalline cellulose unit in Telangana's Pashamylaram industrial estate on Monday morning. The force of the blast, he said, was enough to bring down the roof and hurl men across the compound, some as far as 100 metres away.

## BMC official...

two are making baseless and fabricated claims. Stressing that he was assaulted in the office while performing his duties, the senior officer said these allegations are an attempt to divert attention. He expressed confidence that the law will take its course and move in the right direction. Sahoo also claimed that all ranks of staff from senior officers to ground-level employees have supported his version of events. Based on a complaint lodged by the officer, police have already arrested three persons in connection with the assault, while the administration is continuing its probe into the full sequence of events.

## Flood situation...

flow through large tracts of agricultural land. Central RDC B. Parameswaran visited the Jaleswar Municipality Office on Monday to assess the flood response measures. He later visited the banks of the Subarnarekha River and the Nandika area to examine drainage issues and flood conditions. In Mayurbhanj, heavy downpour caused widespread flooding. Rivers like Budhabalanga, Deo, Gangahar, and Sona are swelling, leading to inundation of over 100 villages across blocks like Morada, Shuliapada, Saraskana, Bangiriposi, Betanati, Barasahi, Gopabandhunagar, Karanjia, Jashipur, and Kusumi. Sources said over 300 kutch houses have been damaged. In many areas, floodwaters entered homes, and locals have been unable to cook for the past two days. Drainage congestion caused by flooding in Jarali and Sarali rivers led to severe waterlogging in various wards of Baripada town.

## Goddess...

three days. The Goddess then gets angry and breaks a part of Nandighosha chariot, parked in front of the Gundicha Temple in a custom known as Hera Panchami. While returning to the Shree Jagannath Temple, she avoids Bada Danda and secretly leaves through 'Hera Gohri Sahi'.

## The administration has made arrangements for darshan facilities for divyangs



**Puri (DMC):** On the advice and assistance of Puri District Collector Chanchal Rana, the divyangs have been provided darshan inside the Sri Gundicha temple today. District Collector Mr. Rana himself was present and greeted the divyangs and interacted with them.

Later, the district collector ordered that the darshan be arranged under the supervision of social security officer-in-charge Anita Patnaik. The divyang devotees expressed happiness by having darshan of the Lord at the Adapa Mandapa. The event was supported by social worker Siddharth Rai and all the volunteers of The Bell Sansthan.

## Bargarh District OAS Association Collective Leave

**Bargarh, (DMC):** In light of the distressing incident involving an attack on Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Additional Commissioner Shri Ratnakar Sahu, a group of 65 officers, including 42 OAS and 22 ORS, from Bargarh district, has submitted a formal request to the District Collector for collective leave for an indefinite period, effective immediately. This event was attended by senior OAS officers, Block Development Officers, and the Tehsildars, highlighting our ranks' collective concern. The Odisha Administrative Service Association (OAS) had initially considered a mass leave as a form of protest against the assault on our esteemed colleague.

However, following assurances from the Chief Minister regarding implementing appropriate measures, the OAS association postponed this action. While OAS officers are within their rights to take collective leave, it is essential to acknowledge the potential implications such actions may have on service regulations and public administration. The situation in Odisha is a significant reminder of the delicate balance between the right to express dissent and public service obligations.



## Air India Delhi-Vienna Flight Plunged 900 Feet Mid-Air, Days after Ahmedabad Crash

**New Delhi, (HS) :** An Air India flight took off from Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport for Vienna on June 14. However, soon after takeoff, it lost altitude - the plane dropped 900 feet mid-air. Both pilots have now been off-rostered pending the outcome of the investigation, the airline said. The incident happened two days after an Air India flight crashed in Ahmedabad minutes after takeoff, killing all but one person on board.

The action was taken after the matter was disclosed to the aviation watchdog Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in "accordance with regulations", Air India said in a statement. "Upon receipt of the pilot's report, the matter was disclosed to DGCA in accordance with regulations. Subsequently, upon receipt of data from the aircraft's recorders, further investigation was initiated. The pilots



have been off-rostered pending the outcome of the investigation," an Air India spokesperson. The Boeing 777 landed safely in Vienna after a flight of 9 hours and 8 minutes. Meanwhile, a

parliamentary panel led by JDU MP Sanjay Jha is all set to review recent air crashes and also manpower gaps in the aviation sector. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport,

chaired by Mr Jha, will meet on June 23 to take up aviation safety as a top priority, in the wake of the Ahmedabad Air India crash and the recent helicopter accident in Uttarakhand, sources told.

Ahmedabad Plane Crash: The London-bound Boeing 787 Dreamliner crashed moments after takeoff from India's Ahmedabad city on June 12, killing 241 of the 242 people on board and several people on the ground. The black boxes of the plane - the cockpit voice recorder (CVR) and flight data recorder (FDR) - were recovered in the days that followed, one from the rooftop of a building at the crash site on June 13, and the other from the debris on June 16. A preliminary probe report on the Air India crash is expected to be released by July 11. The report will be crucial as it may provide the possible causes of the fatal crash.

## India, Pakistan exchange prisoner lists; seeks early release of 159 Indians, consular for 26



**NEW DELHI, (HS):** India and Pakistan on Tuesday exchanged the biannual lists of civilian prisoners and fishermen held in each other's custody, with New Delhi urging Islamabad to expedite the release of 159 Indian nationals who have already completed their sentences and to grant consular access to 26 others. The exchange was done out through diplomatic channels in New Delhi and Islamabad, as part of the 2008 Agreement on Consular Access - one of the few functional bilateral mechanisms still in place between the two countries.

Under the pact, both sides share prisoner data twice a year, on January 1 and July 1. Another operational mechanism is the annual exchange of lists of nuclear installations, held every January 1 to prevent attacks on such facilities during hostilities. India submitted details of 382 civilian prisoners and 81 fishermen believed to be Pakistani. Pakistan, in turn, listed 53 civilian prisoners and 193 fishermen believed to be Indian. In a statement, External Affairs Ministry said India has called for the "early release and repatriation" of Indian civilian prisoners, fishermen along with their boats and missing defence personnel held in Pakistani custody. New Delhi pressed Islamabad to speed up the repatriation of 159 prisoners and fishermen who have completed their jail terms, and to immediately provide consular access to 26 others believed to be Indian, but who have not yet received access.

India also requested Pakistan to confirm the nationality of 80 individuals in Indian custody who are believed to be Pakistani, but whose return has been delayed due to lack of verification from Islamabad. Pakistan was further urged to ensure the safety and welfare of all Indian and believed-to-be-Indian detainees. According to the ministry, Indian efforts have led to the repatriation of 2,661 fishermen and 71 civilian prisoners from Pakistan since 2014 - including 500 fishermen and 13 civilian prisoners since 2023. "India remains committed to addressing, on priority, all humanitarian matters, including those pertaining to prisoners and fishermen in each other's country," MEA said. The bilateral ties nosedived between the neighbours following the April terror attack in Pahalgam, prompting India to impose a series of diplomatic and economic measures against Pakistan including the suspension of the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty.

### IAS Neha Byadwal Failed 3 Attempts

**New Delhi, (HS) :** She failed prelims in the first two attempts. In the third attempt, she wrote mains but failed, again. In the fourth attempt, she cleared the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) with an All India Rank (AIR) 569. She is Neha Byadwal, a 25-year-old IAS Officer posted in Gujarat. No mean feat, she achieved it with hard work, dedication and reportedly a three-year-long breakup with her mobile phone.

### RCB blamed for stampede chaos; IPS officer suspensions



**BENGALURU, (HS) :** The Bengaluru Bench of the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) held that the Karnataka government had "mechanically" suspended IPS officers without sufficient grounds over the stampede that claimed 11 lives during Royal Challengers Bengaluru's (RCB) victory celebrations at Chinnaswamy Stadium, and stated that RCB was prima facie responsible for the massive, unregulated gathering. The tribunal made these observations while quashing the suspension of Inspector General and Additional Commissioner of Police (West) Vikas Kumar Vikas and directed the state government to reinstate him immediately.

"Prima facie, it appears that the RCB is responsible for the gathering of about three to five lakh people. The RCB did not take the appropriate permission or consent from the police. Suddenly, they posted on social media platforms and, as a result of the said information, the public gathered. Because of a shortage of time on June 4, the police were unable to make the appropriate arrangements. Sufficient time was not given to the police," the tribunal observed.

"The public was gathered the whole night intervening June 3 and 4 on the streets of Bengaluru, and the police were making arrangements for the same. Another function was also organised by the state government in front of Vidhana Soudha. Police were also deputed there. Suddenly, the RCB created the nuisance without any prior permission. It cannot be expected from the police that within a short time of about 12 hours, they will make all arrangements required in the Police Act or in other rules, etc," it said. "Police personnel are also human beings. They are neither 'God (Bhagawan)' nor a magician, and also do not have the magic powers like 'Alladin ka Chirag' which was also able to fulfil any wish only by rubbing a finger.

### 6 Women Slip on Top of Bihar Waterfall

**Gaya, (HS) :** Six women had a miraculous escape after they slipped into the sudden gush of water at the Languriya hill waterfall in Bihar's Gaya district. The video of the incident that took place on Sunday was captured on camera and has since gone viral on social media, serving as a stark reminder of the dangers near water bodies. The nearly two-minute clip shows the six women stranded in the middle of the waterfall as water gushed around them. Initially, one woman was saved by crossing a rock. Trying to do the same, three women attempted to cross a rock but were swept into the water. They were, however, pulled up by the villagers - while they were just a few meters away from what looked like a big drop. In the meantime, the fifth woman was rescued from the other side of the waterfall. The sixth woman was still stuck in the middle of the waterfall. Locals rescued her a few minutes later. During the rescue operations, one of the women was injured after she collided with a rock. She was treated at a hospital, officials said. According to eyewitnesses, many people were enjoying the waterfall as the weather was normal. Suddenly, water gushed from the hill, causing the tourists to leave the area immediately.

## 5 dead, 16 missing, 332 rescued following flash floods in Mandi

**CHANDIGARH, (HS) :** Five people died and sixteen are missing in the Karsog subdivision of Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh due to a series of flash floods that were triggered by sixteen cloudburst events. Meanwhile, at least 332 people were evacuated from affected areas in Mandi, Chamba and Hamirpur districts of the State as authorities worked to trace the missing and restore blocked routes.

The Kiratpur-Manali highway has been blocked at multiple places between Mandi and Kullu, and the motorists were stranded inside road tunnels the



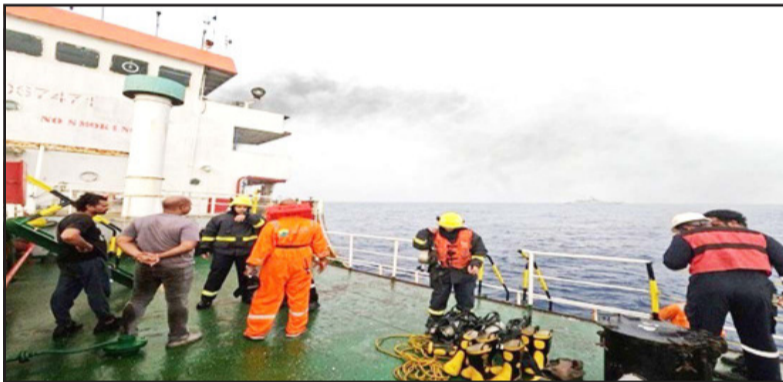
whole night. Five hydroelectricity projects have also been shut down due to high silt levels and high river inflows. Sources said that cloudbursts took place at at least four places in the Mandi district, which resulted in flash floods. Many houses, vehicles and bridges were

also washed away it was early morning, thus the people ran to safe themselves. Meanwhile, 16 people, including 12 children and 4 women, were rescued. A seven-member family from Riki village was also rescued and relocated to a safer area. Meanwhile, sixteen persons are missing as two homes were swept away at Jayuni Khad by the tributary of the Beas River in Sianj Panchayat. Three other homes were washed away in Talwara village of Gohar, and four remain missing in Karsog. Also, ten houses and 12 cowsheds were destroyed and 26 cattle perished.

## Indian Navy Contains Fire on Board Vessel with 14 Indian Crew

**New Delhi, (HS) :** The Indian Navy contained a fire on board a Palau-flagged tanker in the North Arabian Sea and ensured safety of 14 of the vessel's Indian crew members. The Navy swung into action and launched the fire-fighting operation after receiving a distress call from the vessel.

The vessel reported a major fire in its engine room while operating approximately 80 nautical miles east of Fujairah in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). "The Indian Navy undertook a high-risk fire fighting and rescue operation on-board Palau-flagged tanker MT Yi Cheng 6 on June 29 in the North Arabian Sea, successfully stabilising the situation and ensuring the safety of 14 Indian crew members," according to an Indian readout. The navy deployed its warship INS Tabar to assist the vessel. "Responding swiftly, INS Tabar proceeded at maximum speed to provide assistance," the Navy said in the readout. It said seven crew members were immediately evacuated to INS



Tabar using the ship's boats. "No injuries were reported, and all crew were examined by Tabar's medical team. The remaining crew members, including the master, stayed on board to assist with fire containment," it added. A six-member team of fire fighters from INS Tabar was deployed to contain the fire.

"Initial fire fighting efforts from the Indian Naval personnel and ship's crew resulted in considerable reduction in

intensity of the fire with smoke restricted to the engine room," the Navy said. "The fire fighting effort was further reinforced with 13 additional Indian Navy personnel (5 officers and 8 sailors)." "Sustained efforts by the Indian Navy's firefighting team along with crew members have successfully brought the fire under control," it said. The Navy said INS Tabar remains in the vicinity of the vessel for continued support.

## Warn of conflict of interest in environment panel advising SC

**New Delhi, (HS) :** A group of 60 civil servants has written to the Chief Justice of India expressing concerns about a potential conflict of interest in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)-appointed Central Empowered Committee (CEC), which advises the Supreme Court on environmental cases. The letter, signed by 60 retired seasoned bureaucrats, pointed out that

the CEC does not include an independent expert and is instead composed entirely of government officials, which could influence the outcomes of cases concerning amendments to the Forest Conservation Act (FCA) of 1980.

The CEC, which should have five members, is currently made up entirely of former government servants, including retired scientists, rather than

including at least one independent expert as required. The letter cast doubt on the integrity of the CEC and stated that "a CEC which is comprised of officers who had held the highest positions in the MoEFCC, and were closely involved in policy making, can hardly be expected to give independent advice to the Supreme Court, advice that is different from what they gave while they were in the government."

## Karnataka Power Play Could Be Kharge's Defining Test

Sabyasachi K.

**New Delhi, (HS) :** As speculation over a possible change of Chief Minister in Karnataka gains momentum, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has stirred the pot by suggesting that the issue is entirely for the party leadership to decide. "No one can say what is going on in the high command," Kharge remarked, signaling a reluctance to directly intervene in the political churn in his home state.

Kharge's statement has surprised many within the Congress. Traditionally, the Congress president has been regarded as the supreme authority in the party, a position Kharge now appears to distance himself from. "From 1969 until now, we have always treated the Congress president as the high command. It's unusual to see Kharge stepping back like this," said a senior Dalit leader within the party. The BJP was quick to pounce, mocking that the Congress "high command" is nothing but a proxy for the Gandhi family. An opposition MP even quipped that the Congress leadership is like a "ghost"-unseen but omnipresent. Party insiders, however, dismiss suggestions that



Kharge's authority has been undermined. Many believe that while Kharge is the elected president, Rahul Gandhi continues to be the decisive force within the party, steering major decisions and organisational changes. Rahul's growing influence is visible in the party's ongoing structural revamp, including his push to strengthen the Congress from the district level under the banner of "2025: The Year of the Organisation." Yet, this rebuilding effort has drawn some criticism for being overly top-down,

with external groups parachuted into states to lead district-level restructuring. Interestingly, Kharge's apparent discomfort with some of his responsibilities has also been noted. With advancing age and demanding travel schedules, Kharge seems content allowing the Gandhis to take centre stage during key electoral battles. The current situation also revives memories of past Congress leadership dilemmas. In 1996, PV Narasimha Rao faced similar isolation when party colleagues distanced

themselves during his legal troubles, forcing his resignation as Congress president-a move he later regretted.

Kharge's decision to hold on to his post as Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, despite the party's "one person, one post" principle, further signals his pragmatic approach to his dual responsibilities. For now, the question remains: Is Kharge being sidelined or is he carefully choosing his battles in a party where power increasingly seems to rest with the Gandhis? Only time will reveal how the Congress president navigates this complex power maze.

### 6 Die of Suspected Heart Attack

**Bengaluru, (HS) :** At least six people have died of suspected heart attack in Karnataka's Hassan district in the past 24 hours. Authorities have stated that autopsy reports are still awaited to confirm the exact cause of death. Meanwhile, state Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao has confirmed that 18 deaths due to heart attacks have occurred in Hassan district over the past month. According to sources in the Health Department, the victims of the suspected heart attack cases include: Sanjay, a 27-year-old resident of Somenahallikoppalu in Hassan district, who collapsed while partying with friends on Monday evening and died at the hospital. He had been married for 2.6 years. Harshita, a 22-year-old from Hassan, died in an ambulance while being taken to the hospital from a primary health centre. She had come to her parents' house in Shivamogga. She was married and lived in Hassan. Lepakshi, a 50-year-old homemaker, developed back pain at 7.45 am on Monday at her residence in Hassan. Though she was rushed to the hospital, she died of a cardiac arrest. Muttaiah, a 58-year-old English professor, collapsed while having tea in front of his college in Channarayapatna town, Hassan district. Doctors declared that he died of a massive heart attack.

### 3 killed, 6 injured as bus collides with truck

**RAIPUR, (HS) :** Three people died and at least six others were injured after a passenger bus enroute to Raipur from Jagdalpur (Bastar) rammed with a Hyva truck on a national highway near Kendri, about 30 km from the Chhattisgarh capital on Tuesday. A police team from Abhanpur rushed to the spot, shifted the injured to a local hospital. "The bus, moving at high speed while trying to overtake the Hyva lorry, hit the truck from the left side. The bus of Royal Travels was on its way to Raipur. The injured six have been admitted in the local hospital for immediate medical attention", said Siddeshwar Pratap, town inspector, Abhanpur. The bodies have been sent for post-mortem.

## As B'desh Marks One Year of July Protests, Former PM Hasina's Son; 'Democracy Under Threat'

**Dhaka, (H.S):** Sajeeb Wazed, son of former Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, on Tuesday, highlighted that 10 months after last year's violent July protests in the South Asian country, many people have begun to realise the gravity of their mistake "after being misled" into participating in the movement. Last year, starting July 1, Bangladesh witnessed a violent student movement demanding reforms of the quota system in government jobs, which led to the overthrow of the democratically elected government of Hasina.

The unceremonious exit of Hasina last August following the violent student protests was globally seen as a major setback to the democratic set-up in the Muslim-majority nation of nearly 170 million people. Bangladesh is currently in a state of political limbo under the caretaker government led by Muhammad Yunus, until the promised general elections in 2026. Former Information and



Communication Technology (ICT) Advisor to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Wazed, also asserted that the "independence of the nation, the safety of its people, and its democratic foundation are all under threat, in the hands of an authoritarian regime without any public mandate."

"Recognising a mistake is not weakness - it is the beginning of courage. Let us stand together for our country and its people. The July Riots of July-August 2024 mark one of the darkest chapters in Bangladesh's recent history. Fueled by foreign funding and backed by extremist forces, that

period of violence and unrest saw the involvement of many - some knowingly, others misled and confused," Wazed said in a post on X. "Many members of the professional community - people who had served the country for years - fell into the trap of misinformation, rumours, and false promises and thus became part of that conspiracy.

To those we see on social media, in the press, or in private expressing regret, disillusionment, and sorrow for having been misled - we bear no resentment. We seek no vengeance," the post added. Emphasising that the Awami League does not believe in the

politics of revenge, Wazed stated that, inspired by the ideals of the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the party believes in "forgiveness, empathy, and always looking toward the future." The former Advisor called on the people to unite for the sake of "freedom, democracy, and the sovereignty of Bangladesh."

"Let us forget divisions of party, opinion, profession, or past choices - and act now to save Bangladesh from the grip of this authoritarian rule. Even if it is late, we thank you for your awakening. Now is the time to act for the country. Now is the time to stand with the people," Wazed stated. Meanwhile, last month, the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) charged Hasina with crimes against humanity. It has set July 1 (Tuesday) as the date of the hearing of charges against the former Prime Minister and two others over crimes against humanity.

## Thailand's Constitutional Court Suspends PM Paetongtarn



**Bangkok, (H.S):** Thailand's Constitutional Court suspended Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra on Tuesday after accepting a petition seeking her removal from office over a leaked phone call on border issues with Cambodia. A panel of judges unanimously voted to accept the petition and ordered Paetongtarn to stop performing her duties as prime minister starting Tuesday pending a final ruling, the court said in a statement.

To prevent serious and irreparable damage, temporary measures shall be taken, the court said, adding that the defendant is prohibited from exercising duties and powers related to national security, foreign affairs, and finance until the court delivers its ruling, according to a report by Xinhua news agency. The decision comes after a group of senators last month filed a petition accusing Paetongtarn of breaching the constitution by serious violation of ethical standards over the telephone conversation with

Cambodian Senate President Samdech Techo Hun Sen. Last week, thousands of protestors gathered in the Thai capital, Bangkok and demanded the Prime Minister's resignation following the leaked phone call. Speaking to reporters at the government house after the ruling, Paetongtarn said she humbly accepted the court's decision and will submit an explanation within 15 days as requested. According to local media reports, Deputy Prime Minister Suriya Juangroongruangkit will assume the role of acting prime minister and is set to lead new

cabinet members in a swearing-in ceremony on Thursday. Thai King Maha Vajiralongkorn has endorsed a cabinet reshuffle as proposed earlier by Paetongtarn, according to a royal command issued on Tuesday prior to the court decision, following the exit of a key party from the ruling coalition. Paetongtarn, the 38-year-old Pheu Thai Party leader and the daughter of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, was appointed last August to become Thailand's youngest and second female prime minister after winning a parliamentary vote.

## Indo-French Joint Military Exercise 'Shakti 2025' Concludes In France

**Paris, (H.S):** The eighth edition of the Indo-French Joint Military Exercise 'Shakti' concluded on Tuesday after two weeks of intensive training and cooperation between the Indian and French armed forces. Held from June 18 to July 1 in France, the exercise was hosted by the 13th French Foreign Legion Demi-Brigade (13 DBLE) and involved more than 500 personnel from various units of the French Army, Foreign Legion, Navy, and the French Air and Space Force. India was represented by a 90-member contingent, including a Battalion from the Jammu and Kashmir Rifles and troops from other arms and services.

The exercise featured approximately 50 armoured and tactical vehicles, along with fighter jets from both sides. The exercise was conducted in two phases with the first one, held from June 18 to 21 in Aveyron's Monclar district, focused on joint training in weapon handling, combat drills, and command coordination. The second phase, from June 22 to 26 in Herault, saw the deployment of the Monclar Combined Arms Tactical Group (GTIA) in an open-field semi-urban combat exercise that tested troops during



both day and night operations. This year's drill emphasised tactical interoperability, use of modern military technology, and refining combat strategies. French legionnaires had previously participated in Shakti 2024 in India, and both sides reaffirmed their commitment to deepen military collaboration and share best practices."

Exercise Shakti was a vital opportunity for Indian and French military personnel to boost joint operational preparedness for facing the toughest combat situations in a sub-conventional environment under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, with training being conducted in a realistic semi-urban terrain, while strengthening ties with a strategic partner", said

a press statement from the French Embassy in New Delhi. "Serving as an effective platform for exchanging best practices in tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPS), Exercise SHAKTI will pave the way for deeper cooperation and mutual respect between the French and the Indian armed forces as well as significantly reinforcing the Indo-French defence partnership", it added.

The Indo-French Shakti exercise serves as a key platform for enhancing tactical, technical, and procedural synergy between the two nations. Alongside other bilateral defence exercises such as Garuda (Air Forces) and Varuna (Navies), Shakti reflects the evolving and robust strategic partnership between India and France.

**Mauritius, (H.S):** Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, arrived in Mauritius Tuesday on a visit that aims at further strengthening the bilateral relationship which is characterised by deep and abiding bonds based on common friendship, culture, and a shared civilisational heritage. "The visit highlights the regular high-level engagement between India and Mauritius and the importance India attaches to Mauritius as a key partner in our Neighbourhood First, Vision Sagar and MAHASAGAR, Africa Forward policies, and our commitment to the Global South", the Indian Embassy in Mauritius posted on X.

The leadership of the two countries enjoys a high level of trust and mutual understanding, which is reflected in the continued high-level political engagement. These special ties have also resulted in uniquely close cooperation in maritime security, development partnership, capacity-building, cooperation in international fora and bilateral technical assistance through deputation of Indian experts to the region. The close bonds are also evident in the numerous India-assisted



development projects that dot the Mauritian landscape. The enduring cultural and people-to-people ties between India and Mauritius are nurtured by the Indian Cultural Centre in Mauritius - which is India's biggest in the world - and the World Hindi Secretariat, a bilateral organisation for the global promotion of Hindi.

The Neighbourhood First policy, inter alia, is aimed at enhancing physical, digital and people-to-people connectivity across the region, as well as augmenting trade and commerce. This policy has evolved into an institutional priority for all the relevant arms of the Government managing relations and policies with India's neighbourhood. The 'Security

and Growth for All in the Region' (SAGAR) concept was first articulated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Mauritius in 2015. Under this concept, India envisages a free, open, inclusive, peaceful, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region, one which is built on a rules-based international order, sustainable and transparent infrastructure investment, freedom of navigation and overflight, unimpeded lawful commerce, mutual respect for sovereignty, peaceful resolution of disputes, as well as equality of all nations.

Earlier this year, on the invitation of the Prime Minister of Mauritius, Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid a State

Visit to Mauritius to attend the National Day celebrations of Mauritius on March 12 as the Chief Guest. A contingent of Indian Defence Forces also participated in the celebrations along with a ship from the Indian Navy. During the March visit, Prime Minister Modi and Ramgoolam had comprehensive and productive discussions on the entire gamut of bilateral relations between Mauritius and India, reaffirming the strong and enduring bond while reinforcing the shared commitment of both countries to enhance the bilateral relationship across all sectors.

The two leaders had also reaffirmed that Mauritius and India enjoy a special and unique relationship that is unparalleled, given the shared bonds of history, language, culture, heritage, kinship and values. They further acknowledged that Mauritius-India ties, anchored in people-to-people and cultural exchanges, have grown from strength to strength in the last several decades into a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership that cuts across various domains and benefits the two countries, their people and the wider Indian Ocean Region.

## India Won't Yield to Nuclear Blackmail or Spare Terror Sponsors: EAM Jaishankar



**Washington, (H.S):** External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar reiterated India's firm stance against terrorism and nuclear intimidation, asserting that New Delhi will not be deterred by concerns over Pakistan's nuclear arsenal in responding to cross-border terror attacks. In a strongly worded statement during an interview with Newsweek at its headquarters in One World Trade Centre near the 9/11 Memorial in Manhattan, Jaishankar said that India would not give a "free pass" to either terrorists or the states backing them and that nuclear threats would not prevent India from acting in its national interest."

We are very clear there will be no impunity for terrorists, that we will not deal with them any longer as proxies and spare the government which supports and finances and, in many ways, motivates them. We will not allow nuclear blackmail to prevent us from responding," Jaishankar said. The EAM directly addressed the longstanding global cautionary view that conflict between India

and Pakistan must be carefully handled due to the nuclear capabilities of both nations. "We've also heard this for too long - that both India and Pakistan are nuclear countries, and therefore, the other guy will come and do horrible things, but you mustn't do anything because it gets the world worried," Jaishankar said. "Now, we are not going to fall for that. If he is going to come and do things, we are going to go there and also hit the people who did this," he added, drawing applause from the audience. "So no yielding to nuclear blackmail, no impunity to terrorists, no more free pass that they are proxies.

And we will do what we have to do to defend our people," he said. "We believe that terrorism is actually a threat to everyone. No country should use it as an instrument to further its policies because, at the end of the day, it comes to bite everyone," he said, adding that the message to the world is that there should be zero tolerance for terrorism. He said that for India, even though the experience of terrorism has become intense in the last four

decades, it started soon after the country gained Independence. "Terrorists were sent into Kashmir, with an idea that they were proxies and tribal invaders and soon enough, "the Pakistani Army followed," he said, recalling the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks and the 2001 Parliament attack. He specifically referenced the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgalam, in which 26 innocent tourists were killed, describing it as a calculated attempt to inflict economic damage by targeting the tourism sector in Kashmir."

It was an act of economic warfare. It was meant to destroy tourism in Kashmir, which was the mainstay of the economy. It was also meant to provoke religious violence because people were asked to identify their faith before they were killed," Jaishankar said. Highlighting the long pattern of cross-border terrorism, he noted a growing national sentiment that "enough is enough".

He stressed that the infrastructure supporting these terrorist groups is not hidden but exists openly in Pakistan's urban areas. "These are terrorist organisations who have the equivalent of their corporate headquarters in the populated towns of Pakistan," Jaishankar said. "Everybody knows what the headquarters of Organisation A and Organisation B are, and those are the buildings, the headquarters that India destroyed," he added. India destroyed high-value terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) after it launched Operation Sindoor on May 7 in retaliation for the Pahalgalam terror attack.

## UNHCR Welcomes Mali's New Law To Protect Stateless Persons

**Bamako, (H.S)** The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) welcomed Mali's recent adoption of an innovative law aimed at protecting the rights of stateless persons and improving their situation, according to a statement released. "The adoption of this law marks a major step forward in human rights protection in Mali and clearly demonstrates the government's commitment to ending statelessness. It brings hope to thousands of vulnerable people," said Georges Patrick Menze,

UNHCR acting representative in Mali. According to UNHCR, the legislation defines statelessness, specifies the rights and duties of stateless persons, and proposes sustainable solutions. It covers stateless migrants and people born in Mali, guaranteeing equal rights to health, education, employment, housing and justice alongside Malian nationals, Xinhua news agency reported. The law also protects stateless persons from penalties due to lack of legal documents, prohibits their

expulsion except in certain cases, and allows them to acquire or confirm Malian nationality. Many in Mali, especially nomadic groups, refugees and remote border communities, face statelessness due to lack of civil documentation. Since 2017, with UNHCR support, Mali has naturalised nearly 2,400 people and provided civil documents to over 30,000 people. UNHCR pledged continued support for implementing the law and urged ongoing international backing.

## Pak's Human Rights Commission Raise Alarm Over Declining Democratic Standards

**Islamabad, (H.S):** The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) highlighted a significant decline in democratic standards in the country, fueled by increasing concerns over the "legitimacy of the general elections and the weakening of the parliamentary system". Addressing a press conference on Monday, the HRCP launched its flagship annual report on the state of human rights in 2024 in Pakistan.

The report revealed that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province endured significant casualties among civilians as well as law enforcement and security personnel in 2024 as a result of militancy, reflecting the region's deteriorating security environment. In the Kurram district of the province, the rights body stated that the sectarian violence and tribal rivalries also contributed to nearly 250 deaths, while the consequent closure of roads and supplies triggered a humanitarian crisis. "The deterioration in democratic governance, civic freedoms and



law and order raised serious concerns over the region's political and social stability. Data from the provincial police indicates that 77 people were charged with blasphemy and 49 people arrested, including one woman. However, the brutal lynching of a tourist in Swat, following an accusation of blasphemy, reflects an alarming rise in vigilantism nationwide", read the report of the HRCP. "The state's ban on the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement ahead of a national jirga restricted civic space further. The report also recorded at least 105 new cases of enforced disappearances

in the province, based on official data, prompting repeated judicial interventions," it added. The HRCP report further mentioned that legislative output remained limited, with only 30 bills introduced and 21 passed. It also stressed that the judiciary of Pakistan continued to face pressure, with more than 23,000 cases pending at the Peshawar High Court and a backlog exceeding 38,000-many involving contempt proceedings against political and policy actors. The report documents persistent gender-based violence, including hundreds of cases of "domestic

abuse, sexual assault, and honour killings." "Violence against children also surged, with scores of minors killed, assaulted or sexually abused, reflecting serious gaps in child protection. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa remained a key route for the deportation of Afghan nationals under the federal government's Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan," said the report.

Additionally, the report pointed to "labour rights violations continuing unabated", adding that at least 26 miners lost their lives due to hazardous working conditions and militant attacks, underscoring the ongoing risks faced by workers in extractive industries. "A spate of kidnappings saw at least 30 labourers abducted by militants in separate incidents. Persistent wage issues were also reported across sectors, despite provincial pledges to raise the minimum wage. Environmental challenges intensified, with floods and torrential rains claiming over 100 lives and Peshawar ranking among the world's most polluted cities," noted the report.

## On Doctor's Day, Vedanta Salutes its Medical Heroes Serving More Than Five Lakh People

**Bhubaneswar (DMC):** As India observes National Doctor's Day, Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest producer of aluminium, salutes the unwavering dedication and compassion of its 105 doctors, along with their medical teams who are the lifelines of healthcare for more than five lakh people across Vedanta Aluminium's hospitals and diagnostic centres in Odisha and Chhattisgarh. On this day dedicated to honouring the contributions of medical professionals, Vedanta reaffirms its commitment to building healthier communities through accessible, high-quality healthcare.

Behind every hospital, mobile health unit (MHU) and health camp is a team of 105 doctors, and 455 nurses and medical staff, whose tireless service has become a beacon of hope for some of India's most remote and underserved communities. Their relentless efforts extend beyond curative care to preventive healthcare, awareness-building, and nurturing healthier futures. Through its flagship healthcare facilities including the BALCO Medical Centre(a 170-bed world-class oncology hospital in Naya Raipur, Chhattisgarh), diagnostic centres in Jharsuguda and Laikera - the largest in Western Odisha, the Vedanta Hospital and Mata Santoshi Jan Kalyan Hospital in Kalahandi, Odisha, and a fleet of



(MHUs, Vedanta's medical professionals have touched countless lives. To date, the teams have facilitated over 3.5 lakh OPD visits, treated more than 54,000 cancer patients, and conducted over 1,500 cataract surgeries, helping restore health, dignity, and hope to thousands.

At the BALCO Medical Centre, the medical team has performed more than 10,000 surgeries and continues to deliver comprehensive, affordable cancer care to patients from across the region, offering hope where it matters the most. Vedanta's healthcare ecosystem extends further, with diagnostic centres in Jharsuguda and Laikera serving 57,000+ patients, offering vital services like advanced radiology and pathology. In remote villages, MHUs - each staffed with a doctor, nurse, lab technician, and pharmacist - continue to bridge the gap in healthcare access.

These units deliver free consultations, medicines, and diagnostic services directly to people's doorsteps. The doctors also conduct regular awareness sessions on critical topics like hypertension, diabetes, maternal and child health, menstrual hygiene, and chronic disease prevention.

Regular mega health camps, specialized eye camps, and assistive device distribution drives have become lifelines for thousands, while ongoing awareness programs on HIV/ AIDS, tuberculosis, cancer, nutrition, and de-addiction continue to make a significant community impact. Speaking on the occasion, Rajiv Kumar, CEO of Vedanta Aluminium, said, "Our doctors, nurses, and medical staff are the true champions of community health. Their unwavering commitment and tireless service have brought

quality healthcare within reach for lakhs of people who need it the most. On Doctor's Day, we salute their spirit and reaffirm our resolve to support them in their mission to create healthier, more empowered communities." In the past year alone, Vedanta marked key health observances with impactful outreach. For World Health Day, the team organized a multi-specialty health camp benefiting 377 people and a blood donation drive collecting 32 units of blood. On World Tuberculosis Day, 545 patients received nutrition baskets and care, resulting in 171 successful recoveries.

During World Breastfeeding Week, a sensitization campaign reached 350 mothers, while 11 mega health camps across 227 villages served 3,455 individuals. Additionally, the cataract surgery initiative restored sight to 1,507 patients, transforming lives with the gift of vision.As Vedanta Aluminium celebrates Doctor's Day, it celebrates the real heroes: doctors, nurses, and healthcare workers whose compassion, skill, and perseverance are transforming healthcare outcomes for thousands in the hinterland. The company remains steadfast in its mission to expand healthcare infrastructure, scale community outreach, and empower its medical teams with the tools they need to continue delivering excellence.

## GST Enhanced Taxpayer Base, Ease of Doing Business In India: Economist



**New Delhi, (H.S):** The Goods and Services Tax (GST) has been one of the most significant reforms undertaken in India over the past decade, Dr. Manoranjan Sharma, Chief Economist at Infomeries Ratings, said on Tuesday. According to him, GST has not only expanded the country's taxpayer base but also made doing business considerably easier compared to earlier times.

In a conversation with IANS, Sharma said, "Over the last ten years, India has witnessed several important structural changes, and GST stands out among them." "The impact is clearly visible in the numbers. In the financial year 2024-25, GST collections stood at Rs 22.08 lakh crore, with an average monthly collection of Rs 1.84

lakh crore - over 9 per cent higher than the previous year. In contrast, GST collections in FY 2020-21 were Rs 11.37 lakh crore," Sharma mentioned.He further pointed out that the number of registered taxpayers under GST has grown significantly due to periodic reforms implemented by the government."

When GST was first introduced, there were around 60 lakh taxpayers. Today, that number has surged to 1.51 crore," Sharma told IANS. While acknowledging that the initial phase of GST implementation came with challenges, Sharma noted that timely government interventions helped address many of the issues." Over time, the adoption of GST has increased steadily, which is a

very positive sign for the Indian economy," he added. When asked about a recent Deloitte survey that found 85 per cent of businesses believe GST has had a positive impact on their operations, Sharma agreed with the findings. "Earlier, businesses had to deal with multiple tax rates and compliance burdens.

GST has centralised the tax structure under the 'One Nation, One Tax' principle, making it much easier to do business in India," Sharma mentioned. He further said that while GST implementation has seen strong progress over the last seven to eight years, there is still room for improvement. "To move forward more effectively, we need to focus on simplifying the tax process, resolving taxpayer grievances, and ensuring faster refunds," he explained.

## SBI's Balance Sheet Size Bigger Than GDP of 175 Countries: Data

**New Delhi, (H.S):**The State Bank of India (SBI) currently adds 1.1 per cent of global GDP and 16 per cent of India's GDP, the nation's largest bank said on Tuesday, adding that in all the government-sponsored social security schemes implementation, the bank now holds more than 25 per cent share. In the Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), the SBI has opened 15 crore accounts, has enrolled 14.6 crore people under the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), 6.7 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), and 1.73 crore in Atal Pension Yojana (APY).

The bank constitutes 40 per cent profit of all public sector banks (PSBs) in FY25 and a 2.53 per cent contribution in corporate income tax (AY26), according to the report. With 52 crore-plus customers, SBI is larger than the population of the United States of America and the third most populous country on Planet

Earth. The SBI's balance sheet size is bigger than the GDP of 175 countries," revealed the data shared by the bank.The balance sheet of the nation's largest financial institution has soared to Rs 66 lakh crore in its 70th year of operation.The SBI YONO app registrations have reached 8.8 crore, and are growing, making the SBI the 18th most populous nation in terms of YONO customers, according to the bank.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman congratulated the SBI on completing 70 years of service to the nation. "With over 23,000 branches, 78,000 Customer Service Points (CSPs) and 64,000 ATMs, SBI's footprint today is formidable and it is truly the Banker to every Indian. The digital transformation it has achieved in the last decade has been immensely beneficial to its customers," she said in a post on social media platform X.The SBI has also been instrumental in supporting 1.5 crore farmers, 1.3 crore Self-Help Groups (SHGs)

led by women, 32 lakh street vendors under PM SVANidhi, 23 lakh MSMEs, and lakhs of artisans across various schemes, the Finance Minister said. Meanwhile, SBI Mutual Fund, India's leading asset management company, on Tuesday announced the launch of SBIMF Smart Assist, an AI-powered conversational assistant available on WhatsApp. Designed to simplify every stage of the mutual fund journey, SmartAssist helps users learn about mutual funds, invest, and manage their portfolios - all through a simple, WhatsApp chat-based experience."

With the launch of SmartAssist - our AI-powered WhatsApp chatbot, we are bringing the power of AI directly to our investors, making mutual fund investing more intuitive and accessible. This is a significant step in our journey to enhance investor experience and adopt tech for growth and efficiency," SBI Mutual Fund MD and CEO Nand Kishore said.

**New Delhi, (H.S):** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that eight years have passed since GST was introduced, and it stands out as a landmark reform that has reshaped India's economic landscape."By reducing the compliance burden, it has greatly improved the Ease of Doing Business, particularly for small and medium enterprises", PM Modi stated."

GST has also served as a powerful engine for economic growth, while fostering true cooperative federalism by making states equal partners in this journey to integrate India's market," the Prime Minister said in a statement on X.PM Modi had called GST "a path-breaking legislation for New India" at the launch on July 1, 2017. Eight years on, the numbers speak for themselves with GST collections soaring to a record Rs 22.08 lakh crore in 2024-25, marking a year-on-year growth of 9.4 per cent. The number of taxpayers has more than doubled from 60 lakh to



over 1.51 crore under the GST regime.The average monthly collection stood at Rs 1.84 lakh crore in 2024-25, a blockbuster year. In 2020-21, the total collection was Rs 11.37 lakh crore, with a monthly average of Rs 95,000 crore.

The following year, it rose to Rs 14.83 lakh crore, and then to Rs 18.08 lakh crore in 2022-23. In 2023-24, GST collections reached Rs 20.18 lakh crore, showing consistent growth in compliance and economic

activity.The One-Nation One-Tax made tax compliance easier, reduced costs for businesses, and allowed goods to move freely across states. It brought together a wide range of indirect taxes under one umbrella by replacing levies like excise duty, service tax, VAT and others.

This helped remove the cascading effect of taxes and brought consistency in the tax system across the country. According to a Deloitte survey, 85 per cent of taxpayers have

reported "a positive experience with GST" and view it as a more simplified and transparent tax process that facilitated the ease of doing business. This marks the fourth year in a row where sentiment has improved.GST is seen as a consumer-friendly reform that has resulted in the removal of multiple taxes and improved compliance, and the average tax rates have come down. Goods like cereals, edible oils, sugar, snacks and sweets now carry lower tax rates. A study by the Finance Ministry noted that GST helped households save at least four per cent on monthly expenses in total. Consumers now spend less on daily necessities.

GST has also transformed the logistics industry. Long queues of trucks at state borders and corruption-prone checkpoints have become a thing of the past. Goods now move faster and more freely across state lines. Transport time has improved by over 33 per cent, according to several studies. Companies have cut down on fuel costs, and major highways are less congested.

## Indian Economy Remains A Key Driver of Global Growth: RBI

**New Delhi, (H.S):** Despite an uncertain and challenging global economic backdrop, the Indian economy remains a key driver of global growth, underpinned by sound macroeconomic fundamentals and prudent macroeconomic policies, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said on Monday.The Reserve Bank, in the June 2025 issue of its 'Financial Stability Report (FSR)', said that elevated economic and trade policy uncertainties are testing the resilience of the global economy and the financial system" Financial markets remain volatile, especially core government bond markets, driven by shifting policy and geopolitical environment.

Alongside, existing vulnerabilities such as soaring public debt levels and elevated asset valuations have the potential to amplify fresh shocks," it read. However, the domestic financial system is exhibiting resilience fortified by healthy balance sheets of banks and non-banks, said the Central Bank. Financial conditions have eased supported by accommodative monetary policy and low volatility in financial markets. The strength of the corporate balance sheets also lends support to overall macroeconomic stability."The soundness and resilience of



scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) are bolstered by robust capital buffers, multi-decadal low non-performing loans ratio and strong earnings," the RBI report mentioned.Results of macro stress tests affirm that most SCBs have adequate capital buffers relative to the regulatory minimum even under adverse stress scenarios. Stress tests also validate the resilience of mutual funds and clearing corporations."

Non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) remain healthy with sizable capital buffers, robust earnings and improving asset quality. The consolidated solvency ratio of the insurance sector also remains above the minimum threshold limit," it noted.In this global milieu, the Indian economy remains a key driver of global growth. Growth momentum is buoyed by strong domestic growth drivers, sound macroeconomic fundamentals and prudent policies."Nonetheless,

external spillovers and weather-related events could pose downside risks to growth. The outlook for inflation, on the other hand, is benign and there is greater confidence in the durable alignment of inflation with the Reserve Bank's target," said Sanjay Malhotra, Governor, RBI.

Financial sector regulators remain committed to protecting customers, promoting competition and fostering innovation as they strike the right balance between improving efficiency and growth, and safety and soundness." Financial stability, like price stability, is a necessary condition, and not a sufficient one to boost India's potential growth. As custodians of financial stability, we must endeavour to develop a well-functioning financial system that not only promotes macroeconomic stability but also provides financial services efficiently," said Malhotra.

**New Delhi, (H.S):** The Central government has received Rs 7,32,963 crore up to May in the current financial year, which is 21 per cent of the total receipts of the corresponding budget estimate for 2025-26 and reflects the strong fiscal position of the country, according to figures released by the Finance Ministry on Monday. The receipts comprise Rs 3,50,862 crore tax revenue (net to Centre), Rs 3,56,877 crore of non-tax revenue, and Rs 25,224 crore of non-debt capital receipts.

The Centre has transferred Rs 1,63,471 crore to state governments as devolution of share of taxes for this period, which is Rs 23,720 crore higher than the previous year, the statement said. The total expenditure incurred by the Centre is Rs 7,46,126 crore (14.7 per cent of the corresponding BE 2025-26), out of which Rs 5,24,772 crore is on revenue account and Rs 2,21,354 crore is on capital account for projects in the highways, ports and railway sectors.Out of the total revenue expenditure, Rs 1,47,788 crore



is on account of interest payments and Rs 51,253 crore is on account of major subsidies, the statement explained.Given that the government is off to a speedy start in FY26, with May and April 2025 data showing that revenue receipts are already at 21 per cent of the budgeted target, it is expected to meet its revenue targets this year.With the strong emerging fiscal position in 2025-26, the

government is likely to have some additional headroom to meet unforeseen expenditure such as defence, according to a Bank of Baroda report.In its outlook for FY26, the report points out that the government has budgeted a fiscal deficit of 4.4 per cent of GDP, assuming 10.1 per cent growth in nominal GDP."We expect this growth to be around 11 per cent, as we believe real GDP will range between 6.4-6.6 per cent this

year," the report states. This is expected to provide additional fiscal space to the government. The income tax cut is also expected to give a boost to consumption, which in turn will support indirect tax receipts, according to economists.On the spending front, keeping up with past trends, the government has begun front-loading of expenditure from Q1 itself, with capex at an impressive figure of over 2.2 lakh crore.

## Shefali's post-mortem revealed no foul play, says friend Pooja

Shefali Jariwala, who shot to fame after appearing in the Kaanta Laga remix video from 2002, died on June 27, 2025, in Mumbai.

Actor Shefali Jariwala's death left everyone in the industry shocked. The actor died at the age of 42 after reportedly suffering a cardiac arrest on Friday night. In an interview with Vicky Lalwani, the late actor's friend Pooja Ghai opened up about her final moments, staying close by her family on the day of her death and more. During the interview, Pooja

opened up about the preliminary post-mortem report and said, "The good part is that there was no foul play. My only fear, the moment I saw Parag was... Oh my god, the guy was grieving, the guy naturally wanted to be left alone, and he was being cross-questioned by the police. Of course, they were doing their duty. But we've seen it in past cases, I don't want to name people who have gone through this. You've seen (next of kin) being grilled for months, and their life is over. They don't even have enough time to grieve, because

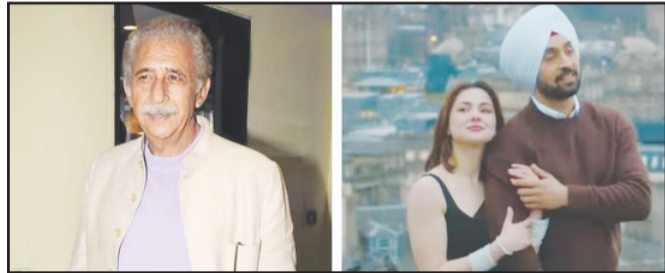
they're constantly under the radar of the police and the media. Few months are probably just gone in that. The moment I saw Parag, my only prayer was, 'I hope he gets out of this as early as possible'. He could spend time with himself. He could be there and grieve. Fortunately, the report says there was no foul play, and he was released." She also added how Parag was beside Shefali throughout when she was being rushed to the hospital. "I don't think he was in the state. He was just numb. He just couldn't gather. Shefali was the

world to him," she said. The details of the late actor's final post-mortem report is not yet out. When asked whether Shefali had taken the IV drip just hours before her death, Pooja said, "I am not sure about that, but the only thing that I saw was that while I was standing there the police called for the guy who gave the drip just to check what medicine she was taking, and that's when it unfolded that she had taken an IV drip that day."

On June 27, Shefali was rushed to Bellevue Multispeciality Hospital by her

husband, Parag Tyagi, reportedly after suffering a cardiac arrest. However, she was declared dead on arrival, according to news agency. The Mumbai Police sent her body for a post-mortem to ascertain the cause of death. Since Shefali's death, several visuals from her final rites at Oshiwara crematorium have surfaced on the internet, which saw the family grieving the death of the actor. A recent video also showed Parag unable to control his emotions as he carried Shefali's ashes to the ocean for asthi visarjan.

## Naseeruddin's support for Diljit shows his 'frustration'



Actor Naseeruddin Shah defended actor and singer Diljit Dosanjh amid the controversy surrounding Sardar Ji 3, and his collaboration with Pakistani actor Hania Aamir. After facing backlash, he has now deleted the post from his Facebook account. Meanwhile, filmmaker Ashoke Pandit, who serves as the

president of the Indian Film & Television Directors' Association, has slammed the veteran actor for his statement and said that he suffers from 'frustration'.

In the now-deleted post, Naseeruddin had stated, "I STAND FIRMLY WITH DILJIT. The dirty tricks dept of Jumla Party has been awaiting

chance to attack him. They think they've got it at last. He was not responsible for the casting of the film, the director was. But no one knows who he is whereas Diljit is known the world over, and he agreed to the cast because his mind is not poisoned." Filmmaker Ashoke Pandit has called out Naseeruddin's statement and responded to news agency. He said, "We are not surprised, not shocked, by Naseeruddin Shah's response to Diljit Dosanjh's entire episode. He calls us the Jumla party, he calls us goons. The educated, versatile actor, senior person in the industry, calling us goons proves the frustration and kind of restlessness of Naseeruddin

## Akshay's Housefull 5 beats L2 Empuraan in box office

Akshay Kumar's star-studded comedy whodunnit entertained the audience, and it's quite evident in the box office numbers. Earlier, the film surpassed Ajay Devgn's Raid 2 to grab the second spot on the list of highest-grossing Bollywood films of the year. Now, it has even overtaken L2: Empuraan's lifetime collection, which previously held its place just behind Vicky Kaushal's Chhaava.

Housefull 5 released in theatres on June 6 and opened to a strong start. As days passed, the film showed steady improvement at the box office. According to the makers, in 25 days, the film has earned 300 crore at the global box office and 200 crore net at the



domestic box office. This means the film has finally surpassed Venkatesh's Sankranthiki Vasthunam (which had a 255 crore collection) and Mohanlal's L2: Empuraan (265.5 crore collection). While the top spot is still held by Vicky Kaushal, Rashmika Mandanna, and Akshaye Khanna's Chhaava, which collected a massive 807.88 crore worldwide and 601.54 crore in India, Akshay's Housefull 5

has now emerged as the second-highest-grossing Indian film of 2025.

The fifth instalment in Sajid Nadiadwala's successful Housefull franchise features a massive ensemble cast including Akshay Kumar, Riteish Deshmukh, Abhishek Bachchan, Nana Patekar, Jacqueline Fernandez, Nargis Fakhri, Sonam Bajwa, Sanjay Dutt, Jackie Shroff, and Johnny Lever, among others.

## Is Jackson Wang a Part of Hrithik's Krrish 4



There has been a lot of buzz around Jackson Wang potentially being featured in Krrish 4, particularly after he met Hrithik Roshan and his family in Mumbai. The rapper-singer even fueled rumors with a cryptic post suggesting that perhaps he might act in the movie or work on the soundtrack. However, it looks like the rumormongering has been

laid to rest now. In a recent conversation, Jackson clarified that he's actually not doing Krrish 4 after all. What's interesting, however, is that when Jackson hangs out with Hrithik, work isn't really discussed in their conversations. So, it seems their hangouts are about friendship, not collaboration.

Jackson also made a point to

compliment Diljit Dosanjh, whom he worked with on the song Buck. He freely acknowledged being a fan of the Punjabi singer, which is rather awesome. Krrish franchise has been a major phenomenon in Indian cinema, with the franchise beginning way back in 2003 with Koi Mil Gaya, followed by Krrish and Krrish 3. Now, Hrithik is said to be preparing for Krrish 4 as well, which will also be his directorial debut. In between, he has another project planned - War 2, with whom he will be sharing screen space with Jr NTR. Jackson, however, is presently touring in support of his new album, Magic Man 2, and has made a couple of recent visits to India, including a stint at Lollapalooza India last year.

## Odisha Cops Gold, Silver at World Police & Fire Games 2025

**Cuttack, (DMC) :** Odisha Police have brought laurels to the state and country by securing Gold and Silver medals at the 2025 World Police and Fire Games in Birmingham, USA. Constable Ashok Dandasena bagged the Gold medal in the men's 800-meter race, displaying exceptional speed and determination. Constable Susmita Tigga clinched the Silver medal in the women's 800-meter race with an outstanding performance. These remarkable achievements have elevated Odisha Police's



reputation and brought glory to the state and nation on a global stage. Odisha Director General of

Police (DGP) Yogesh Bahadur Khurania congratulated the athletes for their achievement.

## India face selection conundrum for comeback against England



**BIRMINGHAM, (HS) :** India will need to shed their conservative selection approach and give themselves the best chance to take 20 wickets on what is expected to be another batting surface in the second Test against England, beginning here on Wednesday. By the team management's own admission, India missed a specialist bowler at Leeds, Kuldeep Yadav to be specific, as England comfortably chased down a record 371 on day five of a game that the visitors should have won.

In the words of assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate, India are grappling to find a team combination that doesn't compromise on batting depth and yet has the bowlers to take 20 wickets. "In terms of managing the strategy there, we're looking at each bowler individually, feeling what we feel they can get wickets-wise. And then it's just trying to balance up and trying to calculate as best you can what the best chance of getting into the Test match." Doeschate admitted. "But you need 20 wickets. So the attacking party is obviously finding someone who can get wickets as well. And we are grappling with that. We don't stop talking about that. We're trying to figure it out," he added. The weather has been rather hot in Birmingham and the surface, bound by a decent covering of grass, is dry underneath. On this very ground three years ago, England had gunned down a daunting 378 with ridiculous ease to draw the series. Of late, the same 22 yards have offered

## Gill says Bumrah not playing for 2nd Test

**BIRMINGHAM, (HS) :** Though it is not certain whether Team India premium speedster Jasprit Bumrah will play in the second Test against England or not, captain Shubman Gill has confirmed about his availability for the important match at Edgbaston, beginning Wednesday. However, the newly appointed captain made it clear that the final call on his participation will be taken later in the day once the team management has reviewed the 22 yards dished out for the contest. "Jasprit Bumrah is definitely available. We just need to see how we manage his workload in the upcoming Test matches. We are trying to find the right combination where we can take 20 wickets and score runs as well on this kind of wicket. We will take a final look at the wicket today and then think about our final combination we want to go with tomorrow," said Gill. "We knew prior to the series that Jasprit Bumrah would be playing three Tests, so we had all the possible combinations we might go in with, looking at the wickets. You definitely miss your best bowler if he is not playing, but we had that kind of sorted



before the series started," he added.

The India pacer, who took five wickets in the first innings of the Leeds Test, was always uncertain for the second Test, but the fact that he featured in two of India's three practice sessions, including the one on the eve of the Birmingham game, sends out mixed signals. The decision could have been a lot easier had India won the Leeds, but with the 2nd Test of the series starting in 8 days' time, not playing Bumrah could be catastrophic.

plenty of runs to the batters in county cricket. The spinners will eventually come into the game and India need to decide whether they want someone like Washington Sundar who can assist Ravindra Jadeja or get Kuldeep, who is a much better wicket-taking option. What is confirmed is that India will go in with two spinners. Shardul Thakur was the fast bowling all-rounder at Leeds but there is a strong possibility that batting all-rounder Nitish Reddy starts on Wednesday. Thakur did not have the best of outings but dropping him after one opportunity would be borderline harsh on him. The

question mark ahead of the game is over Jasprit Bumrah's availability. If he doesn't play the second of his decided quota of three Tests, the pace line-up is expected to be Mohammed Siraj, Akash Deep and Prasidh Krishna. With Bumrah hard to handle at the other end, the pacers did not have the required consistency in their lengths to test England batters. They would be wiser after that experience, and if Bumrah doesn't play, will have a lot to prove. Jadeja, who could not get much out of a turning pitch on day five at Headingley, would be eager to make an impact too. India's catching would have

Karun Nair are certain to get another opportunity after an underwhelming start to the series.

Squads: England: Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Ollie Pope, Joe Root, Harry Brook, Ben Stokes (captain), Jamie Smith (WK), Chris Woakes, Brydon Carse, Josh Tongue, Shoaib Bashir. India: Shubman Gill (captain), Rishabh Pant (VC & WK), Yashasvi Jaiswal, KL Rahul, Sai Sudharsan, Abhimanyu Easwaran, Karun Nair, Nitish Reddy, Ravindra Jadeja, Dhruv Jurel (WK), Washington Sundar, Shardul Thakur, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd. Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, Akash Deep, Arshdeep Singh, Kuldeep Yadav.

## Smriti moves to 3rd spot in ICC T20I rankings



**DUBAI, (HS) :** India vice-captain Smriti Mandhana on Tuesday moved up one spot to be ranked third in the ICC rankings for batters in women's T20 Internationals. Mandhana, who is already world No. 1 in ODIs, made the leap after her maiden century in the opening T20I of the five-match series against England last week, in which she also stood in for injured skipper Harmanpreet Kaur. Mandhana smacked 15 fours and three sixes to make 112 off 62 balls, powering India to a 97-run victory against England at Nottingham. It was also the biggest defeat in terms of runs for the hosts in the shortest format. The left-handed Indian opener now has a career-high of 771 rating points and is ranked third, behind West Indies' Hayley Matthews, who is second with 774 points, and Australia's Beth Mooney at the top with 794 points.

Among other Indian batters, comeback opener Shafali Verma and Harleen Deol also made gains. "Fellow Indian opener Shafali Verma gains one place to move to 13th on the same rankings list following her innings of 20 in the same match against England, while teammate Harleen Deol re-enters the batter rankings in equal 86th after a quickfire knock of 43," the ICC said in a release. The ICC added, "Pakistan spinner Sadia Iqbal remains at the top of the list for T20I bowlers, but it's tight at the top with just 44 rating points separating the top 10 players."

## Anderson Ruled out of Neeraj Classic with Ankle Injury



**New Delhi, (HS) :** Two-time world champion Grenada's Anderson Peters has been ruled out of the Neeraj Chopra Classic, a World Athletics category A javelin event, due to an ankle injury, organisers said on Tuesday. Poland's Cyprian Mrzyglod, ranked 16 in the world, has been named as Peters' replacement in the final lineup of the one-day competition, classified as a World Athletics Continental Tour Gold meet, slated to take place at the Sri Kanteerva Stadium in Bengaluru. "Anderson Peters has been ruled out of the Neeraj Chopra Classic 2025 due to an ankle injury sustained during his last competition. Poland's Cyprian Mrzyglod has been named as his replacement in the final lineup," organisers posted on X. Peters, known for his explosive throws beyond 90m, a personal best of 93.07m, has two world titles to his name, which he won in 2019 and 2022. He is also a reigning Pan American Games gold medalist. The 27-year-old thrower is the biggest name to miss out on the competition. Peters is a second athlete who has been ruled out of the competition due to injury. Earlier, India's Asian Games silver medalist Kishore Jena ruled out of the Neeraj Chopra Classic 2025 due to an ankle injury, with fellow Indian javelin thrower Yash Vir Singh replacing him in the final entry list for the athletics meet.