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English Daily



51 dead, 22 missing amid rain fury



Shimla, (HS) : At least 51 people have lost their lives and 22 others are missing in Himachal Pradesh as torrential rains, flash floods, and landslides continue to wreak havoc across the state during the ongoing monsoon season, according to the latest official data.

The State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC), under the Department of Revenue, Government of Himachal Pradesh, released a cumulative damage assessment report on July 2, covering the period from June 20 to July 1. The report reveals significant damage to human

lives, private properties, livestock, and public infrastructure across the state's 12 districts. "A total of 51 deaths have been reported so far due to multiple causes, including flash floods, drowning, landslides, lightning strikes, and road accidents. The number of missing persons currently stands at 22, with Mandi district reporting the highest -- 10 deaths and all 34 missing persons -- primarily due to flash floods and cloudbursts," the SEOC said in its report. The report further stated that 103 people have been injured in

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Flood situation remains grim in Odisha

Bhubaneswar (DMC) : With heavy rain battering many parts of Odisha, the flood situation remained critical in the state as several rivers are in spate inundating many villages in affected districts. Rivers like Subarnarekha, Budhabalang, Baitarani and Brahmani continued to swell with floodwaters snapping road connectivity in several areas.

The body of a man, who was swept away by the floodwaters of Subarnarekha River in Balasore district on Tuesday, was recovered by a team of the Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF), sources said. The deceased has been identified as Rakesh Singh of Bishnupur village in Balasore district. Singh had gone missing on Tuesday afternoon while bathing in the floodwaters.

The Subarnarekha River continued to flow above the danger mark, causing widespread flooding in the district. The floodwaters have inundated several villages in Baliapal block, with over 20 villages affected in six panchayats. The water level



on the roads is waist-deep, with some areas experiencing water levels up to 4-5 feet. The flood has caused substantial damage to crops and infrastructure, with thousands of people affected. The district administration has deployed teams from the Odisha Fire Service, ODRAF, and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) to assist in rescue and relief operations. A report from Jajpur said flood fear gripped several low-lying areas in the district after the water level of Baitarani River breached the danger mark due to incessant rainfall triggered by a low-pressure. Baitarani was reportedly flowing at 18.25 metre

against the danger mark 17.83 metre near Akhuapada village of the district. Flood fear loomed over many panchayats of Dasarathapur, Korei, Binjharpur and Jajpur blocks. The district administration is monitoring the situation and has directed field-level officials to remain alert.

Meanwhile, normal life was disrupted in parts of Koraput district following incessant rain triggered by a low-pressure system over the region. The downpour has led to a sharp rise in the water levels of several rivers and streams, submerging roads and disrupting vehicular movement. Sources said a

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Five-Nation Tour: Modi arrives in Ghana



New Delhi (HS) : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday arrived in Ghana on a two-day visit during which he will hold talks with the West African country's top leadership and review the strong bilateral partnership. Modi, who is visiting Ghana at the invitation of President John Dramani Mahama, was given a guard of honour upon his arrival at the Kotoka International Airport here.

This is the prime minister's first-ever bilateral visit to Ghana. It is also the first prime ministerial visit from India to Ghana in three decades. Ghana is a valued partner in the Global South and plays an important role in the African Union and the Economic Community of West African

States, Modi said in his departure statement. Modi added that he looked forward to talks aimed at further deepening the two countries' historical ties and opening up new windows of cooperation, including in the areas of investment, energy, health, security, capacity building and development partnership. "As fellow democracies, it will be an honour to speak at the Parliament of Ghana," he added. During the visit, Modi will hold talks with the president of Ghana to review the strong bilateral partnership and discuss further avenues to enhance it through economic, energy, and defence collaboration, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

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Assault on BMC Officer

Jagannath meets BJP Chief, says ready to cooperate

Bhubaneswar (DMC) : Amid growing demand for his arrest in BMC Additional Commissioner Assault case, BJP leader Jagannath Pradhan on Wednesday met party's Odisha unit president Manmohan Samal and offered full cooperation with whatever legal action is taken as per the law. Pradhan visited the party office in Bhubaneswar in the evening. "State party president had called me and we held discussions," he said while emerging from the party office in after over an hour-long meeting with Samal.

Describing his meeting with Pradhan as an internal matter of the party, the state BJP chief said

the attack on the senior OAS officer has been condemned by everybody. The state government will take further decision and if something is decided, party spokesperson will inform the media, Samal said. Earlier, Pradhan stated in a social media post that the recent incident at Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) was 'unfortunate and condemnable.' He further said that will cooperate with whatever legal action is taken as per law in interest of Odisha and the state government. "For the past two days, the opposition has been trying to cook a political

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Mayor slams BSCL over defunct CCTVs, security lapse

Bhubaneswar (DMC) : Two days after the brutal attack on Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Additional Commissioner Ratnakar Sahoo in office premises, a high-level meeting was held on Wednesday to review and bolster security arrangements in the building.

Voicing concern over security lapse and defunct gadgets at the BMC headquarters, Mayor Sulochana Das criticised the Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) alleging negligence in security and infrastructure maintenance in the building. Noting that CCTV cameras at the BMC building have been defunct for a long time, she told reporters that BSCL is officially

responsible for building maintenance and surveillance systems. Das sought to know as to why this issue was not flagged and resolved earlier by the Smart City authorities. If BSCL is unable to handle these responsibilities, they should transfer these tasks to BMC, she said.

Raising questions over the role of security personnel, Das sought to know as to how the miscreants managed to enter the building and attack the senior officer despite the presence of so many security personnel. It may be noted that the senior OAS officer was assaulted when during a public grievance hearing. In the

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Govt urges agitating OAS & ORS officers to resume work

Bhubaneswar (DMC) : As official work was severely hit due to a 'cease work' protest by Odisha Administrative Service (OAS) and Odisha Revenue Service (ORS) officers, the state government on Wednesday appealed to them to resume duty.

The officers abstained from duty since Tuesday protesting the brutal assault on the Additional Commissioner. Based on the complaint lodged by Sahoo, a senior OAS officer, five people have been arrested so far in connection with the incident. To resolve the ongoing deadlock, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi had also convened a high-level meeting with senior officials. After the meeting,

Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari urged the protesting officers to end their agitation and assured that no such incident would happen again. Stating that the incident has shocked everyone, he said nobody is supporting the assault on the senior officer. Five people have been arrested so far in connection with the incident, while other accused will be nabbed and forwarded to court, the Minister told reporters. Noting that the representatives of the OAS Association have already held meetings with the chief minister and the chief secretary, Pujari said if they want, the government is ready for further discussions.



CLASSICAL SHOW: A vocalist performs at 'Guhari', a devotional and spiritual music festival organised by Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Odissi Research Center in association with the Department of Odia Language, Literature and Culture at Utkal Ranga Mancha Bhubaneswar on Wednesday.

Four from Odisha dead in Telangana blast



Bhubaneswar (DMC) : At least four workers from Odisha have died in the massive explosion at Sigachi Industries Limited's pharmaceutical factory at Pashamylaram industrial area in Telangana's Sangareddy district, which turned chunks of the building into rubble on Monday. The deceased have been

identified as Lagnajit Duari of Tigriria in Cuttack, Rajmala Jagamohan of Chhatrapur in Ganjam district, Manoj Rout from Balasore, and Dolagobinda Sahu from Jajpur. Four others from the state - Samir Padhi of Ganjam, Nilambar Bhadra of Nabarangpur, Chandan Kumar Nayak of

Bhadrak and one Chitansen Batra, who native places remains unknown, - are currently undergoing treatment. While Padhi is in the ICU at Pranaam Hospital in Madinaguda with 35% burn injuries, Chandan and Nilambar are being treated in the general ward for minor injuries. Officer on Special Duty at Odisha Paribar's directorate Pritish Panda, who along with OPS Chandra Sekhar Hota are in Telangana to oversee rescue efforts for Odia workers, stated that many bodies are severely charred and require DNA identification. "We are yet to ascertain the exact number of the workers from the state because most of them had gone through

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SPACE TALK

Astronaut to inspire young minds with live ham radio session on July 4

Bengaluru, (HS) : In a landmark moment for space outreach and education, Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla is set to interact with school students and scientists at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) this Friday, not from Earth, but from his orbital outpost aboard the International Space Station (ISS). The interaction, to be conducted via ham radio, is designed to ignite curiosity among young minds and promote interest

in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

The session is being coordinated by the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS), a global initiative that facilitates live communications between astronauts in space and students on Earth. The contact will be established through a telebridge at the U R Rao Satellite Centre (URSC) in Bengaluru, scheduled for Friday, July 4 at



10:17 UTC (3:47 PM IST) via K6DUE. Shukla, part of the Axiom-4 mission, is currently on a 14-day scientific expedition aboard the ISS. On Sunday, he conducted a space microalgae experiment, deploying sample bags and capturing images to study algae strains. These organisms could become vital in long-duration space missions, offering sustainable and nutrient-rich food sources. The Axiom-4 team is also contributing to the Neuro Motion

VR project, where astronauts use VR headsets to perform tasks that test cognitive and motor responses. Brain activity is monitored using functional near-infrared spectroscopy (fNIRS) to understand how microgravity affects the human brain.

Additionally, data is being gathered for the Telemetric Health AI study, which integrates biometric and mission data to better understand cardiovascular and balance systems in space.

This research could revolutionise real-time health monitoring in space and on Earth.

Friday's live session offers students a rare chance to speak with an astronaut from space a conversation that could shape the future careers of young Indian scientists and engineers. As Shukla orbits above, his voice will echo the possibilities of human exploration and the boundless potential of young minds back home.

WB Crime

A college, like a hospital, is meant to be a refuge and a place of equality. For a 24-year-old law student at Kolkata's South Calcutta Law College, however, the campus became the space for brutal violation. Her alleged rape on June 25 - less than a year after the rape and murder of a trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College - is an indictment of a state and society that pledges safety to its women only to betray these promises time and again. It is also a story of an abdication that has become a recurring feature in West Bengal - crimes against women are hijacked by a raucous and partisan politics in a state that professes to put women at the centre. If four accused have been arrested and a Special Investigation Team constituted. But the outrage has been co-opted by political agendas. Opposition parties have spotlighted the Trinamool Chhatra Parishad (TMC student wing) affiliation of three of the four accused - a former student and contractual employee, and two current students; the BJP has formed a "fact-finding" committee to probe institutional lapses. The TMC government has promised "exemplary punishment", but not before tone-deaf, misogynistic remarks have been made by its own functionaries. The predictable aftermath of the crime sidesteps the foundational failures that enable such horrors. Gender-based violence in India is not an aberration, it is structural. Institutional safeguards are often more performative than functional, political expediency frequently trumps moral clarity. This is particularly acute in Bengal, where law and order is enmeshed in a shadow network of political influence and patronage.

The horrific December 2012 Delhi gang rape had spurred a long-overdue reckoning with misogyny. That reckoning must not be allowed to fade into complacency. Banerjee's government must reframe its commitment to gender equity in unequivocal terms. It must confront the culture of impunity head-on - rebuild institutional guardrails that have been systematically eroded, and hold both perpetrators and enablers to account, irrespective of political affiliation. When a woman cannot walk into a college or hospital without fear of violence, it is not just a failure of governance, it is a collapse of the very idea of a civilised society.

3rd July

Plastic Bag Free Day



International Plastic Bag Free Day, celebrated on July 3, is a global initiative that aims to eliminate the use of plastic bags. Plastic bags may seem like a grocery shopping convenience, but they are also a huge strain on the environment. It can take up to 500 years for plastic bags to disintegrate, so they make up a large portion of what stays in our landfills and pollutes our waterways. July Holidays

For most of our history, single-use products were blasphemous. But through the end of the Industrial Revolution and into the modern era, plastic became a cheap and plentiful resource. Plastic bags are just one perfect example. From birth to ban, the history of the plastic bag has impacted our world. In 1933, polyethylene, the most commonly used plastic, was created by accident at a chemical plant in Northwich, England. While polyethylene had been created in small batches before, this was the first synthesis of the material that was industrially practical, and it was initially used in secret by the British military during World War II.

By 1965, the one-piece polyethylene shopping bag was patented by the Swedish company Celloplast. Designed by engineer Sten Gustaf Thulin, the plastic bag quickly begins to replace cloth and plastic in Europe. After controlling 80 percent of the bag market in Europe, plastic bags went abroad and were widely introduced to the United States in 1979. Plastic companies began to aggressively market their product as superior to paper and reusable bags.

It wasn't until 1997 that sailor and researcher Charles Moore discovered the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, the largest of several gyres in the world's oceans where immense amounts of plastic waste have accumulated, threatening marine life. It was discovered that plastic bags are notorious for killing sea turtles, which mistakenly think they are jellyfish and eat them.

Bangladesh became the first country in the world to implement a ban on thin plastic bags in 2002 after it was found that plastic bags played a key role in clogging drainage systems during disastrous flooding. Other countries quickly followed suit, such as South Africa, Rwanda, China, Australia and Italy.

International Plastic Bag Free Day looks for safer alternatives to demonstrate that a world without the use of so much plastic is possible. It is part of the Break Free from Plastic Movement, which began in September 2016, and has been joined by nearly 1,500 different organizations. The movement is looking for solutions to the plastic pollution crisis, to make the planet safer for humans, the environment and wildlife.

Public Servant Assault Theory



Dr. Sarada Prasad Kar

The State of Odisha is utterly shocked seeing an uncivilized criminal atrocity that too by workers of a party in power. A senior officer of the rank of Additional Secretary, Shri Ratnakar Sahoo, OAS, BMC, while hearing public grievances at the office was dragged from his office and brutally kicked and assaulted in front of a BJP Corporator. Astonishingly, the CM office yet not revealed any stringent action on the culprits plying away of the spot. Slapping and attacking a public servant on duty is an offense under Section 353 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). This section deals with assault or criminal force used to deter a public servant from performing their duty. Let's see ahead how the police have assessed the issue with intent impartiality. Pressure on police likely, the graveness pertaining to the issue is that a party corporator of the same government involved the boundless barbarity. The punishment can include imprisonment for up to two years, a fine, or both.

BJP rule in Madhya Pradesh had also witnessed dozens of

instances of ruling party politicians beating up Government officials. Some of those incidents were recorded in the state State Home Ministry. State Minister Uma Shankar Gupta was notorious for taking matters in his own hands. When a Public Works Department official stood up to him, Gupta slapped the officer. As a member of the Babulal Gaur Ministry, Gupta had beaten up a doctor at the state-run Hamidiya Hospital. Arriving late at Raj Bhavan gates, the Bhopal Dakshin-Paschim MLA had thrown a police officer to the ground after being stopped. In BJP-ruled Madhya Pradesh, the past action stars include former Water Resource Minister Jugal Kishore Bagri, who had grabbed a Secondary Education Board clerk by the scruff. He was upset at some discrepancy in the mark-sheet of someone he knew. Jagdish Mohel, too, was a Minister when he locked up a group of officials so that loyal party workers could give them a proper hiding. In June 2019, Patnagarh MLA Saroj Meher (BJD) had forced a PWD junior engineer to do sit-ups in public. The then saffron party in opposition made the demand that the legislator be arrested immediately. Even as Works Minister Prafulla Mallik had assured, action will be taken on the basis of the inquiry into the incident. Nothing sagacious developed thereafter. Criticising the Chief Minister for his silence over the issue, BJP leader Lekhashree Samantsinghar alleged that there have been several instances in the past when BJD leaders misbehaved with Government officials, but no



action has ever been taken against them. Stating that such behaviour by an elected representative is highly undemocratic, the BJP leader said action should also be taken if there has been poor road work. Now is the time to reopen the mouth to slam own.

In 1991, the then Odisha Chief Minister Biju Patnaik had called upon the people to thrash any official they found uncooperative. Biju Patnaik slapped an inspector of police on duty at a Janata Dal poll workers meeting at Karanjia. Angered over brick batting by a small section of people at his meeting at a local high school Patnaik walked up to the police officer on duty and slapped him for his "failure to prevent the incident". While the police inspector L.D Pradhan kept silent several administrative officers and sr. police personnel present, watched the incident in dismay. To Biju's horror, an unemployed youth slapped the 'Kalinga Sandh' (The Bull of Kalinga) when the Chief Minister was on his way to the

secretariat, reminding him of his own call to take the law in one's own hands. Following the slapping incidents that became frequent all over Odisha then, Biju Babu revised his earlier call and asked the public to first send him a telegram seeking his permission before beating up errant officials. Throughout 1974-76, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's son Sanjay, without holding any official position, was an uncrowned king. In the heady days of Emergency, Sanjay had asked his Youth Congress workers to publicly beat up errant bureaucrats. There were many instances of overenthusiastic and arrogant Youth Congress leaders hitting Government servants with shoes. Shivraj Singh Chouhan slapped his security guard, during a roadshow at Sardarpur in Dhar district. This uncharacteristic show of belligerence by someone who is considered 'Mr Cool' in state politics was not enough as Chouhan went on to justify his aggression by saying that the guard,

Kuldeep Gujar, was constantly obstructing him from mingling with the masses.

Former Union minister and the then Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Chandra Shekhar Sahu had stoked a controversy on after a video clip of him slapping a former Congress worker Sangram Sahu went viral on social media, and no action was taken. In many ways Biju Patnaik was a bit of a pulp book hero himself. Following the slapping incidents that became frequent all over Odisha then, Biju Babu revised his earlier call and asked the public to first send him a telegram seeking his permission before beating up errant officials. What message does this give ? In the drive, who is the father of this "public servant assault theory", does not honour this peace loving state with more heroic accolade. This is the time to punish such criminal minds. This is the time to resume peace.

Dakbanga Chhak, Old Bhubaneswar-2

The true time-table

Badal Bhuyan

Caught in the coils of the 'created,' man is blind to the fact that he is part of the Divine Creator; identifying himself with the physical sheath in which he is encased, he is blind to the unity of all beings in the One Universal Absolute. Man has written and studied countless texts on spiritual discipline and discovery, and confounded the confusion, indulging in dialectical rivalries and argumentation. But, he who has put at least a page or two of these tomes into practise, is rendered silent, innocent of any desire for fame or victory. He is happy in the depths of his being. He ploughs the inner field, sows the seeds of love and the plants yield the flowers of fortitude, which fructify as Shanthi. This is the message of the rishis of this land. Each human being has three errors to correct: ma'a, vikshepa and avarana. Mala is the basic ajnana, which makes the tenth man declare that there is no tenth man. This ajnana or mala is the miasma that causes the declaration, avarana. And, vikshepa is the effect of that ignorance which makes all the ten search in the fiver for the lost man. Mala is the consequence of karma, in this and in previous lives. This can be removed by nishkamakarma. The avarana effect can be overcome, by the cultivation of sahana and anyonyatha. If only the ten were

bound together by mutual solidarity no one would have been taken as missing. So too, vikshepa can be conquered by prema. Love would have revealed each to the other, and no one would have been 'missed.' This is the way to equip yourself with Anandha - the way of love, dedication and service.

When one's inner reactions and agitations are transmuted into Divine, all that one experiences through the senses, the mind and the intellect take on the Divine lustre, reveal their Divine core, and man is shaped in the mould of Love. One can be in the world but yet unaffected by it, provided this vision is gained. All activity will then be for the Almighty, by His Grace and through His Will. Do not get work done through cooks, servants, ayahs, and others, in the home; women must not depend on these, for the care of their children or attendance on their husbands.

Earning leisure for Dhyana, through these servants, is not a spiritual gain. Do all the household work as acts of worship for Him; that is more fruitful than hours of Dhyana, hours gained by entrusting this precious work to paid helpers. Men too must feel that frittering away precious time, flitting from one vanity to another and seeking more and more purposeless means of spending days and nights is detrimental to the main aim of life. Spread joy, give strength, distribute courage,

console the distressed, help the lame to walk and the blind to see - that is the real time-table of activities of man. India has been reduced into a beggar-nation, since her children gave up these ideals and enthroned the ego, as the only God to be worshipped. When the petromax lamps become dim, we pump air in, and they become brighter. These lamps tend to burn dim and so we call them to this place for Sathsang and pump inspiration and instruction into them; their batteries get re-charged, for further service. India has always stood forth on the side of virtuous character, maintained through vigilance, in perfect trim. Without that steady, strong character, achievements like scholarship or siddhis are like plastic fruits, deceptive imitations incapable of yielding joy. When the mind is engaged in the recital of God's Glory and the names of God, there can be no temptation to stray into the rake's highway of insane desire. Twice a day, morning and evening, if you spare some time to sing the names of God, with like-minded persons, all in unison, with full awareness of the deeper significance of each name as it sweetens the tongue, it will be of considerable help to establish the feeling of the constant presence of God, within you and without.

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Ajaya Kumar Behera

There are four Asramas or stages in life, viz., Brahmacharya or the period of studentship, Grihastha or the stage of the householder, Vanaprastha or the stage of the forest-dweller or hermit, and Sannyasa or the life of renunciation or asceticism. Each stage has its own duties. These stages help the evolution of man. The four Asramas take man to perfection by successive stages. The practice of the four Asramas regulates the life from the beginning to the end. The first two Asramas pertain to Pravritti Marga or the path of work and the two later stages—the life of Vanaprastha and that of Sannyasa—are the stages of withdrawal from the world. They pertain to Nivritti Marga or the path of renunciation. Life is very systematically and orderly arranged in Sanatana Dharma. There is opportunity for the development of the different sides of human activity. Due occupations and training are assigned to each period of life. Life is a great school in which the powers, capacities and faculties of man are to be evolved gradually. Every man should pass through the different Asramas regularly. He should not enter any stage of life prematurely. He can enter the next

Four Asramas

stage, only when each has been completed. In nature, evolution is gradual. It is not revolutionary.

Lord Manu says in his Smriti: "Having studied the Vedas or two Vedas or even one Veda in due order without breaking celibacy, let him dwell in the householder order. When the householder sees wrinkles in his skin and whiteness in his hair and the son of his son, then let him retire to the forest. Having passed the third portion of life in the forests, let him, having abandoned attachments, wander as an ascetic in the fourth portion of life." In

How to Celebrate International Plastic Bag Free Day

Vijay Garg

There are many ways to participate in International Plastic Bag Free Day and contribute to a cleaner environment:

Switch to Reusable Bags: Commit to using reusable bags when shopping and encourage others to do the same. Keep a few reusable bags in your car or bag so that you always have one on hand.

Organize or Join a Cleanup Event: Participate in or organize a community cleanup to remove plastic bags and other litter from local parks, beaches, or waterways. These events help reduce pollution and raise awareness about the impact of plastic waste.

Educate Others: Use social media, community events, or educational programs to share information about the environmental harm caused by plastic bags and the benefits of using sustainable alternatives.

Support Policies to Reduce Plastic Use: Advocate for local or national policies that limit the use of plastic bags, such as bans, taxes, or incentives for using reusable bags. Supporting such initiatives can lead to significant reductions in plastic waste.

Shop Sustainably: Choose to support businesses that prioritize sustainability by

using eco-friendly packaging and offering alternatives to plastic bags. Your consumer choices can influence companies to adopt greener practices.

Spread the Word: Share your efforts and experiences on social media using relevant hashtags. Encourage friends, family, and followers to join you in reducing plastic bag use and promoting sustainable living.

International Plastic Bag Free Day was established as part of the larger Break Free from Plastic movement, which aims to reduce plastic pollution worldwide. The day was first observed in 2009 and has since become an important event in the global environmental calendar. It is supported by numerous environmental organizations and is part of broader efforts to combat plastic pollution, protect marine life, and promote sustainable living. The observance has gained momentum over the years, with increasing participation from individuals, communities, and governments around the world.

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extraordinary cases, however, some of the stages may be omitted. Suka was a born Sannyasin. Sankara took Sannyasa without entering the stage of a householder. In rare and exceptional cases, a student is allowed to become a Sannyasin, his debts to the world having been fully paid in a previous birth. Nowadays, young Sannyasins without qualification are found in abundance. This is contrary to the ancient rules and causes much trouble. At the present moment, the Asramas cannot be exactly lived according to the details of the ancient rules, as the conditions have changed very much; but, they may be revived in their spirit, to the great improvement of modern life. In these stages, no one should do the duty of another. The student or Brahmachari should not do the duties of a householder, a recluse or a Sannyasin. The householder must not perform the duties of a Brahmacharin, Vanaprastha or a Sannyasin. A Sannyasin should not seek again the joys of the householder. Peace and order will prevail in society, only if and when all people do their respective duties efficiently. The abolition of Varnas and Asramas will cut at the very root of social duties. How can the nation hope to live when Varnasrama Dharma is not rigidly practised?

Editor The Niyati, P.C. Sarakar Lane, Arundoya Market, Cuttack

2 days after brutal assault, BMC official falls ill



Bhubaneswar, (DMC): Two days after being brutally attacked, Additional Commissioner of Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) RatnakarSahoo was hospitalised after he felt unwell while on duty on Wednesday.

According to sources, the senior OAS officer complained of sudden illness while working. He was immediately shifted to BMC Hospital in an ambulance for medical attention.

While the sudden development created panic among

BMC staff, officials immediately arranged for medical assistance, ensuring Sahoo received timely attention.

While the exact cause of his condition is yet to be disclosed, the senior officer was brutally assaulted by a group of around six miscreants inside the BMC headquarters on Monday.

The incident had sparked widespread condemnation, and five persons have so far been arrested in connection with the assault.

The Odisha Administrative Service (OAS) Association had announced a mass leave in protest, demanding strict action and protection for public servants. OAS officers of several districts have resorted to cease work demanding immediate arrest of BJP leader JagannathPradhan, accusing him of being the prime accused and 'kingpin' behind the attack.

Cuttack, (DMC): Rain wreaked havoc in Cuttack on Tuesday after a heavy downpour which lasted for over an hour left several residential and market areas of the city severely waterlogged.

The city received around 70 mm rainfall in just one-and-a-half-hour prompting the Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) authorities to engage dewatering pump sets. What added to the residents' misery was the choked drains that worsened the waterlogging issues.

Among the 130 places that were submerged under water, the situation turned grim in Patapola, MakarabagSahi, Meria Bazar, Gamadia, Kesharpur, Dhobi Lane, Satahat, DagabarSahi, New Rausapatana, ShilpiKumbharSahi, Balu Bazar, Kazi Bazar, Rovers Street, JholaSahi, KathagadaSahi, Tulasipur, Haripur, Bhagatpur, Pithapur, Roxy Lane etc., where



overflowing drain water gushed into several houses located in low-lying areas.

"Heavy rain lashed the city from 3.30 pm to 5 pm resulting in

overflowing drains and gushing of sewage water into our houses. Such was the situation that we had to shift our belongings to safer places. The filthy water emanated

a foul smell and created a very unhygienic surrounding," said Sanjay Pani, a resident of Satahat New Colony.

Communication too, was

severely hit as roads and streets were submerged under knee-deep waters making commuting difficult for people. Residents attributed the situation to the alleged apathy on part of the CMC in clearing the choked drains. "After completion of the box drain project on main storm water channel (MSWC)-1, we were hopeful of getting relief from the persistent waterlogging problem.

But nothing improved as the civic body failed to desilt and repair the drains in time. Despite making tall claims, the CMC did not clean the branch drains. Hence, whenever it rains, overflowing drains make our lives miserable," rued some residents.

CMC mayor Subhas Singh said the civic body has mobilised 250 dewatering motor pump sets for draining out water from the low-lying areas.

Odisha tightens real estate regulations

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): In a major step towards strengthening the implementation of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016, in Odisha, the State government has taken a slew of decisions aimed at enhancing transparency, coordination, and enforcement.

These decisions were taken during a high-level meeting chaired by the Chief Secretary at LokSevaBhawan in Bhubaneswar.

In a significant move, all planning and development authorities under the Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) Department are now required to notify ORERA in real-time regarding any project plan approvals. A digital protocol for seamless data sharing will be developed, ending the long-standing practice of information gaps between departments.

The integration of ORERA 2.0 with the Bhulekh and SUJOG portals will reportedly help eliminate data duplication and allow for cross-verification of approved projects.

The H&UD Department will coordinate with the Revenue &



Disaster Management Department to enforce ORERA's orders and recover penalties under the OPDR Act. For the first time, enforcement support from BDA/BMC will be made available to ORERA, and a monthly enforcement calendar will be published, an official release read.

Monthly coordination meetings between ORERA, H&UD, and Revenue Departments have been institutionalised, and district collectors and tehsildars will now report illegal real estate activities to ORERA regularly. As per the release, implementation of RERA provisions has also been made a permanent agenda item in collector

review meetings, ensuring continuous oversight at the district level. Additionally, key sanctioned posts like Joint Secretary (Admin) and Deputy Secretary (Enforcement) in ORERA will be filled on a priority basis. ORERA has also been empowered to hire retired government servants for sanctioned posts through open advertisements. Regular review meetings between ORERA and H&UD Department will now be held to address grievances in a time-bound manner. These reforms mark a paradigm shift in Odisha's real estate regulatory framework, aiming to protect homebuyers' rights and ensure builder accountability.

Rahul, Kharge to visit city on July 11

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): Congress MP and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi is scheduled to visit Odisha on July 11.

According to Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president BhaktaCharan Das, Rahul along with Congress national president MallikarjunKharge will participate in the party's "Save Constitution" rally at Baramunda Ground in Bhubaneswar. During the visit, the party is also likely to highlight the alleged rise in crimes against women in the state. AICC General Secretary K C Venugopal will also join them, Das confirmed after a meeting of the party's Political Affairs Committee. Senior leaders attended, discussing and offering suggestions to ensure the success of the rally last evening.

State to host energy ministers'conclave this year

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): Odisha is all set to host the Energy Ministers' Conclave this year in collaboration with Tony Blair Institute and IIT Kanpur.

Energy Ministers from all over the country are expected to participate in the conclave. Odisha will take the lead in development of the framework, effective policy making for energy transition, a senior official said. A preparatory meeting in this regard was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Chief Minister KanakVardhan Singh Deo, who holds the energy portfolio, on Tuesday evening.

The Deputy CM said that the foundation of the Viksit Bharat by 2047 under the leadership of the Prime Minister has been laid. The energy sector will play a key role in achieving the goals, he said. Keeping in mind the future, a



climate-resilient strategy is being prepared by the government. The state is also moving towards achieving the net zero carbon target by reducing carbon emissions and adapting renewable sources, he added. "We are on the verge of transitioning from traditional sources to renewable energy and are moving towards solar power, PSP, green energy, etc in the state.

The Tony Blair Institute will support us in this," Singh Deo said.

It may be recalled that the Odisha government recently signed anMoU for the conclave in New Delhi. The conference will showcase the innovations in the energy sector of Odisha. Many eminent personalities from India and abroad are likely to attend the conclave, the official said.

Puri Stampede Probe

Govt deposes 4 OAS officers to help DC Anu Garg

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): The Odisha government on Wednesday constituted a committee of four OAS officers to assist Development Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief Secretary AnuGarg, conducting a detailed inquiry into the stampede at Saradhahali near Shree Gundicha Temple in Puri, which claimed three lives on Sunday. These officers are ManasRanjanSamal, Joint Director of Estates and Additional Secretary, GA & PG Department; Binaya Kumar Dash, Additional Secretary to Government, H & UD Department; RashmiRanjanNayak, Additional Secretary to Government, Water Resources Department; and Pradip Kumar Sahoo, Additional Secretary to Government, Works Department. The notification issued by the GA & PG Department said that Dash, Nayak and Sahoo will remain in Puri till July 8.

"The officers concerned shall undertake this responsibility in addition to their regular duties. They are required to be present in the office of the Development Commissioner- cum-Additional Chief Secretary, Planning &

Convergence Department, for approximately two hours daily, from 3 pm to 5 pm, to support the inquiry process," it added.

Following the stampede, the government ordered an administrative inquiry headed by Garg. She has been asked to submit a report within a month.

The Development Commissioner started her investigation into the incident from the spot on Monday and held discussions with the chief administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA), Puri collector and SP, besides other officials and temple servants. "I have

come to Puri regarding this unfortunate incident. An inquiry must be conducted into it, and a time frame of 30 days has been given to determine the reasons behind the incident and how such incidents can be prevented in the future. Today, I had some preliminary discussions with everyone and reviewed the entire situation," she told the media. Garg further stated that she would examine all CCTV footage available, go through the deployment orders and whether the SOPs were being followed. "Currently, the primary focus is to ensure smooth conduct of the remaining rituals at Puri," she added.

TPCODL Wins Prestigious Industry Award for Excellence in Cost Management

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): TP Central Odisha Distribution Limited (TPCODL), a joint venture of Tata Power and Odisha government, has been honoured with the Industry Award under the Transmission & Distribution category at the 19th National Awards for Excellence in Cost Management – 2024 and the 8th CMA Awards – 2024. The award ceremony was held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, recognising organisations that have demonstrated outstanding cost management practices and operational excellence. Shri Hemant Goyal, CFO, TPCODL; Shri Siba Prasad Kar, CGM (Finance) and Shri Sudhanshu Kumar Sahu, Sr. GM (Finance), received the award on behalf of TPCODL.



19th Foundation Day of KiiT International School

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): July 2: KiiT International School celebrated its 19th Foundation Day with a vibrant ceremony marked by the oath-taking of the newly elected Student Cabinet and an inspiring address by renowned journalist, neurodiversity advocate, and author Mugdha Kalra. The event began with the formal installation of the student leadership team. The newly elected student body took an oath to uphold the values of the school, lead by example, and work towards the holistic development of their peers. The ceremony underscored the school's commitment to nurturing leadership qualities and civic responsibility among its students. Chief guest Mugdha Kalra, known for her advocacy of neurodiversity, lauded KIIT International School for its inclusive ethos. "I have been to a lot of



campuses, but this is a campus I am proud to come to—whether it's the infrastructure or the environment. Come to metros and see how difficult it is to even have a playground," she said, praising the school's spacious, student-friendly facilities. Kalra particularly highlighted the school's commitment to inclusion, noting: "Here, special children and mainstream students take classes

together, and I think KIIT is creating that environment for you." She urged students to appreciate and strengthen such inclusive practices that build empathy and social awareness. "The struggle is more at the human level—the constant comparison with peers," she observed, advising students to stay grounded. She encouraged them to keep themselves fit, stay connected

with family and friends, remain focused, and pursue their passions with dedication. "Study smart," she concluded, leaving the audience with a practical mantra for success in an increasingly competitive world. Advising students Dr. Mona Lisa Bal, Chairperson, KiiT IS said, don't be afraid to be different; don't be afraid to ask "why not?" and don't be afraid if your idea seems strange —because strange ideas change the world. She also advised to think better, feel deeper, and lead bolder, always help someone in need. In his message Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, KIIT & KISS, congratulated all the staff and student of KiiT International School and wished a successful event. Saswati Bal, President, KIIT & KISS; Dr Sanjay Suar, Principal, KiiT International School also spoke on the occasion.

NEW ATTRACTION

After IPL, robotic dog to enthrall visitors in Jatra Pandals in Odisha

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 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

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES		A-358
Office of the Addl. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar		
Email Address: semechcircle104@gmail.com		
e-Procurement Notice- Bid Identification No.- ACEM/MDS/27/2025-26		
1. Name of the Work	: Mechanical Gate Works	
2. No. of Works	: 01 (One)	
3. Category of executors	: SSI Units registered under DIC/ NSIC/ MSME for Irrigation Shutters / Hydro mechanical gates.	
4. Bid Identification No.	: ACEM/MDS-27/2025-26	
5. Estimated Cost	: Rs. 10,63,453/-	
6. Period of Completion	: 02 (Two) calendar months.	
7. Date & time of availability of bid documents in the Portal	: From dt.03.07.2025(10.00 AM) to dt.14.07.2025(5.30 PM)	
8. Last date/ time for receipt of bid In the Portal	: dt.14.07.2025 (up to 5.30 PM)	
9. Date and Place of opening of Bid	: dt.15.07.2025(12.00 Noon onwards in the O/O the undersigned)	
10. Name of the Officer inviting bid	: Addl. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar	
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal https://tendersodisha.gov.in . Any further issue of Addenda/ Corrigenda/ Cancellation Notice shall be uploaded in the aforesaid website only.		
OIPR: 32405/11/0082/2526		Addl. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Circle Bhubaneswar

Grand Celebration of Hera Panchami at Devbhoomi, Jindal Nagar

Angul, (DMC): Devbhoomi, Jindal Nagar, witnessed the celebration of Sri Hera Panchami on 1st July 2025. The Pratham Sevika of Devbhoomi, Smt. Shallu Jindal performed all rituals with utmost devotion and dedication under the divine guidance of the Prime Priest, Srikant Ji. In a sacred display of tradition and reverence, she took part in the Palanki Yatra of Goddess Maha Laxmi, which symbolically represents the Goddess's divine visit to the Gundicha Temple to inquire

about Lord Jagannath's prolonged stay. The rituals began early at 5:00 AM with Mandir Sodha, Mangal Aarati, and Mailam, followed by Tadap Lagi and Abakash Neeti. The major morning rituals included Rosh Homa, Surya Puja, Dwarpal Puja, and Vesha Aarati. Thousands of devotees thronged the temple premises to witness the grand rituals, seek blessings, and offer prayers. The afternoon was marked with Madhhyana Dhoopa and Pahuda, while the



evening was filled with devotion through Sandhya Aarati, Vesha Lagi of Sridevi at 6:10 PM, and the divine Angyan Mala Bijee at 7:00 PM. The day concluded with Veta, Rath Katha, and the grand Badasinghar Vesha at 8:30 PM. The atmosphere was divine, vibrant, and deeply spiritual throughout the day. Now, all eyes are waiting to witness the return journey of all three chariots, which is known as the Bahuda Yatra.

Positive Development: Encroachment Eviction for the Railway Overbridge in Barpali



Bargarh, (DMC): In a proactive move following the recent publication in Duman Mail English News, the administration is taking significant steps toward successfully constructing the railway overbridge near Barpali High School by addressing encroachments in Jagannath Nagar. The land designated for the railway bridge was previously

occupied, which delayed the project as residents expressed concerns about their living conditions. However, the administration has engaged in constructive dialogue with the community and is now moving forward with the eviction process, which began today. Many residents have shown commendable cooperation by

voluntarily removing structures from the identified land, while the administration is also conducting necessary demolitions to clear the area. The operation is handled peacefully, supported by a strong police presence to ensure safety and order. Key officials, including Barpali Revenue Supervisor Kavita Bahidar, Tikeswar Mallick, Barpali Revenue Inspector Sevak Bagh, District Police SDPO, and IIC Jaya Rashmi Sethi, oversee the campaign. Heavy vehicle traffic has been temporarily paused to facilitate a smooth process. Today's demolition marks a hopeful turning point in the prolonged halt of the railway overbridge construction. It signals a commitment to resume work and complete this vital infrastructure project for the community's benefit.

JSW Foundation's 'Waste to Wealth' Project Boosts Rengali Sanitation & Livelihoods



Sambalpur, (DMC): In a significant move set to enhance public sanitation and create local livelihoods, the JSW Foundation, the CSR arm of JSWBPSL, has inaugurated a modern bus-toilet and cafeteria at Rengali Tehsil Chowk. This 'Waste to Wealth' project transforms an old bus, turning it into a vital community asset. Rengali MLA Mr. Sudarshan Haripal officially opened the

facility, joined by local dignitaries including Mr. Satyanarayan Agrawal, Chairman of Rengali Block, Mr. Mihir Mishra, Civil Head - JSWBPSL, Mr. Vishal Raj, CSR Head - JSW Foundation, Sambalpur & Jharsuguda along with the Sarpanch of Salad and Rengali. The complex provides separate, well-equipped toilets for men and women, while the adjacent cafeteria, complete with

essential infrastructure, is specifically designed to create income opportunities for local women. In a move promoting sustainability and community ownership, the entire facility will be managed by "Maa Laxmi Mahila Swayam Sahayaka Gosthi," a local women's self-help group. This partnership ensures smooth operation and sustainable income generation for the group members. MLA Mr. Haripal praised the project and committed further MLA funds for future expansion. Local residents have widely welcomed the initiative, praising JSW Foundation and JSWBPSL's continuous support for grassroots development and women's empowerment. The project is set to significantly enhance public hygiene and offer long-term economic benefits to the women of local Self-Help Groups.

Clean Water Flows for Thelkoloi: Akanksha Ladies Club's Latest Initiative

Sambalpur, (DMC): SAMBALPUR, Odisha - In a significant step towards community well-being, the Akanksha Ladies Club, JSW BPSL, Sambalpur Works, has installed a new tube well near Panchayat office in Thelkoloi. This vital project aims to provide much-needed access to clean drinking water and promote improved hygiene standards for local residents. The inauguration ceremony took place on June 24, 2025, with Mrs. Neelam Singh, President of Akanksha Ladies Club, officially opening the facility. Mrs. Abanti Nayak, Sarpanch of Thelkoloi, joined club members and villagers to celebrate the new water source. This installation underscores the club's unwavering



commitment to enhancing public health in the plant's neighboring communities. The Akanksha Ladies Club, led by Mrs. Neelam Singh, has a proven track record of uplifting health infrastructure in these areas. Their dedication to

sustainable community development is demonstrated through a variety of impactful projects, including mass marriage initiatives, sanitation drives, health camps, and previous water accessibility programs.

Train Services Regulated due to Land Slide Koraput-Kirandul line

Rayagada, (DMC): Due to incessant rains, landslide occurred between Malliguda-Jarati stations in Koraput-Kirandul line of Walair Division, the following train services got affected. The railway officials rushed to site with men and materials and the restoration

works are on warfooting. The train No. 18448 Jagdalpur-Bhubaneswar Hirakhand Express leaving Jagdalpur on 02.07.2025 is cancelled. The train No. 18516 Kirandul-Visakhapatnam Night express leaving Kirandul on 02.07.2025 is cancelled. People are requested to note the changes

and act accordingly. The railway officials rushed to the site for assessment, planning and ensuring early restoration. Heavy earth moving machineries, manpower and materials have been mobilized and the restoration works are on warfooting.

Irregularities in Issuing Birth & Death Certificates at DHH, Khordha



Khordha, (DMC): Due to the negligence & greed of the dealing assistant working in the birth & death certificate issue section of the District Head Quatre Hospital (DHH) Khordha many people are deprived of getting accurate birth & death certificates. There are also complaints about the person concerned demanding extortionate money to issue birth & death certificates. People coming from far & wide are not given birth & death certificates unless they sign their hands for birth & death certificates, & those who do not sign their hands are given defective certificates. When the person concerned is brought to the attention he shows red eyes & misbehave them, which has been seen recently. A labour class people from Jatni area rushed to the birth & death certificate section DHH, Khordha to correct the errors in his son's birth certificate, but in the end, he was disappointed. The dealing assistant working in the birth & death certificate section of DHH, Khordha, was previously working at the Haldia Primary Health Center & was caught by the Vigilance Dept. while accepting bribes for issuing birth & death certificates. Later, he managed to get himself posted in the birth & death certificate section of DHH, Khordha by manipulating some dishonest employees of the office of the CDM & PHO, Khordha. Although many complaints have been made to the above departmental officers in this regard, no result has been obtained. In this regard, it is being demanded that the minister of health & family welfare take note of this & a departmental inquiry be conducted against the concerned employee & should be transferred him elsewhere. Otherwise, there is no doubt that this will turn into a public nuisance in the coming days.

OAS Officers on Mass leave - District Administration Paralysed

Jagatsinghpur, (DMC): Jagatsinghpur district administration paralysed due to mass leave of OAS Officers. About 40 above OAS & ORS officers on mass leave and all 8 Blocks and Tehsil including Collectriate in a miserable condition. All the officers protesting the unpleasant situation created by BJP workers at BMC office on monday. Additional BMC commissioner Ratnakar Sahoo brutally assaulted inside office premises. So OAS officers feeling themselves unsafe and are in leave. Due to absence of OAS and ORS officers people suffers a lot. People coming different parts of district harassed and returned back by spending time and money. Even the subordinate staff of Tahasil and Block and of Collectorate were also absent and entire district administration failed.

Urgent meeting held in Rayagada to discuss attack on senior official

Rayagada, (DMC): An emergency meeting was held in Rayagada, bringing together representatives from various government employee unions. The meeting was chaired by the President of the District OAS Association and was attended by members from different unions, including the Revenue Service Association, Revenue Department Employees Association, Revenue Officers Association, Engineers Association, PEO, ADIO, and GRS Association. The meeting strongly condemned the attack on Senior OAS Officer Shri Ratnakar Sahu, which occurred on June 30, 2025, at the BMC office. The District OAS Association presented several demands, which

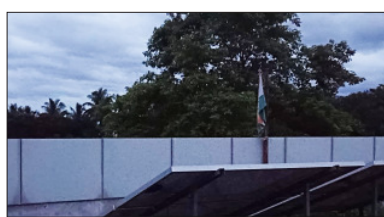


were supported by all the attending unions. These demands are expected to be submitted to the state government for immediate consideration. The unions urged the state government to take immediate action to address their demands and ensure the safety and security of government employees. The

unions have expressed their solidarity with Shri Ratnakar Sahu and his family, and have demanded that the state government take concrete steps to prevent such incidents in the future. The meeting concluded with a resolution to continue pressing for their demands and to take further action if necessary.

National flag disrespected at collectorate

Rayagada, (DMC): In Rayagada district the national flag displayed above the District Magistrate's office is hoisted every day at 5.30 am and taken down at around 5 pm. This duty is assigned to the night watcher of the District Magistrate's office. An employee of the said office said. But when the night watchman went on leave, today the national flag was seen hoisted



at the District Magistrate's office till around 7 pm and it was not taken down. According to information, this can be called an irregularity in the democratic system of governance. When we asked Rayagada District Additional District Magistrate Naveen Nayak about this, he said that he was not aware of this, and that he would ask and understand about the incident.

Rayagada : Poor Quality Road Construction Raises Eyebrows



Rayagada, (DMC): recent incident of substandard road construction in Rayagada's Muniguda block has sparked widespread criticism. The road in question, which connects Niali Chhak to Humagunji via Madakhala, was constructed under the Rural Development Department's scheme. However, the quality of the work has been questioned, with many alleging that the contractor and department officials colluded to compromise on the quality of materials and workmanship. The road construction work has been criticized for its poor quality, with the pitchum (a layer of bitumen) crumbling and peeling off within days of its application. The absence of proper supervision by department officials has been cited

as a major reason for the substandard work. There are allegations of corruption against the contractor and department officials, with many suspecting that they colluded to siphon off

funds meant for the project. The public is outraged over the poor quality of road construction and the alleged corruption involved. Many are demanding action against those responsible and

seeking compensation for the losses incurred due to the substandard work. The Junior Engineer (JE) in charge of the project has been questioned about the allegations, but no concrete action has been taken so far. The JE has promised to take action against the contractor and ensure that the road is repaired, but many are skeptical about the outcome. Given the gravity of the allegations, many are demanding a high-level investigation into the matter. A thorough probe is necessary to uncover the truth and bring those responsible to justice. The investigation should also examine the role of department officials and contractors in compromising on the quality of work and the alleged corruption involved.

From Page- 1

Five-Nation...

This visit will reaffirm the shared commitment of the two countries to deepen bilateral ties and strengthen India's engagement with the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) and the African Union, it added.

Flood situation...

temporary bridge near Bangalaguda under Koraput block got submerged early Wednesday morning, with nearly two feet of water flowing over it. Vehicular movement on the route has come to a grinding halt.

51 dead,...

monsoon-related incidents. Extensive Damage to Property and Infrastructure The state has reported damage to 204 houses, of which 22 were fully damaged (both pucca and kaccha structures). Additionally, 84 shops, cow sheds, and labour huts have been affected. The loss to private property is estimated at Rs 88.03 lakh. Damage to public infrastructure is far more extensive, amounting to a staggering Rs 283.39 crore (Rs 28,339.81 lakh). The worst-hit sectors include, Public Works Department (PWD), Jal Shakti Vibhag (JSV) and power sector. Losses were also reported in health, education, rural and urban development, fisheries, and animal husbandry departments."These figures are cumulative and subject to updates as field reports continue to arrive. All district authorities are on high alert and conducting rescue, relief, and restoration operations," the SEOC spokesperson added. Among districts, Kangra reported the highest number of deaths (13), followed by Mandi and Chamba (6 each), and Kullu (4 deaths). The districts of Kinnaur, Shimla, and Una reported between 2 to 4 deaths, while Sirmaur and Solan reported fewer casualties.

Jagannathmeets...

narrative out of the BMC incident. I have said it before, and I say it again-this incident is deeply saddening and deserves strong condemnation," the BJP leader said in a post on X.

Noting that the issue has brought the administration to a halt and may create law and order situation in the state, Pradhan said in view of the situation he is reiterating his respect for the law and assures full cooperation with any legal proceedings.

Mayor slams...

wake of the incident that took place on Monday, a high-level meeting was held at the BMC office. It was attended by senior civic and police officials, including Commissioner of Police S DebaDatta Singh, BMC Additional Commissioners RatnakarSahu and ShubhenduSahu, senior officers from the BSCL, members of the security agency, and the standing committee.

Four from...

private contractors. Since Chitrassen is unconscious, his native village is not known yet. While condition of Samir is serious, the other three are stable," he added.

Netanyahu says Israel will free hostages and dismantle the group



New Delhi, (HS) : Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday said that Hamas would be completely dismantled and all Israeli hostages freed.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday said that Hamas would be completely dismantled and all Israeli hostages freed.

Speaking at the EAPC facilities in Ashkelon, he said, "There will be no more Hamas - it's over. We will free all of our hostages and eliminate Hamas down to its very foundations. Expected revenues from gas in the coming decade will be almost NIS 300 billion."His remarks came as Israel and Hamas outlined their positions ahead of possible negotiations on a US-backed ceasefire proposal. While Hamas signalled it was open to a deal, it insisted any agreement must lead to a complete end to the war in Gaza.

Throughout the nearly 21-month-long war, ceasefire talks between Israel and Hamas have repeatedly faltered over whether the war should end as part of any deal.

Hamas said in a brief statement Wednesday that it had received a proposal from the mediators and is holding talks with them to "bridge gaps" to return to the negotiating table to try to reach a ceasefire

Massive Fire at Patna's Saguna Mor, Blaze Engulfs Restaurant

Patna, (HS) : A massive fire broke out on Wednesday at Caelium, an upscale restaurant located on the fourth floor of Ashiana Mahendra Enclave Complex in Patna's Saguna Mor area in Bihar, triggering panic in the locality. An official said that the fire started in the restaurant's kitchen and quickly spread across the premises. Fire brigade teams have been rushed to the spot and launched an operation to control the blaze, while restaurant staff also attempted to douse the fire. Sources indicated that some people were trapped inside the restaurant, prompting rescue efforts by authorities and staff. The firefighters managed to evacuate the customers and restaurant staff with the help of local people. A large crowd gathered around the complex as smoke billowed from the building, leading to chaos in the area. The exact cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained, but initial suspicion points towards a possible short circuit. The official said that police have launched an investigation to determine the precise cause.

agreement. Hamas has said that it's willing to free the remaining 50 hostages, less than half of whom are said to be alive, in exchange for a complete Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and an end to the war. The proposal, announced by US President Donald Trump on Tuesday, includes a 60-day ceasefire period during which efforts would be made to end the conflict. Trump said Israel had agreed to the terms and urged Hamas to accept the deal "before conditions worsen."

Hamas official Taher al-Nunu said the group is "ready and serious regarding reaching an agreement," but stressed it would accept only "any initiative that clearly leads to the complete end to the war." Israel says it will only agree to end the war if Hamas surrenders, disarms, and exiles itself, something the group refuses to do.

Centre denies COVID-19 vaccine link to sudden deaths, attributes lifestyle, health conditions

New Delhi, (HS) : The Centre on Wednesday denied any direct link between COVID-19 vaccination and reports of sudden deaths in the country, asserting instead that lifestyle and pre-existing health conditions were the key contributing factors. The government's clarification came a day after Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah alleged that an increase in heart attack-related deaths in Hassan district could be due to the "hasty approval and distribution" of COVID-19 vaccines to the public. Quoting extensive studies by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), the Union Health Ministry said the matter of sudden unexplained deaths has been thoroughly investigated by multiple agencies across India. "These studies have conclusively established that

Encounter Breaks Out Between Terrorists, Security Forces

Jammu, (HS) : An encounter is underway between the Army and terrorists in the Chatroo area of Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district, officials said. The encounter started after a joint team of the Army and Jammu and Kashmir police launched an operation to track down hiding terrorists in the mountainous region.

"Yes, contact has been established," said a senior army officer. At least three terrorists are believed to be holed up in the cordoned area in the reportedly fierce gun battle. The area has witnessed several encounters in the last one year. On May 22, a soldier was killed in action at the Chatroo area after the army launched an operation against terrorists. Kishtwar is part of the Jammu administrative province, which has increasingly come under the terror radar. The region that was free from terrorism until a few years ago has become the biggest security challenge and a site of some of the major terrorist attacks in J&K.



there is no direct link between COVID-19 vaccination and the reports of sudden deaths in the country," the ministry said in a statement. Instead, the statement attributed such deaths to factors like lifestyle and pre-existing conditions.

"Studies by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and National

Monsoon Session of Parliament to be held from 21st July to 21st August

New Delhi, (HS) : The upcoming Monsoon Session of Parliament will be held from 21st July to 21st August, 2025, with a two-day intermission on 13th and 14th of August. Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Kiren Rijiju, confirmed the revised schedule on Wednesday evening via a post, stating that the President of India, Droupadi Murmu, has approved the government's proposal to extend the session.

Initially, the session was tentatively scheduled to conclude on 12 August. Rijiju stated, "The Hon'ble President of India has approved the proposal of the Government to convene the Monsoon Session of Parliament from 21st July to 21st August, 2025." He further added, "In view of the Independence Day celebrations, there will be no sittings on the 13th and 14th of August." Although Independence Day falls on 15 August, the two-day break has been approved to allow for necessary preparations. This Monsoon Session will be the first since Operation Sindoor and is anticipated to be a turbulent one, with Opposition parties reportedly planning to raise several issues, including a demand for a special discussion on the Pahalgam terror attack. The government, led by the BJP and supported by several parties within the broader National Democratic Alliance (NDA), has also begun strategising to counter the Opposition's narratives in both the Rajya Sabha



and Lok Sabha. Sources suggest that the BJP may convene a meeting of NDA allies ahead of the session to align their strategy. As per parliamentary tradition, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to address the media from the Parliament premises on the opening day of the session, 21 July.

Several Bills are also expected to be introduced during the session, including the one related to insurance.

Rape charge cannot stem from failed consensual relationship: Kerala HC

New Delhi, (HS) : The Kerala High Court has observed that merely because a consensual relationship turns sour at a later stage, it cannot form the basis of a rape allegation.

The court further stated that there cannot be a case of deceitfully obtaining consent under a false promise of marriage if the complainant is still in a subsisting marriage. Justice Bechu Kurian Thomas made the observation while granting anticipatory bail to a 27-year-old man from Malappuram, who was accused in a rape case registered by the Thamarassery police. According to the prosecution, the accused had raped a third-year student of a private medical college between November 3, and November 4, 2024 at a hotel near Thamarassery. The counsel for the petitioner argued that the allegations were false and that a consensual relationship had been converted into a rape case without any basis, merely because the relationship later deteriorated. The court noted that the complainant's statement revealed she is a third-year student at a private medical college and had been married in 2023, a marriage that is still subsisting, though the couple had decided to part ways. The complainant stated that, in the meantime, she became acquainted with the petitioner through Instagram, and their relationship continued through a platform called Snapchat. Later, according to the complainant herself, under the pretext of returning home for study leave, she took a train to Kozhikode, where she was picked up by the petitioner.

They then travelled together to Wayanad. En route, they took a room at a hotel near Thamarassery and spent a night there. The next day, they travelled to Tirur and stayed in another hotel, after which she returned to Thiruvananthapuram. The court observed that the statement indicates she went of her own volition to meet the petitioner and also willingly stayed with him in two different hotels.

Dalai Lama Reveals Succession Plans But China Says "Our Approval Must"

Dharmasala, (HS) : The exiled spiritual leader of Tibet confirmed today that he will have a successor when he dies, reassuring Buddhist followers around the globe that the 600-year-old institution of the Dalai Lama will continue. It is a landmark decision for Tibetans, many of whom had feared a future without a leader, as well as for global supporters who see the Dalai Lama as a symbol of non-violence, compassion and the enduring struggle for Tibetan cultural identity under Chinese rule.

According to Tibetans, Tenzin Gyatso is the 14th reincarnation of the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama is lauded by his followers for his tireless campaign for greater autonomy for Tibet, a vast high-altitude plateau in China about the size of South Africa. He and thousands of other Tibetans have lived in exile in India since Chinese troops crushed an uprising in the Tibetan capital Lhasa in 1959. The charismatic Nobel Peace Prize-winning Buddhist had previously said the institution of Dalai Lama would



continue only if there was popular demand. He said today that he had received multiple appeals over the past 14 years from Tibetan diaspora in exile, Buddhists from across the Himalayan region, Mongolia and parts of Russia and China, "earnestly requesting that the institution of the Dalai Lama continue". "In particular, I have received messages through various channels from Tibetans in Tibet making the same appeal," he said in a video broadcast at the start of a

meeting of religious leaders in Himchal Pradesh's Dharamshala where he has lived for decades. "In accordance with all these requests, I am affirming that the institution of the Dalai Lama will continue," he added, according to an official translation. His advanced age had also sparked concern over the future of Tibetan leadership and the delicate question of his succession. The announcement was made ahead of his 90th birthday on July 6.

China said on Wednesday that the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama "must be approved by the central government", after the spiritual leader said he would have a successor after his death. "The reincarnation of the Dalai Lama, the Panchen Lama and other great Buddhist figures must be chosen by drawing lots from a golden urn, and approved by the central government," foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning told a regular news briefing, referring to a method introduced by a Qing dynasty emperor in the 18th century. "The Chinese government implements a policy of

freedom of religious belief, but there are regulations on religious affairs and methods for managing the reincarnation of Tibetan living Buddhas," Mao said.

While China condemns him as a rebel and separatist, the internationally recognised Dalai Lama describes himself as a "simple Buddhist monk". Many exiled Tibetans fear China will name its own successor to bolster control over a territory it poured troops into in 1950. But the Dalai Lama said Wednesday that responsibility for identifying the 15th Dalai Lama "will rest exclusively" with the Gaden Phodrang Trust, the office of the Dalai Lama. "I hereby reiterate that the Gaden Phodrang Trust has sole authority to recognise the future reincarnation; no one else has any such authority to interfere in this matter," he added. The Dalai Lama handed over political authority in 2011 to an exiled government chosen democratically by 130,000 Tibetans globally. At the same time, he warned that the future of his spiritual post faced an "obvious risk of vested political interests misusing the reincarnation system".

Pilots Recreated AI-171's Final Moments on Simulator

New Delhi, (HS) : A week after the crash of AI-171 on June 12, at least three Air India training pilots on the airline's Boeing 787 fleet attempted to recreate likely scenarios in Mumbai that resulted in the accident in which 260 people were killed. The pilots attempted to simulate electrical failures that could cause a dual-engine flame-out, resulting in an inability of the aircraft to climb post takeoff.

Accident investigators, who have already downloaded data from the jetliner's black boxes (flight data recorders and cockpit voice recorders), will also examine the position of the fuel switches on the 787 and corroborate this data with any wreckage of the fuel switches that may have been found. This would be crucial in ascertaining whether any of the engines were accidentally switched off by the pilots during a critical phase of the flight - the takeoff run or shortly after the aircraft lifted off from Ahmedabad. To ensure they were accurate in their simulation scenarios, the pilots replicated the precise trim sheet data of AI-171. A trim sheet is a document used in aviation to calculate and record an aircraft's weight and balance, ensuring the center of gravity is within safe limits for takeoff, flight, and landing. The trainer-pilots also simulated the failure of a single engine, left the undercarriage of the aircraft



down, and retracted the flaps of the 787 completely.

This configuration, considered unsafe and improper for normal takeoffs, was meant to simulate an underpowered jetliner taking off with its bulky undercarriage deployed (down). The undercarriage of an aircraft is normally stowed in its fuselage shortly after takeoff to ensure the jetliner is aerodynamic and can climb out efficiently. What's more, an improper take-off flap configuration was also selected. This would make it even more challenging for the 787 to climb away on a single engine. Takeoff flaps are adjustable surfaces on an aircraft's wings that are extended during takeoff to increase lift, or the ability of an aircraft to climb. In all of the scenarios described here, AI-171, with a single operational engine, was able to gain

altitude safely. Air India's Boeing 787-8's General Electric GEnx-1B67-K turbo-fans have been uprated to produce a significant 70,000 pounds of thrust each. These are among the most powerful engines developed for civilian aircraft in the class of Boeing 787.

A dual-engine failure, as widely speculated, would, however, be catastrophic. Pilots on Air India's Boeing 787 fleet are not trained to deal with a dual-engine failure at an altitude of less than 400 feet, as in the case of AI-171. This would be considered 'negative training', in other words, training for scenarios where the chances of successful recovery are technically not possible. But simply, a dual-engine failure at the altitude AI-171 was flying in, would have likely resulted in a crash.

Air India Crash Preliminary Report Next Week, Will Possible Causes

New Delhi, (HS) : The preliminary probe report on the Air India crash, in which at least 270 people were killed - including 241 on board the flight - is expected to be released by July 11. The document, which is likely to be four to five pages long, will be crucial because it will provide initial insights into the crash, including the possible causes.

Sources said the report will include details about the aircraft, which was a Boeing Dreamliner 787-8, the crew, conditions at the Ahmedabad airport, and the weather on June 12, when Air India flight 171 crashed, roughly 30 seconds after taking off. Details about the wreckage will also be part of the report, as will the name of the investigator in charge. The document will chart the progress of the probe, outline the next steps that need to be taken and highlight areas that need further investigation. As per International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) guidelines, India is required to file a preliminary report within 30 days of the crash. Just days ago, the junior minister for Civil Aviation, Murlidhar Mohol had told that all angles are being investigated in the crash, including sabotage.

The Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, which was operating as Air India flight AI-171 to London, had taken off from Ahmedabad on the afternoon of June 12 and crashed into the complex of the BJ Medical College - an aerial distance of less than 2 km. The crash took place at 1.39 pm, just 32 seconds after the aircraft took off. Of the 242 people, including 10 crew members and two pilots, on board the flight, only one - 40-year-old Vishwash Kumar Ramesh, a British-Indian who was returning to the UK after a visit - survived. At least 30 people on the ground, including trainee doctors, were also killed.

Families of Air India Crash Victims May File Cases Against in US Courts

New Delhi, (HS) : Legal teams from the US and the UK are preparing to file lawsuits against Boeing in the two countries over the Air India crash in Ahmedabad last month, in one of the worst aviation disasters the country has seen, sources have told . All but one of the 242 people on board the Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner were killed when it crashed moments after take-off in Ahmedabad on June 12. The airline has said that the plane was "well-maintained" and that the pilots were accomplished flyers. The teams are working with the families of the crash victims and are seeking to assert their legal rights under existing international law. The legal effort is led by James Healy-Pratt and Owen Hanna from UK-based Keystone Law, along with aviation experts from the US-based Wisner Law Firm, are leading the legal effort. James Healy-Pratt, partner at Keystone Law, who is involved in the firm's investigation, told Economic Times that their international legal team has been in talks with the families of those who died in the UK crash over the past week. He added that they are closely reviewing all the evidence and are considering filing a lawsuit against Boeing in the US, along with a similar case against Air India in the High Court in London. The planned lawsuits, say reports, would be separate from any other efforts Tata Sons, which owns Air India, might be making to support or compensate the victims' families, including financial help. Air India had on June 14 announced that it would provide an interim compensation of Rs 25 lakh or approximately GBP 21,500 to the families of each of the victims and survivors of the airline's crash to help address immediate financial needs. This, it said, is in addition to the compensation of Rs 1 crore announced by its parent company, Tata Sons.

PM Sheikh Hasina sentenced to 6 months in contempt case



DHAKA, (HS) : Bangladesh's deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina was on Wednesday sentenced to six months in prison by the International Crimes Tribunal in a contempt of court case, according to media reports. A three-member panel of the tribunal-1 (ICT), led by Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder, passed the order after reviewing a leaked phone conversation involving the ousted Awami League leader that circulated on social media last year, The Daily Star newspaper reported.

It marks the first time that 72-year-old Hasina has been sentenced in any case since she left office in August last year. In the audio clip, the ousted premier is allegedly heard telling former Gobindaganj upazila chairman and banned Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader Shakil Akand Bulbul, "I have had 227 cases filed against me, so I have received a licence to kill 227 people." The tribunal considered the statement contemptuous and a direct attempt to undermine the court. The tribunal also convicted and sentenced Bulbul to two months' imprisonment, the state-run BSS news agency reported. In its judgment, the tribunal said the sentences would come into effect from the day of their arrest or surrender, it added.

Hasina faces multiple cases in Bangladesh after being ousted on August 5 last year following a major student-led agitation in the country, which forced her to flee Dhaka. After Hasina's ouster, the 84-year-old Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus took over as the head of an interim government in Bangladesh in August last year. Most leaders of the Awami League and ministers of the past regime, including several officials, were arrested or were on the run at home and abroad as the government initiated their trial for brutal actions to tame the uprising, leaving several hundred people, including students, dead.

Hasina and her regime leaders are being prosecuted in Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal, formed in 2010 for trying hardened collaborators of Pakistani troops during the 1971 Liberation War on charges like crimes against humanity.

Assistant Commissioner among 4 Officials Killed in Blast



Peshawar, (HS) : Four government officials, including an assistant commissioner, were killed and 11 others injured in a bomb blast in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Wednesday, police said. The blast, which occurred near Mela Ground in Khar Tehsil

in the Bajaur tribal district bordering Afghanistan, targeted the vehicle of Assistant Commissioner of Bajaur district's Nawagai tehsil Faisal Sultan. The other victims were identified as Assistant Sub-Inspector Noor Hakeem, Levies Tehsildar Wakil Khan and Constable Rasheed. Security forces swiftly cordoned off the area, while a search operation and investigation into the attack are underway. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister's Adviser on Information, Barrister Saif condemned the bomb blast, terming it a "highly tragic incident". "The loss of precious lives, including the assistant commissioner and tehsildar, is deeply saddening," he said in a press release. "We will not allow anti-state elements to succeed in their nefarious designs," he added. He further said that Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur has ordered a thorough investigation into the incident and directed the provision of immediate medical assistance to the injured.

Singapore Ship Collision Killed 1; Indian National Charged

Singapore, (HS) : An Indian national was charged in a Singapore court on Wednesday under the Merchant Shipping Act over a collision of two vessels a year ago in which one man was killed and another was badly injured. Soosai Antony Vainer, 35, and a Sri Lankan, Wickramage Viraj Amila Shavinda Perera, 40, were the two crew members on the Singapore-registered Hafnia Nile, which collided on the morning of July 19, 2024, with Ceres I, registered with the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe, Channel News Asia reported. Perera was the officer in charge of the navigational watch on the Hafnia Nile at that time, the report said, citing charge sheets. Vainer was the duty lookout of the navigational watch, the chargesheet added. Vainer observed that the Hafnia Nile was "approaching close" to the Ceres I, but did not report this to the officer in charge of the navigational watch, his charge alleged. Instead, he allegedly steered the Hafnia Nile when he had not been directed to do so, and failed to keep a proper lookout, resulting in the collision of two tankers, it added.

Iran's President approves law to suspend cooperation with IAEA



Tehran, (HS) : Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian has approved a law to suspend cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Press TV reported. Pezeshkian officially communicated the law mandating the government to suspend cooperation with the UN nuclear watchdog, which was approved during a public session of Iran's Parliament on June 25.

Considering violation of Iran's national sovereignty and territorial integrity by Israel and the United States

regarding the country's peaceful nuclear facilities, the Iranian government is hereby obligated to immediately suspend all cooperation with the IAEA, Press TV reported, citing a parliament resolution. As per the resolution, IAEA inspectors will not be allowed to enter the country until the security of the country's nuclear facilities is ensured and the peaceful nuclear activities are guaranteed, which is subject to the approval of Iran's Supreme National Security Council. Earlier, the country's parliament speaker, Mohammad Baqer

Ukraine military says has not been notified of any US aid suspension

KYIV, (HS) : The Ukrainian defence ministry said Wednesday it had not received advanced notice of reductions to US arms shipments and said ending Russia's invasion required "consistent" support. "Ukraine has not received any official notifications about the suspension or revision of the delivery schedules for the agreed defense assistance," the ministry said in a statement. "We emphasize that the path to ending the war lies through consistent and joint pressure on the aggressor, as well as through continued support for Ukraine," it added.

Ukraine summoned a senior US diplomat earlier on Wednesday, urging its key ally not to cut or delay the critical military aid, a move which could thwart its ability to fend off escalating Russian air attacks. Moscow revelled in the decision, saying it could bring the end of the war closer. Kyiv has long feared halts to US aid after Donald Trump returned to the White House in January, having criticised the tens of

billions of dollars in support and weapons sent by his predecessor, Joe Biden. The US embassy's deputy chief of mission, John Ginkel, was summoned on Wednesday -- a rare diplomatic move usually reserved for foes and rivals, not vital allies -- amid uncertainty about what the cuts would mean for Kyiv. "The Ukrainian side stressed that any delay or procrastination in supporting Ukraine's defence capabilities would only encourage the aggressor to continue the war," Ukraine's foreign ministry said in a statement. The White House announced Tuesday it was halting some key weapons shipments to Ukraine promised by the previous US administration, but did not provide details on what would be cut. Under Biden, Washington had spearheaded Western support for Ukraine, with Congress having approved more than \$100 billion in aid, including \$43 billion in weaponry. Trump, who has held several phone calls with Russian President Vladimir Putin and pushed the



two sides into peace talks, has refused to announce new packages and Kyiv has been corraling Washington's European allies to step up support for when US deliveries end.

Putin has rejected calls for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and demanded Ukraine cede more territory if it wants Moscow to halt its invasion. Tens of thousands have been killed since February 2022 when Russia

UN-Backed Report Warns of Escalating Global Drought Risk



energy, ecosystems, and human survival, Xinhua news agency reported. Eastern and Southern Africa are among the worst-affected regions. Over 90 million people are facing acute hunger. Southern Africa, already drought-prone, was devastated, with about 68 million, roughly one in six people, needing food aid in August 2024. In Zimbabwe alone, the 2024 corn crop

was down 70 per cent year on year, and doubling maize prices, while 9,000 cattle died of thirst and starvation. In Somalia, drought-related hunger led to an estimated 43,000 deaths in 2022. Zambia faced a major energy crisis in 2024 when the Zambezi River fell to just 20 per cent of its long-term average. The country's largest hydroelectric plant fell to 7 per

cent generation capacity, causing blackouts of up to 21 hours per day. Countries across the Mediterranean are also battling prolonged drought and extreme heat. Spain's olive crop fell by half by September 2023, pushing olive oil prices to double. Morocco's sheep population has shrunk 38 per cent since 2016. In Turkey, drought accelerated groundwater depletion, triggering sinkholes.

To ensure no one is left behind, the report stresses the need for gender-responsive adaptation, ensuring that women and girls are not further marginalised.

Strengthened international cooperation is vital, it said, especially in protecting transboundary river basins and trade routes. "Drought is a silent killer. It creeps in, drains resources, and devastates lives in slow motion. Its scars run deep," said UNCCD Executive Secretary Ibrahim Thiaw. "Drought is no longer a distant threat," he added.

Indian Woman Assaulted by Pedestrian in UK, Dies In Hospital

London, (HS) : A 56-year-old Indian-origin woman succumbed to a head injury suffered during an assault while out on a street in the eastern England city of Leicester and a 23-year-old male suspect charged with her murder has been remanded in custody. Nila Patel died in hospital from her injuries last week after being attacked as a pedestrian and Leicestershire Police has said a post-mortem examination gave the "provisional cause" of her death as a head injury. Michael Chuwuemeka appeared before Leicester Crown Court sitting at Loughborough on Tuesday charged with her murder and also faces additional charges of dangerous driving, possession with intent to supply Class B or banned drugs, attempted grievous bodily harm relating to a prior incident and assault of an emergency worker following an alleged assault on a police officer after his arrest on June 24. He has been additionally charged with causing actual bodily harm in connection with a separate victim in London earlier. "A post-mortem examination has been conducted and a provisional cause of Nila's death has been given as a head injury," Leicestershire Police said.

Israeli strikes.



Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar said that "a large majority within the government and the population is in favour" of a deal to free hostages held by Hamas in Gaza. "If the opportunity arises, it must not be missed!" Saar wrote on X. Out of 251 hostages seized by Palestinian militants during Hamas's 2023 attack, 49 are still held in Gaza, including 27 the Israeli military says are dead. On the ground in southern Gaza, civil defence spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP that five members of the same family were killed in an Israeli air strike on Wednesday that hit a tent housing displaced people in the Al-Mawasi area. Despite being declared a safe zone by Israel in December 2023, Al-Mawasi has been hit by repeated

a weapon?" "They came here thinking it was a safe area and they were killed... What did they do?" said another resident, Maha Abu Rizq, against a backdrop of destruction. AFP footage from nearby Khan Yunis city showed infants covered in blood being rushed into Nasser Hospital. One man carrying a child whose face was smeared with blood screamed: "Children, children!" Some appeared terrified while others lay still on hospital beds in bloodied bandages and clothes as medics treated them. Further north, Bassal said four people from the same family were killed in a pre-dawn Israeli air strike on a house in Gaza City, and another five in a drone strike on a house in the central Deir el-Balah area.

10 Injured As Students, Police Clash In Bangladesh

Dhaka, (HS) : At least 10 people, including four police personnel, were injured in a violent clash between police and members of the Students Against Discrimination (SAD) outside the Patiya Police Station in Chittagong's Patiya sub-district, according to local media reports. The violence broke out around 9 p.m. on Tuesday local time, after SAD activists allegedly detained a leader of the ruling party's student wing, the Chhatra League (CL), near the central Shaheed Minar. Tensions quickly escalated when the activists brought the individual to the police station, demanding action. Police officials said the SAD members attempted to create chaos inside the station premises. This reportedly forced police to intervene, resulting in a physical altercation, Bangladesh's leading newspaper, The Daily Star, reported on Wednesday. In response to the police action, SAD launched a protest movement dubbed the "Patiya Blockade" on Wednesday morning, bringing more unrest to the area. Officer-in-charge of Patiya Police Station, Zayed Nur, told local media, "They came to the police station with a procession and beat the banned Chhatra League leader inside the police station. Later, police took him into custody. At one point during the argument, with instigating slogans against the police, they locked into scuffles with cops, and police later drove them out of the police station." Nur confirmed that a general diary (GD) had been filed regarding the incident and mentioned that four police personnel were injured in the confrontation. On the other side, SAD accused police of using excessive force. Speaking to reporters, Rizwan Siddiqui, joint convener of the Chattogram metropolitan unit of SAD, said, "Upon hearing the news, I went to the scene in Patiya. Our activists were beaten with batons by the police. Several of my brothers had to be taken to the hospital for primary treatment." He added that six SAD leaders were injured during the first clash. Another altercation reportedly took place around 11:30 p.m., during which Siddiqui claimed nine more activists were hurt. While media reports noted that efforts were made to reach Officer Nur for an official statement on the Wednesday morning blockade, he remained unreachable at that time.

speaking on condition of anonymity. In Moscow, the Kremlin said reducing the flow of weapons to Kyiv will help end the conflict faster. "The fewer the number of weapons that are delivered to Ukraine, the closer the end of the special military operation," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters in response to a question by AFP, using Russia's term for its more than three-year offensive. The US decision was taken "following a DOD (Department of Defense) review of our nation's military support and assistance to other countries across the globe," White House Deputy Press Secretary Anna Kelly told AFP in an email.

Kyiv said it was caught off-guard by the move. "Ukraine has not received any official notifications about the suspension or revision of the delivery schedules for the agreed defence assistance," the defence ministry said. "The path to ending the war lies through consistent and joint pressure

on the aggressor, as well as through continued support for Ukraine," it added. "We are clarifying the situation. I think that everything will be clarified in the coming days," presidential aide Dmytro Lytvyn told reporters. Politico and other US media reported that missiles for Patriot air defence systems, precision artillery and Hellfire missiles are among the items being held back. Last week at a NATO summit in the Netherlands, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky met with Trump, who gave no public indication he was thinking of cutting aid. "We're going to see if we can make some available," Trump said of the air defence missiles that Kyiv desperately seeks to shoot down Russian attacks. "They're very hard to get," Trump added. Russia has ramped up attacks on Ukraine in June, launching nearly twice as many missiles and over 30 per cent more drones than in May, according to an AFP analysis of Ukrainian air force data.

US Plans 500% Tariffs on Top Russian Oil Buyers; Will Affect India

Washington, (HS) : The United States is planning to tax countries that continue to trade with Russia even after Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine three years ago. According to US Senator Lindsey Graham, a Republican from South Carolina, President Donald Trump has extended support to a proposed bill calling for 500 per cent tariffs on goods from countries continuing to trade with Russia, including India and China. Graham, who is sponsoring a tough new sanctions bill on Russia, told ABC News on Sunday that Trump told him that legislation should be brought forward for a vote after the "July break".

The sanctions bill, which, according to Graham, currently has 84 co-sponsors, aims to pressure countries like India and China into buying Russian oil and other goods to weaken Moscow's war economy and push Russian President Vladimir Putin to the negotiating table on Ukraine and give Trump "a tool" to bring that about. "Big breakthrough here. So what does this bill do? If you're buying products from Russia and you're not helping Ukraine, then there's a 500 per cent tariff on your



products coming into the United States. India and China buy 70 per cent of Putin's oil. They keep his war machine going. My bill has 84 co-sponsors. It would allow the president to put tariffs on China and India and other countries to get them -- stop them from supporting Putin's war machine, to get him to the table," the US senator told ABC. He stressed, however, that Trump had a waiver and could decide whether or not to sign it into law if and when it passes Congress. "I was playing with him (Trump). He says, 'It's time to

move -- move your bill. There's a waiver in the bill, Mr. President. You're in charge whether or not it's to be implemented." But we're going to give President Trump a tool in the toolbox he doesn't have today. After the July break, we're going to pass a bill that will allow the president," Graham added. The legislation, initially proposed in March, is expected to be moved in August. It is part of America's growing efforts to tighten the economic noose around Russia as Trump struggles to drag Putin to the negotiation table while the war in

Ukraine drags on.

Amid Western sanctions, countries like India and China have continued buying discounted Russian oil, making them targets of the proposed legislation. India, the world's third-largest oil-importing and consuming nation, bought from abroad around 5.1 million barrels of crude oil, which is converted into fuels like petrol and diesel in refineries. India, which has traditionally sourced its oil from the Middle East, began importing a large volume of oil from Russia soon after the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. This was primarily because Russian oil was available at a significant discount to other international benchmarks due to Western sanctions and some European countries shunning purchases. This led to India's imports of Russian oil seeing a dramatic rise, growing from less than 1 per cent of its total crude oil imports to a staggering 40-44 per cent in a short period. In June, India ramped up purchases of Russian oil, importing more than the combined volumes from Middle Eastern suppliers such as Saudi Arabia and Iraq, amid market volatility triggered by Israel's dramatic attack on Iran.

GST relief : Essential goods that may get cheaper



New Delhi, (HS) : The Central Government is planning a major Goods and Services Tax (GST) revamp that could bring price relief for middle-class and lower-income households. The proposal includes eliminating the 12% GST slab and reclassifying several commonly used items into the 5% category.

Targeted Items: The relief focuses on daily-use goods such as: Toothpaste, tooth powder, Umbrellas, sewing machines, Pressure cookers, aluminium/steel utensils, Electric irons, geysers, small washing machines, Bicycles, footwear (Rs 500-1,000), garments (above Rs 1,000), Stationery (exercise books, geometry boxes, maps), Basic vaccines, diagnostic kits, Ayurvedic medicine, Ceramic tiles, solar water heaters, agricultural tools

To make essential goods more affordable, boost consumption, and broaden the tax base in the long run.

Estimated revenue loss of Rs 40,000-Rs 50,000 crore, which the Centre is reportedly prepared to absorb. The government expects lower prices to fuel higher demand, ultimately compensating for the short-term loss via increased GST collection. The move is part of a broader strategy to introduce a more rational and easier-to-comply tax framework. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman recently hinted at ongoing deliberations to make GST more middle-class friendly. The proposal is expected to be tabled at the 56th GST Council meeting, likely to be held later this month.

The 12% GST slab currently applies to many items used by average households, sitting between the essential 5% and luxury 18% brackets. Eliminating it could bring relief to millions while simplifying India's four-rate GST system.

Ola, Uber & Rapido Rides to Become More Expensive



Mumbai, (HS) : In a major step that was approved by the Central Government, the rides of the cab aggregators such as Ola, Uber and Rapido are all set to cost more. The hike shall cost customers a lot more, said reports. The Central government has allowed cab aggregators to charge passengers twice the base fare during peak hours under the revised guidelines. This change is part of the newly introduced Motor Vehicle Aggregator Guidelines (MVAG) 2025. The Transport Ministry has approved a penalty of 10 percent of the fare if a ride is cancelled without a valid reason. A similar fee will also apply to passengers for cancelling their rides.

MF exposure in NBFCs grow 32.5 pc to reach Rs 2.77 lakh cr. in May

New Delhi, (HS) : The mutual fund exposure in the non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) grow 32.5 per cent to reach Rs 2.77 lakh crore in May, according to a new report. This year-on-year growth was driven by commercial papers (CPs) and corporate debt, which remained over Rs 2 lakh crore for 14 consecutive months, according to a CareEdge Ratings report. The previous records were Rs 2.69 lakh crore in April this year and Rs 2.64 lakh crore in July 2018. However, the share of NBFC credit in total bank credit decreased from 9.3 per cent in May 2024 to 8.5 per cent in May this year, the data showed. The mutual fund industry's total assets under management (AUM) rose to Rs 72.2 lakh crore in May from Rs 70 lakh crore in April. The industry witnessed net inflows of Rs 29,108 crore during the month, with 65 per cent flows from the equity category, according to the latest AMFI data.

Coal production from India's commercial mines jumps 16.4 pc

New Delhi, (HS) : Coal production from the country's captive and commercial mines shot up by a robust 16.4 per cent to 46.01 million tonnes during the first quarter (April-June) of the financial year 2025-26 from 39.53 million tonnes in the same quarter of the previous year, according to official figures released on Wednesday.

The dispatches of coal from these mines rose by 13 per cent to 51.63 million tonnes in the April-June quarter of the current financial year compared to 45.68 million tonnes in the same period of the previous year. The quarterly increase in production and dispatches of coal for the third year in a row reflects improved efficiency and better utilisation of mining capacity.



During June, coal production has been recorded at 15.57 million tonnes, and dispatches at 17.31 million tonnes. In

other developments during June, which are expected to boost the production of coal further, mine opening permission

was granted for Utkal A Mine, having a peak rated capacity of 25 million tonnes. Vesting orders were also issued for three coal blocks, raising the total number of coal blocks allocated by the Ministry of Coal to more than 200, the statement said.

The increase in coal production ensures a reliable supply of coal to key industries such as power generation, steel manufacturing, and cement production, thereby reinforcing the backbone of India's industrial infrastructure, the statement added. Meanwhile, the Nominated Authority of the Coal Ministry, last month, opened the bids for the 12th round of commercial coal blocks' auction, in which as many as 41 bids have been received online as well as in physical form for 11 coal blocks.

RVNL shares extend fall



New Delhi, (HS) : Shares of Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd (RVNL) continued to slip for the second consecutive session on Wednesday. The stock fell 0.77 per cent to settle at Rs 392.60. At this closing price, it has declined 8.23 per cent on a year-to-date (YTD) basis.

Kranthi Bathini, Director of Equity Strategy at WealthMills Securities, highlighted RVNL's robust order book and strong earnings visibility, stating that long-term investors can continue holding the stock as the railway sector remains a promising theme. The PSU has an order book of around Rs 97,000 crore, excluding Vande Bharat-related contracts.

Technically, some analysts highlighted that the stock appears 'bearish' on the charts, with strong resistance in the Rs 400-420 range. Osho Krishan, Senior Analyst at Angel One, observed that the stock is in a consolidation phase, facing stiff resistance near the Rs 420 level. He noted that RVNL appears to be in a stagnation zone, with immediate support likely around the breakout neckline near Rs 375.

According to Sebi-registered independent analyst AR Ramachandran, "RVNL stock price is bearish on daily charts with strong resistance at Rs 405. A daily close below the support of Rs 380 could lead to a downside target of Rs 355 in the near term."

Ambuja Cements shares: Nuvama sees 17% upside potential as Adani Group ramps up capacity



New Delhi, (HS) : Nuvama Institutional Equities has reiterated its positive stance on Ambuja Cements, citing robust expansion plans, cost-efficiency initiatives and an optimistic demand outlook.

As per Nuvama, the Adani Group's cement business has reached a consolidated capacity of around 103 million tonnes (MnT) -- including Orient Cements -- and is set to expand to 118MnT by FY26E and further to 140MnT by FY28E. Clinker capacity is projected to touch 107MnT by the end of FY28. Ambuja Cements is also pursuing significant cost savings, aiming for a reduction of Rs 500-550 per tonne by FY28E through operational efficiencies, scale benefits and

logistics optimisation. Notably, the company expects a 25 per cent year-on-year (YoY) volume growth in FY26E, aided by acquisitions and organic capacity additions. The management indicated that cement prices have likely bottomed out, and the company is optimistic about a recovery in pricing trends. Currently holding a 14.5 per cent market share, Ambuja is targeting an increase to 17-18 per cent by FY28E and crossing 20 per cent by FY30E.

Sustainability remains a key strategic focus. Ambuja has already commissioned 375MW of green power capacity, with a roadmap to scale it up to 1GW by June 2026. By FY30E, it aims to meet 60 per cent of its power needs through green sources, compared to the present 21 per cent. The capex for greenfield capacity addition is pegged at \$75-80 per tonne. "We continue to like Ambuja Cements for its healthy capex pipeline, volume growth outlook, and cost-efficiency measures," said Nuvama. The brokerage has retained its 'BUY' rating with a target price of Rs 694, based on an EV/EBITDA multiple of 20x FY27E. This strategic ramp-up, coupled with the group's green energy transition and operational focus, is expected to further solidify Adani's position in India's cement sector.

Meanwhile, shares of Ambuja were trading 2.53 per cent higher at Rs 594.65 on Wednesday, indicating a potential upside of 16.71 per cent based on Nuvama's revised target price.

India may soon agreement with UK under free trade

New Delhi, (HS) : India may soon have a social security pact with the UK as an in-built component of the free trade agreement (FTA) which has been finalised between the two countries, a source said on Wednesday.

The source said that from now onwards, the social security agreement (SSA) will be an in-built component of all free trade agreements to be negotiated in future. "UK is believed to have agreed on the social security component under the FTA negotiations, which would be ratified in the near future," the source said. The SSA, a reciprocal arrangement between two or more countries, ensures that an employee while on a foreign assignment does not have to contribute to the social security coverage fund in that country but get the full benefit of employment period for pension calculation, while the employers are saved from making double social security contributions on behalf of their workers.

The Indian employees posted abroad or on foreign assignment are required to obtain a certificate of coverage (CoC) from retirement fund body EPFO, which helps them avoid paying social security contribution in countries where they are posted. The Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has been authorised to issue the Certificate of Coverage to employees posted in nations that have signed an agreement with India. Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya told reporters here that he has requested the commerce ministry to include the SSA in all FTA negotiations in future.

He said, "We are doing so to promote social security for all." At present, India has SSAs with 22 countries including Canada, Japan, Australia, Germany, Sweden and Brazil. The citizen of all 22 nations with which India has inked SSAs get the same benefit if they are posted in India.

HDB becomes 8th most valuable NBFC with Rs 69,625-cr m-cap



MUMBAI, (HS) : HDB Financial Services, the non-banking lending arm of HDFC Bank, made a stellar market debut on Wednesday despite a bleeding market, emerging as the eighth most valuable shadow bank, with shares listing at a 13% premium over the issue price of Rs 740. The stock opened at Rs 840 and touched a high of Rs 851.40 before closing at Rs 840.90, up 13.55% on the NSE, valuing the firm at Rs 69,625 crore at close. The broader market bled throughout the day and closed with a 0.35% loss, after having dropped nearly 1% intra-day. Last week, when the company hit the market with a Rs 12,500 crore IPO, it marked the largest primary share sale in the NBFC space. The issue comprised aRs 10,000 crore offer for sale by HDFC Bank, which held a 93.45% stake in the company pre-issue now reduced to 75% and a fresh issue by the company to the tune of Rs 2,000 crore. The issue, which was open from 25 to 27 June, saw robust demand with a subscription of nearly 16.7 times. It was prompted by an October 2022 RBI directive mandating all upper-layer non-banks to be listed. Bajaj Finance remains the most valuable shadow bank, with a market capitalisation in excess of Rs 5.81 trillion, followed by Jio Financial Services and Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company, valued at Rs 2.08 trillion and Rs 1.37 trillion respectively.

India Poised to Become 3rd-Largest Economy by 2030, Overtaking Germany: Puri

New Delhi, (HS) : India has recently overtaken Japan and is poised to become the third-largest economy by 2030, overtaking Germany, Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has said. In the past 11 years, India has risen from the eleventh to the fourth largest economy in the world.

"Our GDP has more than doubled - from \$2.1 trillion in 2014 to \$4.3 trillion in 2025" said Puri while addressing the 77th Foundation Day of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) here. The minister highlighted the nation's resilience during global headwinds and the critical role played by bold policy reforms, extensive social welfare schemes, and sound financial management. Under the flagship social initiatives, Puri noted, over 27 crore citizens have been lifted out of multidimensional poverty, nearly four crore houses have been sanctioned under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, and



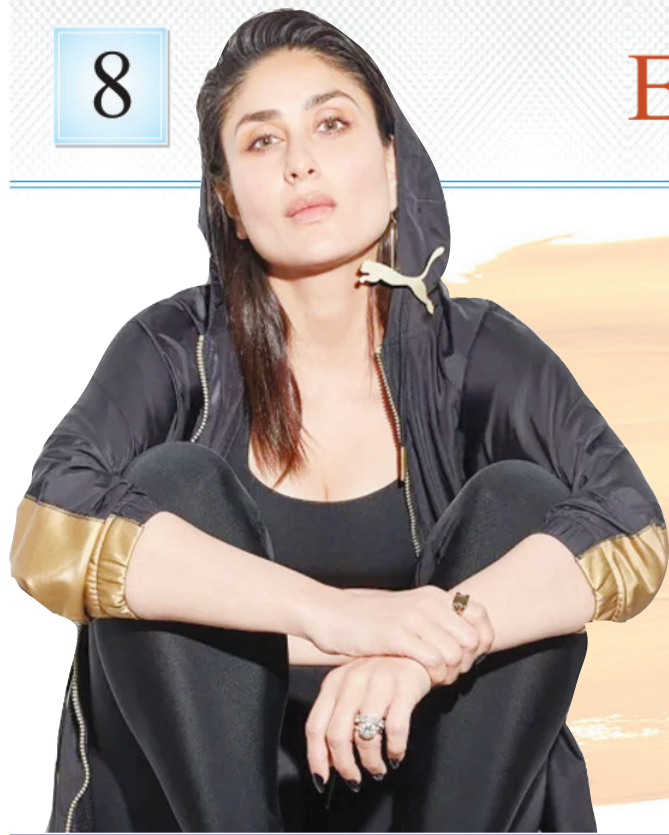
15.4 crore rural households now enjoy piped water through the Jal Jeevan Mission. "Ayushman Bharat has expanded health coverage to over 70 crore individuals with a Rs 5 lakh insurance benefit, reinforcing India's commitment to inclusive development," the minister added.

He emphasised India's success in attracting global investment, with \$748 billion of foreign direct investment inflows between 2014 and 2025 - an

increase of 143 per cent over the previous decade - and the expansion of source countries from 89 to 112. "Landmarks in policy reform, including the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, Production-Linked Incentive schemes, the Goods and Services Tax, Direct Benefit Transfers, and the elimination of over 25,000 compliances and 1,400 obsolete laws, have strengthened the nation's business landscape," the minister emphasised. The

transformation in tax administration underscores India's evolving financial culture. Annual Income Tax returns filed grew from 3.6 crore in FY 2013-14 to 8.5 crore in FY 2024-25, with 95 per cent processed within 30 days. "Each return, each rupee of tax collected, translates into tangible benefits-LPG connections for mothers, medicines for the poor, electricity for rural homes, pensions for the elderly, and employment opportunities for youth," Puri highlighted.

Looking ahead, the minister called on chartered accountants to embrace artificial intelligence and advanced analytics, automating routine tasks to focus on strategic advisory roles and harnessing data-driven insights for more effective decision-making. "Embracing AI is no longer optional - it is essential for staying competitive and innovative in today's evolving financial world," he noted.



When Kareena Kapoor reacted to being called 'ultimate insider'

As more star kids step into the spotlight, the nepotism debate in Bollywood continues to intensify, with young actors frequently facing harsh criticism for their performances. Back in 2021, Kareena Kapoor addressed nepotism in an interview with Mojo Story, where she reflected on being labelled the "ultimate insider" and a "privileged girl."

When asked about her thoughts on being called the "ultimate insider" and the "ultimate privileged girl", Kareena said, "We are not used to understanding what the situation is; we are used to just attacking people, whether they are from a privileged background or whether they are elitist. I think it's this idea that if someone has a name, fame, money, success - it's bad. The larger picture is not being looked at. Honestly, I want to say that my 21 years of working would not have happened with just nepotism - it's not possible." Kareena pointed out that being a star kid doesn't guarantee success in the film industry. She said there are many examples of superstar children who haven't been able to make a mark. She acknowledged that it's natural for a doctor to want their child to become a doctor, and similarly, people in Bollywood

may hope for their children to follow in their footsteps. She added that Bollywood celebrities often become easy targets because their lives and opinions make for an "interesting watch".

Kareena also reacted to Janhvi Kapoor, saying she "feels guilty about her privilege" and said, "My struggle is there, but my struggle is not as interesting as somebody who comes on a train with 10 in his pocket. Yeah, it's not been that, and I can't be apologetic about it. But I also have a story to tell; every human being has a story to tell. But to

tell someone that your story is smaller or bigger or more interesting - that pointing finger is just terrible, it's just wrong on every level. The audience has made us. Nobody else has made us. The same people pointing fingers are making these nepotistic stars, right? You are going to watch the movies. Don't go - nobody has forced you." Kareena further stated that most of the biggest stars in Bollywood - like Akshay Kumar, Shah Rukh Khan, and Rajkumar Rao - are all outsiders and they have worked hard. But similarly, whether it's Alia Bhatt or herself, they have also worked hard, and it is the audience who can make or break them.

Kareena Kapoor will next be seen in Meghna Gulzar's film Daayra. The film also features Prithviraj Sukumaran in the lead role. The actor shared a couple of pictures on Instagram and wrote, "I've always said that I'm a director's actor... and this time I cannot wait to work with one of the finest directors we have, @meghnagulzar, and alongside the magnificent @therealprithvi, whose work I deeply admire. To my dream team, #Daayra - let's do this."

AICWA writes to PM, urges ban on digital presence of Pakistani artists

The All Indian Cine Workers Association (AICWA) has formally written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, raising strong objections to the reappearance of social media accounts of Pakistani actors in India. A day ago, Pakistani actor Mawra Hocane's Instagram account was visible in India after it was banned in the wake of the Pahalgam attack.

The statement read, "It is deeply concerning and absolutely unacceptable that social media accounts of Pakistani artists like Mawra Hocane, Yumna Zaidi, and several Pakistan-based channels are once again visible in India. This is not merely a digital appearance - it is a direct insult to the sacrifice of our martyred soldiers and an emotional assault on every Indian who lost a loved one in terror attacks perpetrated by Pakistan." The letter also read, "Let the nation not forget - Pakistan was, is, and will remain a terrorist nation. From 26/11 Mumbai attacks to Pulwama, Uri, and Pahalgam, Pakistan has consistently waged war on India through terrorism. Thousands of our brave soldiers have laid down their lives on the borders protecting this



land, and hundreds of innocent civilians have been victims of Pakistan-sponsored terror."

The suggestions in the letter included, "We urge the Honourable Prime Minister and the Government of India to: Enforce an immediate nationwide digital blackout of all Pakistani social media accounts and media channels. 2. Ban all future collaborations or promotions involving Pakistani citizens in Indian media, OTT platforms, and advertising. 3. Declare a permanent cultural disconnect from Pakistan, as a mark of respect to the Indian Armed Forces and the families of our martyrs."

Aap Jaisa Koi trailer: Fans love Madhavan and Fatima's pairing



Is Bollywood slowly reigniting the rom-com genre? With Param Sundari, Metro... In Dino and Saiyaara, fans on social media are happy that the rom-com genre is having a moment. On Wednesday, Netflix India dropped the trailer of their upcoming release, Aap Jaisa Koi, starring R Madhavan and Fatima Sana Shaikh. Fans gave a thumbs up to the fresh pairing and the themes of gender roles in a modern-era relationship.

The trailer begins with Madhavan's Shritenu meeting

Fatima's Madhu Bose on a coffee date. Their first impressions go well, and they give their bond some time to see whether the relationship can lead to marriage. However, Shritenu's family has some objections to Madhu's lifestyle, given their orthodox background. «Sab kuch allow karenge lekin limit mein (We will allow everything but within limits),» is how Shritenu states his point, to which Madhu asks, Why should you decide my limit? They decide to cancel their wedding as more issues arise.

Tanvi trailer: Shubhangi plays Anupam's granddaughter, fights to join Indian Army

Tanvi The Great makers have unveiled the trailer of the upcoming film starring debutant Shubhangi Dutt alongside actors Anupam Kher and Pallavi Joshi. Taking to its YouTube channel, Anupam Kher Studio on Monday posted the over three-minute-long video.

In the video, Shubhangi plays Tanvi Raina, a woman who is autistic. She lives with her mother Vidya, played by Pallavi, and her grandfather Colonel Pratap Raina. She takes a trip to Lansdowne and her interest in the Indian Army piques. Her father, Samar Raina, played by Karan Tacker, died while serving in the army when she was young. Wanting to fulfil her late father's dream, she decides to join the army. During the course of her journey, she meets Boman Irani, who plays a fun character. Tanvi's wish to join the army leaves her grandfather in shock. Tanvi approaches Arvind Swami's character, Major Srinivasan, to turn her into a "cheetah" during her training in the army. The



trailer then shows Tanvi getting her training as she joins the army. In the trailer, 21-year-old Tanvi gives her all and more to fulfil her father's unfulfilled dream-- to stand at Siachen, the world's highest battlefield, and salute the Indian flag. Despite societal pushback and institutional barriers against autistic recruits in the military, she becomes determined to fulfil this mission. Sharing the trailer on Instagram, Farhan wrote, "In a world that saw her through a different lens, she kept shining with a light that could not be unseen. Her smile

awakens hope, her heart builds courage, and her journey inspires us all. And now, she is here to meet you all. She is #TanviTheGreat."

Directed by Anupam, the film will release on July 18. The film also stars Iain Glen, Jackie Shroff, and M Nasser. The music of the film has been composed by Oscar-winner MM Keeravani. Tanvi The Great is produced by Anupam Kher Studios in collaboration with the NFDC. The global distribution is handled by AA Films, led by Anil Thadani and Excel Entertainment.

Jaiswal leads India's resurgence after early setback against England

BIRMINGHAM, (HS) : Birmingham: Yashasvi Jaiswal's promising knock ended in him making 87 while captain Shubman Gill showed enormous patience to be unbeaten on 42 as India reached 182/3 in 53 overs at tea on day one of second Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy Test against England at Edgbaston on Wednesday. It was a session where old-fashioned attritional cricket took centrestage, as India made 84 runs in 28 overs. Though Jaiswal fell 13 runs short of his sixth Test hundred, Gill continued to hold fort in his unbeaten 109-ball knock laced with just three boundaries. With Rishabh Pant unbeaten on 14 off 28 balls, India will look to pile more runs, as another session of toil awaits England's bowlers. The second session began with Gill and Jaiswal picking up singles whenever an opportunity came. While Jaiswal got a boundary by slicing over the slips, Gill got his boundaries off edges through gully twice, while being severely tested on playing around his front pad.

Woakes continues to test Gill around the middle stump line in



the hope of getting him playing across his front pad, but the Indian skipper, batting outside the crease, handled it well with his sturdy forward defence. With Tongue and Bashir coming in, Jaiswal and Gill got a four each as they brought up the fifty-run partnership. But Stokes once again pulled a rabbit out of a hat to get England a vital breakthrough, as Jaiswal tried to cut one away outside off and got a thin edge behind to keeper Jamie

Smith, with the England skipper ecstatic in his celebration. While Gill continued to be happy in getting singles on both sides of the wicket, Pant took his time and respected some good bowling coming his way before dancing down the pitch to smack a half-volley from Bashir over long-on for six. The duo knocked off singles in the last two overs before tea break arrived.

Sai Sudharsan, who made his test debut in Leeds, and Shardul

Thakur were dropped and Nitish Kumar Reddy and Washington Sundar picked in an attempt by India to try and balance batting depth with a side that can take 20 wickets. India became the first side to lose a test after hitting five centuries. Bumrah was replaced by Akash Deep.

Brief Scores: India 182/3 in 53 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 87, Shubman Gill 42 not out. Rishabh Pant 14*; Brydon Carse 1-26, Ben Stokes 1-33) against England

Divyanshi, 14 Wins Historic Gold in Asian Youth TT Championships as India 4 Medals



Tashkent (Uzbekistan), (HS) : Divyanshi Bhowmick scripted history at the 29th Asian Youth Table Tennis Championships here, becoming the first Indian in 36 years to win the U-15 Girls' Singles title. The 14-year-old Indian, who is seeded second in this event, defeated China's Zhu Qihi 4-2 in a high-pressure final, capping a sensational run that included victories over three Chinese players-an unprecedented feat in Indian youth table tennis. With this performance, the second-seeded Divyanshi also sealed her berth for the World Youth Championships with this title.

In the Asian Championship, her standout moment came in the semifinals, where she edged past

China's Liu Ziling in a thrilling seven-game battle to keep India's gold medal hopes alive. A product of India's growing pipeline of table tennis talent, Divyanshi is part of the Dani Sports Foundation's development program, which works alongside Ultimate Table Tennis to identify and nurture young prospects. The youngster was a part of the first edition of the UTT Juniors, which ran alongside Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) Season 6 in Ahmedabad, featuring some of the country's best young talents. Meanwhile, she was also named the Best Women's Player (Overall) at the Table Tennis Super League (TTSL) Maharashtra in April this year.

Court orders Shami to pay Rs 4 lakh monthly alimony to estranged wife & daughter

New Delhi, (HS) : Indian cricketer Mohammed Shami has been directed by the Calcutta High Court to pay Rs 4 lakh monthly alimony to his estranged wife, Hasin Jahan, and their daughter. The court issued the order after Hasin Jahan challenged a 2018 directive asking Shami to pay much less - Rs 50,000 to Jahan and Rs 80,000 to their daughter. The new arrangement amounts to Rs 1.5 lakh monthly for Hasin Jahan's personal upkeep and Rs 2.5 lakh for the care and maintenance of their daughter. The court ruling considers Shami's huge earnings, with his income tax return of 2021 indicating around Rs 7.19 crore, which translates to around Rs 60 lakh monthly.

Hasin Jahan had originally asked for Rs 10 lakh total, Rs 7 lakh for herself and Rs 3 lakh for her daughter - the lower court rejected the application. The High Court determined that Jahan had total monthly expenditure (for herself and her daughter) of over Rs 6 lakh, and Jahan was granted relief. The relationship between the couple became sour in 2018 when Hasin Jahan alleged domestic violence, dowry harassment, and match-fixing against Shami. Shami's encounter with daughter Aaira in 2023 was controversial as Jahan claimed it was a stunt. This notwithstanding, the ruling of the court centers around financial security for Jahan and their daughter. The court also added that Shami can opt to pay extra amounts towards his daughter's educational or future expenses. The updated order is viewed as a major milestone in the ongoing legal war between Shami and Hasin Jahan.



India football coach Manolo Marquez steps down after poor run

New Delhi, (HS) : Embattled India football head coach Manolo Marquez stepped down on Wednesday after reaching a "mutual agreement" with the All India Football Federation (AIFF), which was under pressure to fix accountability for the recent downward spiral of the national team. The AIFF Executive Committee, in its meeting here, agreed to relieve the 56-year-old Marquez after he expressed his desire to do so despite one year still left in his contract.

"The AIFF and Manolo decided to mutually part ways without any financial implications to any of the two parties. So, he is relieved from being India coach. The AIFF will shortly advertise for the post of head coach," AIFF Deputy Secretary General K Satyanarayana told. The Spaniard was



appointed as head coach in June 2024 for a two-year tenure. He worked in a dual role last

year as he was also the head coach of Indian Super League side FC Goa in 2024-25 season. India lost 0-1 to lower-ranked Hong Kong in an away match of the AFC Asian Cup qualifiers on June 10, which left the country in danger of missing out on qualifying for the continental showpiece in 2027. India logged just one win from their last eight matches under Marquez's tutelage, the lone victory coming against Maldives in March.

Marquez has been one of the longest serving foreign coaches in Indian football, having managed multiple Indian clubs. He has secured trophies, including the Super Cup and the ISL Cup. His tenure of one year is the shortest among Indian head coaches in the last decade -- Stephen Constantine was India head coach from 2015-2019 before Igor Stimac (2019/2024).