



The Pioneer

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Modi launches 105 projects worth over Rs 18,600 cr

CUTTING THROUGH MYTHS AND MUSCLES



Kuberaa: A strong message wrapped in a stretched RUNTIME



QUOTE OF THE DAY

The Pioneer

Five villages — merged into Andhra Pradesh during bifurcation — be returned to Telangana. The issue must be raised strongly by CM Revanth Reddy in the upcoming June 25 meeting of Chief Ministers with Prime Minister Narendra Modi under the 'Pragati' initiative. Polavaram has created a permanent flood threat to the Bhadrachalam region. Over 1,000 acres of endowment land belonging to Bhadrachalam Rama temple are now in Purusottapatnam, merged with Andhra Pradesh. The Lord remains in Telangana, but his lands are in another state



- Kavitha, BRS MLC

DON'T MISS...

'Welfare topmost priority of govt'

Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy on Friday made it clear that the Indiramma government, formed with the blessings was dedicated to uplifting the poor. The government under the leadership of the Chief Minister is implementing developmental and welfare programs in equal measure, even though the state is burdened with a debt of approximately Rs 8.19 lakh crore. The Minister ...

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Min Sukanta alleges 'threat to life'

Union minister Sukanta Majumdar on Friday wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla alleging a 'grave breach of privilege' and a 'threat to life' after his convoy was allegedly attacked in the Budge Budge area in West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district on the previous day. Majumdar, who is also the BJP's West Bengal unit president, was visiting the area on Thursday to meet party workers who were reportedly injured after ...

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Coop sector grew unevenly: Shah

Union minister Amit Shah on Friday said the cooperative sector grew unevenly in India as it stabilised only in the western parts but remained weak in northern and eastern regions, and added that the government intends to make its growth symmetrical. Addressing a cooperation sector conference organised by the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED), he also said the cooperative ...

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Indian archers return with 9 medals

India's junior archers returned with nine medals — two gold, six silver, and one bronze — from the Asia Cup Leg 2 here on Friday. It seemed a successful outing on paper, but a deeper look once again highlighted a troubling trend that has come to define Indian archery at all levels — faltering when it matters the most. Despite making seven of the 10 finals across recurve and compound disciplines, Indian archers finished on top of the podium just twice. The rest of the finals — five ...

-SPORTS

BANAKACHARLA ISSUE

CM wants resolution, not confrontation with AP

Godavari issue is BRS's lifeline: Revanth



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy wrapped up his New Delhi visit on Friday, stating that Telangana seeks resolution and not confrontation on inter-State matters like river-water sharing.

During an informal interaction with reporters, the Chief Minister clarified that a Cabinet meeting will be held on June 2, and if required, the Andhra Pradesh Government

will be invited for talks after that.

Revanth stressed that discussions, not disputes, are the way forward. "We have maintained cordial relations with Karnataka. We want the same with Andhra Pradesh. The

its defunct politics. But let's be clear. KCR and Harish Rao themselves are responsible for the injustice done to Telangana on irrigation matters," he said.

The CM recalled that the groundwork for Banakacharla was laid in 2016, when Andhra

Revanth stressed that discussions, not disputes, are the way forward. "We have maintained cordial relations with Karnataka. We want the same with Andhra Pradesh. The problems we face today are not new; they existed even before the formation of Telangana," he said, while accusing the BRS of reviving the Godavari issue purely for political reasons

problems we face today are not new; they existed even before the formation of Telangana," he said, while accusing the BRS of reviving the Godavari issue purely for political reasons.

"The BRS is trying to use the Godavari waters issue as Sanjeevani to breathe life into

Pradesh issued GOs in 2016 and 2018 allowing surveys for transferring Godavari water to Penna.

"If these decisions were objectionable, why didn't the Telangana Government go to court then?" he asked.

He also pointed out that

KCR, during Apex Council meetings, had openly suggested that 400 TMCs of Godavari floodwater could be diverted via Polavaram and Somasila for around 86 days.

"Only after Telangana completes its projects will we know how much floodwater is available," he said, defending the Centre's decision to act based on feasibility reports.

Directing flak at Harish, the Chief Minister said, "In the Apex Council meetings held in 2015 and 2020, it was KCR and Harish who agreed to give 2009 TMCs of Krishna water to Andhra Pradesh. In 2023, Harish admitted this was a mistake and demanded 50 per cent, about 405 TMCs, for Telangana. Now, after asking for 500 TMCs, how could the same Harish write a letter agreeing to 45 TMCs? Where does he hide his head now?"

On the Kaleshwaram Project, Revanth said that it provided irrigation to only 50,000 acres, despite tenders being

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JAGRUTHI FLAGS FLOOD RISKS DUE TO POLAVARAM PROJECT

Kavitha demands return of 5 villages merged with AP

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Jagruthi President Kavitha demanded that the five villages merged with Andhra Pradesh during bifurcation should be returned to Telangana, warning that their future hangs in the balance due to the backwater threat posed by the Polavaram Project.

Speaking at a roundtable meeting organised by Telangana Jagruthi on Friday, she said the issue must be raised strongly at the June 25 meeting of Chief Ministers with Prime Minister Narendra Modi under the 'Pragati' initiative.

"The villages Purusottapatnam, Gundala, Etapaka, Kannayigudem, and Picchukalapaka are suffering immensely. The TG Chief Minister must ask the Centre to bring them back. If not, a single year of heavy rains could completely submerge them," Kavitha said.

She pointed out that raising the bunds is the only way to ensure protection, adding, "Polavaram has created a permanent flood threat to the Bhadrachalam region."

Kavitha also expressed concern about temple lands. "Over



Over 1,000 acres of endowment land belonging to the Bhadrachalam Rama temple are now in Purusottapatnam and it has been merged with Andhra Pradesh

1,000 acres of endowment land belonging to the Bhadrachalam Rama temple are now in Purusottapatnam and it has been merged with Andhra Pradesh. The Lord remains in

Telangana, but his lands are in another state. Andhra Pradesh is not even showing interest in protecting this divine endowment," she said, demanding its restoration.

She said a joint survey must be conducted to assess flood impacts and that Telangana Jagruthi would pursue legal action if needed. Recalling the organisation's earlier legal interventions, she reminded that it had approached the Supreme Court during

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Revanth remarks expose secret deal with Naidu: Harish

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former Minister Harish Rao on Friday came down heavily on Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy for his recent comments in Delhi, alleging that they reveal a secret understanding with Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu over the Banakacharla water issue. In a sharp rebuttal, Harish accused Revanth of conspiring to compromise Telangana's rightful share in both Godavari and Krishna waters.

"The real story behind Banakacharla has been exposed by Revanth's own words. His readiness to consider 1000 TMC from Godavari

and 500 TMC from Krishna as Telangana's share shows a dangerous inclination to undercut the State's entitlements. It is



evident that this is a pre-set match with Chandrababu," Harish said in a strongly worded press release.

He argued that while KCR

demanding 2,918 TMCs from Godavari—968 TMCs based on existing GOs and 1,950 TMCs from the floodwaters merging into the sea—Revanth's position caps Telangana's share at just 1000 TMCs. "This is nothing short of a betrayal," Harish said.

In the case of Krishna waters, Harish Rao asserted that KCR fought for a rightful allocation of 763 TMCs by placing a strong affidavit before the Brijesh Tribunal, while Revanth was willing to settle for

only 500 TMCs. "This is not negotiation; this is surrender. Is Revanth repaying Chandrababu with political

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Local body polls only after court verdict: Mahesh

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The high command's decision will be final in selecting the candidate for the Jubilee Hills by-poll, TPCC chief B. Mahesh Kumar Goud said.

He also made it clear that local body elections will be held only after the court's verdict.

Addressing the media on Friday, Mahesh said that there was nothing wrong in Azharuddin, who contested the 2023 Assembly elections, saying that he (Azharuddin) would contest once again.

"However, Azharuddin's statement is not final. We will recommend some names to the Election Committee. Later, the high command will take a final decision," Mahesh said.

He said that former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao violated the tradition of making election unanimous



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Cong, BRS moving forward with mutual understanding: Kishan

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Both the Congress and the BRS are moving forward with mutual understanding, Telangana BJP President G. Kishan Reddy said.

Addressing a meeting of public representatives held at the state BJP office on Friday, Kishan said that BJP leaders must explain the corruption that took place during BRS rule to the people. He also said that BJP activists should tell the people how the Congress Government has failed to implement its six guarantees.

Kishan said there is a need to bring a BJP government to power to protect the state's interests and asked BJP activists to ensure the victory of BJP candidates in the local body elections.

He said that it is not possible for the state government to implement development projects without the help of

the Centre. Social welfare schemes are being implemented in Telangana with the Centre's help, he added.

He said the Congress



Government is bringing various issues to the fore to deflect public attention. The public must pressure the Congress

Continued on Page 2

Tummala says Rs 7310.59 cr released for Rythu Bharosa till now

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageshwara Rao said that the state government released Rs.905.89 crore on the fifth day for Rythu Bharosa. With the release of this amount, the farmers who have below 7 acres received Rythu Bharosa amount,

Tummala said.

The government released Rs.7310.59 crore within five days. He said that 65.12 lakh farmers benefited from the Rythu Bharosa scheme till Friday. The Minister made it clear that the government will extend Rythu Bharosa to the cultivated land without linking the area of land.

Inform consumers in advance about power maintenance: CMD Musharraf

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chairman and Managing Director of the Southern Power Distribution Company of Telangana Limited (TSSPDCL), Musharraf Faruqui, IAS, on Thursday directed electricity officials to ensure that all consumers

are informed at least a day in advance regarding power maintenance schedules and supply interruptions.

Speaking during a teleconference with Chief Engineers and Superintending Engineers, Faruqui stressed that timely communication about line clearances and shut-

downs for network maintenance is essential to prevent inconvenience to consumers. He observed that sudden power outages without prior notice have been causing frustration among the public.

Highlighting the need for reliable and quality power supply during the

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SIT to issue notice to Bandi in tapping case

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the phone-tapping case is getting ready to serve a notice in a day or two to the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, who exposed the phone tapping issue.

SIT officials called the Union Minister on Friday night and asked him for an appointment to record his

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Protest at Indira Park demands filling of two lakh jobs, DSC notification

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Thousands of unemployed youth from across Telangana gathered at Indira Park on Friday, demanding the immediate release of a job calendar, notification for 25,000 teacher posts under DSC, and the fulfilment of the Congress government's promise to fill two lakh government jobs. The protest was led by the Telangana Unemployed JAC Chairman and BC Welfare Association State President Neelam Venkatesh, with the participation of Rajya Sabha MP R. Krishnaiah, who voiced strong criticism of the government's inaction.

Addressing the gathering, Krishnaiah pointed out that not even 60,000 posts have been filled in the



past 18 months, including those under various court orders. "There are thousands of vacancies across government departments. Yet, the government has failed to take con-

crete steps to fill them," he said, demanding immediate action to address the crisis.

Protesters expressed disappointment that despite high expecta-

tions, the much-awaited job calendar was not announced on June 2, Telangana Formation Day. Many asserted that the unemployed youth were instrumental in bringing the Congress to power and electing Revanth Reddy as Chief Minister, and now feel betrayed by the delay in recruitment.

They alleged that some officials are providing inaccurate vacancy data and are resorting to irregular methods in calculating sanctioned posts. "There is no account of how many retired, how many were promoted, or how many new posts were created due to the formation of new districts and offices. This is leading to an artificial underreporting of vacancies," the JAC alleged.

Iran's FM holds talks with top European diplomats in Geneva

PNS ■ GENEVA

Iran's foreign minister was holding talks with top European diplomats in Geneva on Friday about the crisis that centres on concerns about his country's nuclear programme, a week after the long-simmering dispute erupted into war between Israel and Iran.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi arrived at a hotel in the Swiss city for a meeting with his counterparts from France, Germany and the UK and the European Union's foreign policy chief.

It is the first face-to-face meeting between Western and Iranian officials since the start of the conflict.

Ahead of the meeting, Araghchi said his country has "nothing to discuss" with the United States as long

as Israel continues its strikes on Iran, but is open to "dialogue" with others, though not negotiations. The war has seen

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Iran lifts airspace curbs to evacuate 1,000 Indians

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

The Indian nationals were moved



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



CITY EVENTS

Kuchipudi & Bharatanatyam
By Nrityamala Nityakala
Venue
Ravindra Bharathi
Jun 21, (9 am)

Arangetram Of K Venkat Reddy's Daughter
Venue
Ravindra Bharathi
Jun 21, (1:30 pm)

Meri Bayaz Se: Urdu Poetry
By Socio Reforms Society Of India
Venue
Lamakaan
Jun 21, (3:30 pm)



Hyderabad City Police Commissioner CV Anand addressing a media conference in Hyderabad on Friday

'High-rise Eagle View cameras to be installed to bolster surveillance'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad City Police Commissioner CV Anand on Friday announced a series of new initiatives to streamline traffic management in the city.

Anand addressing media said that the project Rope which removes encroachments on roads has increased average vehicle speed i.e 6 km per hour and widened the carriage way.

He also explained that the Traffic Marshal system will soon be introduced under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, allowing trained volunteers appointed by corporate bodies to assist in managing traffic at key junctions. This is aimed at addressing the city's manpower shortage in the traffic wing.

SCR GM Arun Kumar Jain gets Rajbhasha gold medal

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

South Central Railway (SCR) General Manager Arun Kumar Jain has been awarded the prestigious Kamalapati Tripathi Rajbhasha Gold Medal by the Railway Board on Friday.

This honour was given in recognition of his outstanding efforts in promoting and increasing the use of Rajbhasha (Hindi) within the railway zone.

It is a proud moment not just for Arun Kumar Jain, but also for the entire SCR, which falls under the 'C' region. The award was given at the All-India Railway level, highlighting his exceptional contribution in strengthening official language usage.

This recognition is seen as a motivation for other officers and staff across the zone. SCR officials said the medal reflects the General Manager's dedication.

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03

What we now need is an inclusive lift-all approach: Bhatti

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana is scripting a new definition of development by blending economic growth with human values, asserted Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu on Friday. Addressing the ASSOCHAM Southern CSR and Sustainability Council Conference and Awards ceremony at The Westin, Mindspace, Hyderabad, Bhatti said the Congress-led government is firmly committed to constructing a socially just and environmentally responsible Telangana under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy.

"In a world of vast resources yet deep inequality, we've seen that trickle-down models don't work. What we now need is an inclusive lift-all approach," Bhatti said, adding that the Congress philosophy roots economic growth in the foundation of social justice. He stressed that corporate social responsibility (CSR) must be driven by accountability, not charity, and must focus on real social transformation rather than token gestures.

"Your efforts should not just build institutions, but uplift communities. Telangana is the most transparent and effective platform for utilising CSR funds. Every paisa spent here will have impact," he told industry representatives, urging companies to expand their social investments in the state.



Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu speaking at the ASSOCHAM Southern CSR and Sustainability Council Conference and Awards ceremony in Hyderabad on Friday

Bhatti pointed out that Telangana is a highly investment-friendly state with no language barrier, abundant human resources at competitive costs, strong law and order, and above all, a government that supports and partners with industry.

Telangana is not just competing with other Indian states, but with developed countries," he said, citing the State's progress in health, pharma, IT, and food processing sectors. He revealed that 100 Young India International

Residential Schools are being established—one per Assembly constituency—with an investment of Rs. 200 crore each on 25-acre campuses. These institutions aim to provide international-standard education to students from economically weaker sections.

The Deputy Chief Minister also stated that many corporations responded enthusiastically to the government's appeal to manage these schools. "Within 15 days, companies came forward to take responsibility. This shows the

strength of the model we are building," he said.

Bhatti highlighted that 100 ITIs in Telangana are being upgraded into Advanced Technology Centres with the help of leading corporate players. He added that CSR should be viewed not as a statutory 2% of profits, but as a tool for deep, long-term community transformation.

He emphasised that development should not be measured just in corporate infrastructure but in the upliftment of girls in government schools, distressed farmers, and vanishing rural artisans. "Let us stop seeing CSR as a donation. Let's see it as a partnership. We must enable youth in villages with green skills, provide not just funds but tools, training, and marketing support to women's groups," Bhatti said.

He urged companies to engage with people in their operating regions, work with local bodies, and understand their lived realities. "Buildings become old, but skill, confidence, and leadership in people create lasting impact. Every CSR initiative should help people stand on their own feet, not with outstretched hands. Let it be guided by self-reliance and the spirit of Swaraj," he concluded.

The event was attended by Hyderabad Collector Dasari Harichandana and key organisers including Suresh Chukkappalli, Barun Islam, Abhishek Ranjan, and Krishna Eula.



GHMC Food Safety officials inspecting a bakery in Hyderabad on Friday

Bakeries urged to maintain hygiene standards in food items

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a city-wide drive to enforce food safety standards, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Food Safety Wing conducted surprise inspections at 90 bakeries across various circles.

The inspections were carried out under the directions of the GHMC Commissioner, focusing on ensuring compliance with food safety regulations.

During the inspections, officials lifted 80 surveillance samples and sent them to the State Food Laboratory at Nacharam for analysis.

The Food Safety Officers also issued advisories to bakery owners regarding the maintenance of cleanliness and hygiene in food preparation areas, storage, and display counters.

They emphasised proper labeling practices, including date of preparation and shelf life of food items on display.

Notices were issued under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and Rules and Regulations, 2011 for various violations. Major infractions may lead to legal adjudication before the designated Adjudication Officers.

The Common violations observed include: Failure to display valid FSSAI licenses. Absence of Best Before or Use By dates on food items.

Open dustbins and improper waste disposal. Presence of houseflies and littered premises. Lack of health records and water analysis reports. Food handlers working without hair-nets.

Community Connect Drive held at Gandhi Nagar

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Central Zone Police conducted a "Community Connect" programme under the jurisdiction of Gandhi Nagar Police Station on Friday at 60 pm. The initiative, held under the supervision of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central Zone), aimed to engage with the local community, address their concerns, and take action against illegal and anti-social activities.

The operation focused on areas including CC Nagar and Bansilapet. Around 200 police personnel participated in the extensive drive, covering over 250 houses. During the operation, authorities seized 32 bottles of beer from an unauthorised belt shop and confiscated 150 gutka packets.

Several vehicles including 80 two-wheelers, one three-wheeler, and one four-wheeler were seized for violations such as missing documents, lack of number plates, or being found abandoned. Police also checked three known rowdysheeters and eight suspects as part of the crackdown.



Central Zone Police participating in a "Community Connect" programme in Hyderabad

Senior officers including Additional DCP B. Anand, ACP A Yadagiri, SHO N. Bose Kiran, and other officials from surrounding police stations participated in the event. They interacted with residents, gathered input on civic issues, and assured the public that their concerns would be addressed through proper channels. Police thanked the residents for their cooperation and encouraged continued vigilance.

TGIC launches 'Innovation Panchayat Vol.1'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Government's TGIC -Telangana Innovation Cell launched 'Innovation Panchayat Volume1' on Friday, an initiative designed to connect innovators, startup founders, and aspiring entrepreneurs directly with ecosystem experts.

Held at T-Hub, the event opened a new, walk-in platform for idea-stage innovators to get personalised advice, mentorship, and direction.

The goal is to help people easily access Telangana's vibrant startup network. Many innovators struggle to find the right support or understand where to go next. TGIC's new programme tackles this problem by offering a direct, face-to-face way to connect with key organisations and mentors in the ecosystem.

The pilot will run till August 2025. Starting from



Representatives of TGIC releasing 'Innovation Panchayat Volume1' at T-Hub on Friday

June 20, it will be held on the 3rd Friday of every month at T-Hub from 2 pm to 5 pm. Anyone with an idea, prototype, or even questions about innovation are advised to attend.

CEO of TGIC, Meraj Faheem said, "We are bringing the ecosystem to the people. Every idea matters, and this is about giving innovators

a clear path forward."

Experts from TGIC, T-Hub, T-Works, WE Hub, EdVenture Park, RICH, IIITH, and MATH were present, offering real-time support. A follow-up process within a week ensures continued help. This initiative reflects Telangana's strong push for inclusive, accessible innovation for all.

Inter-state narcotics racket busted, 166 kg of marijuana seized

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a major crackdown on interstate drug trafficking, the Special Operations Team (SOT) of LB Nagar Zone, along with Hayathnagar Police, arrested four individuals involved in smuggling 166 kilograms of dry marijuana worth over Rs 50 lakh.

The accused were caught



during a vehicle check near Dhananjaya Function Hall, Hayathnagar.

The arrested persons iden-

tified as Vikas Baban Salve (30) – a painter from Ahmednagar, Maharashtra, Ranganath Yurajn Sadve (36) – a farmer from Aurangabad, Maharashtra, Sagar Gajanan Khandebharad (29) – a Central Government railway employee from Buldhana, Maharashtra Amol Narayan Borde (26) – a driver from Aurangabad, Maharashtra.

Sports Authority chief lauds Telangana Sports Schools

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Sports Authority Chairman Shivsena Reddy appreciated the facilities at Telangana's sports schools and academies, calling them among the best in the country. During his visit to the Karimnagar Sports School on Friday, he emphasised the government's commitment

to transforming these institutions into model educational and training centres for young athletes.

Speaking on the occasion, Shivsena Reddy said that with increased budget allocations for sports, efforts are underway to further upgrade infrastructure and establish more academies across the state.

'Bhadrakali Bonalu temporarily deferred to avoid unrest'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has decided to temporarily defer the Bhadrakali Bonalu celebrations in Warangal, citing the need to prevent potential disturbances due to emerging political tensions and misinformation. Announcing this on Friday, Minister for Endowments Konda Surekha said that recent objections and misleading reports in certain media outlets had raised concerns over the sanctity and peaceful conduct of the event.

Minister Surekha stated that while the government had earlier taken a decision to organise Bonalu at the Bhadrakali Temple with reverence and grandeur, some individuals appeared to be deliberately trying to create confusion by mixing political disputes with



religious practices. "There is apprehension that anti-social elements might exploit the situation and create unnecessary conflict," she said, explaining the reason behind the postponement.

Clarifying the religious procedures, Surekha noted that the temple authorities, along with Vedic scholars and the Endowments Department, had

reiterated that only vegetarian Bonalu would be offered at the Bhadrakali Temple. "Based on Agama Shastra and the guidance of Vedic priests, we intended to organise the event accordingly. However, some individuals began spreading that non-vegetarian offerings were being made, leading to miscommunication among the devotees," she said.

Minister Surekha emphasised that political motives should not be allowed to disturb the faith and sentiments of devotees. "We are not cancelling the Bonalu permanently. We are only deferring the June 22 celebration to ensure harmony. The government is committed to organising the Bonalu celebrations with greater splendour after wider consultations with stakeholders," she said.

Appealing to devotees, Surekha reiterated that the government's primary aim is to protect traditions and honour the genuine devotion to Goddess Bhadrakali. She asserted that the government will soon announce the future course of action after taking into account the views of the public, priests, and elected representatives.

Man arrested in job fraud case

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

An alleged conman, who promised three job aspirants, including two women, jobs in the defence forces and took them to a military college's premises, was arrested, police said on Friday.

The accused, who claimed to be an army employee, allegedly assured the three persons that he would get them jobs on outsourcing basis in the defence forces.

He took them to the premises of the Military College of Electronics and Mechanical Engineering (MCEME) here on Thursday, they said.

The accused allegedly sought to sexually exploit the women.

The accused, claiming to be an Air Force employee, showed an identity card that was downloaded from the internet to the security personnel to gain access to the area.

NIMS announces admissions for Master's in Hospital Management

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) has officially announced admissions for the Master of Hospital Management (MHM) programme for the academic year 2025.

Applications are now invited from eligible candidates interested in pursuing careers in hospital and healthcare

administration.

The entrance examination will be held on July 28, 2025 and the last date for submission of applications is July 9, 2025. The results will be declared on August 2, 2025, with all events scheduled before 5pm on their respective dates.

The MHM course is designed to train professionals for management roles in hos-

pitals, health systems, and allied healthcare sectors. The programme is open to graduates from life sciences, health sciences, and other relevant fields.

The application fee Rs 5,000 (for OC/BC/EWS candidates) and Rs 4,000 (for SC/ST candidates).

Interested candidates can visit the official website for further details.

CREDAI Hyderabad elects new managing committee members

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Confederation of Real Estate Developers Association of India (CREDAI) Hyderabad has announced its new managing committee for the 2025–2027 term. The new team will lead efforts to strengthen the real estate sector in Hyderabad.

In the Annual Council Meeting on Friday, N Jaideep Reddy has been appointed as President. B Jagannath Rao is the President-Elect. Manoj Kumar Agarwal, Kurra Srinath, K Anil Reddy, and Y Ravi Prasad are Vice Presidents. Kranti Kiran Reddy K will serve as General Secretary, Nitish Reddy Gudoor as Treasurer, and Sanjay Kumar Bansal and Sriram Musunuru as Joint Secretaries.

The Executive Committee includes Addula Gopal Reddy, Alugubelli Venkat Reddy, B Jaipal Reddy, B Vinod Reddy, C Amarendra Reddy, Kavya Kavuri (first woman EC member), N Venugopal, and Susheel Kumar Jain.

With the theme "Embracing Growth and Innovation," the new team plans to promote



smart construction, sustainability, skilling, and collaboration with the Telangana government. They will support developers and promote 'Brand Hyderabad' as a leading real estate destination.

President N Jaideep Reddy said, "Hyderabad's growth is real and visible. CREDAI Hyderabad will drive innovation, trust, and sustainability to build a resilient future."

President-Elect B Jagannath Rao emphasized innovation and policy reform, while General Secretary Kranti Kiran highlighted the Rs.4,000 crore worth of home registrations in May 2025, marking a strong and confident market.



Warangal court receives hoax bomb threat call

PNS ■ HANAMKONDA

Tension gripped the Warangal court premises after an unidentified person made a threatening call to the police, claiming that a bomb had been planted in the court. The call, made to the control room 100 number, prompted immediate action from the police.

Officers quickly cordoned off the court complex and launched a thorough search operation.

During the search, six detonators were recovered from the premises.

The bomb squad was immediately deployed to examine the scene, and the surrounding area was evacuated as a precautionary measure.

However, further investigation revealed that the recovered detonators were related to an old case and had no connection to the recent bomb threat.

According to police and court staff, the detonators had been stored within the court premises as part of evidence from a resolved case.

Welfare topmost priority of government: Ponguleti

PNS ■ BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM

Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy on Friday made it clear that the Indiramma government, formed with the blessings was dedicated to uplifting the poor.

The government under the leadership of the Chief Minister is implementing developmental and welfare programs in equal measure, even though the state is burdened with a debt of approximately Rs 8.19 lakh crore.

The Minister visited the Chundurugonda, Annapureddypalli, and Mulakalapalli mandals within the Aswaraopeta constituency. During his visit, he laid the foundation stones for various development programs, including the construction of Indiramma houses. He was accompanied by Khammam MP Ramasahayam Raghuram Reddy, local MLA Jare Adinarayana, and District Collector Jitesh V Patil.

He further detailed the government's initiatives, including 200 units of free electricity, LPG cylinders for RS 500, free bus travel for women irrespective of distance, a



Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy addressing a gathering at Annapureddypalli in Bhadradi Kothagudem district on Friday

40 per cent increase in mess charges and a 200 per cent increase in cosmetic charges for students, distribution of fine-quality rice through ration shops, Rs 500 bonus per quintal of fine rice, and the distribution of new ration cards.

The Minister highlighted the government's commitment to farmers: "While the previous government waived RS 17,000 crore farmer loans over ten years, the Indiramma government has waived Rs 21,000 crore within just

10 months of coming to power. The previous BRS government left the dream of double-bedroom houses for the poor unfulfilled for 10 years, but the Indiramma government is fulfilling the dream Under the Rythu Bandhu scheme, the previous BRS government provided RS 10,000 per acre in two instalments, whereas the Indiramma government is providing Rs 12,000 per acre under the Rythu Bharosa scheme."

He also mentioned that Rythu Bharosa funds have begun to be

deposited into farmers' accounts for the last three days, and the entire Rs 9,000 crores in Rythu Bharosa funds would be credited to beneficiaries' accounts within nine days.

The Minister concluded his speech by stating, "Even though the state's financial situation is not sound, the government is moving forward with the resolve to support the poor. I sincerely request the people to bless the Indiramma government's candidates in any upcoming elections."

Three women forced out of RTC bus, stranded midway

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Acting promptly on its election promises, the Congress government in Telangana has launched a free bus travel scheme for women across the state. While the initiative has been widely welcomed, it has also led to overcrowding and rising tensions during peak travel hours.

In a disturbing incident that underscores the challenges emerging from the scheme's implementation, a video has gone viral showing three women being forcibly removed from a TGSRTC bus by a conductor in Warangal district. The incident happened near Anantaram crossroad in Parvathagiri Mandal.

According to reports, the women, hailing from Gopannapalli, had purchased chilli peppers from a local market and boarded the bus with their luggage. Midway through the journey, the conductor allegedly objected to their bags and forced them to disembark on the roadside.

The women, visibly distressed, said they had no money to arrange alternative transportation and were left stranded.

This incident raised serious concerns about the safety and fairness in the



Women passengers walking to their destination after conductor forced them out of TGSRTC bus at Anantaram crossroad in Warangal on Friday

implementation of the free bus travel scheme.

Citizens and transport experts are now urging the Telangana Transport Department to put in place stronger regulations and better infrastructure to manage the surge in demand and prevent such incidents.

Social media users reacted with outrage and sympathy, with many condemning the act and questioning the handling of the scheme. While earlier videos showcased women competing for seats, this latest clip highlights a different, more troubling side of the issue.

Leopard, tiger movements cause panic among people

PNS ■ RAJANNA SIRICILLA / JAYASHANKAR BHUPALPALLY

Leopard movement is causing panic in the Rajanna Siricilla district. On Friday morning, farmers spotted leopard pugmarks in the 10th ward of Siricilla Municipal limits and on the outskirts of Chinnna Bonala.

Upon receiving the information, forest department officials confirmed that the tracks were those of a leopard. Forest department officials advised farmers in the surrounding areas to avoid going to the fields at night as the leopard

is moving around the Chinnna Bonala forest area. The local residents are experiencing fear and anxiety due to the leopard's presence.

Meanwhile, a tiger attacked and killed a cow belonging to farmer Gurram Rajayya in Yedlapalli.

For the past three days, there has been tiger movement in the forest areas of Tadicherla, Koyyur, Mallaram, and Peddathundla.



Pugmarks of leopard

Speaker vows to ensure welfare benefits to all eligible

PNS ■ VIKARABAD

Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar has assured the people that he will take responsibility for bringing welfare schemes to their doorsteps.

On Friday, Speaker Prasad Kumar attended a programme as the chief guest where Indiramma house sanction letters, Kalyana Lakshmi, and Shaadi Mubarak cheques were distributed to beneficiaries from Mominpet, Marpally, and other mandals.

Speaking on the occasion, Prasad Kumar mentioned that the government's goal is to fulfil the dream of owning a house for poor people.

He would work towards ensuring that every eligible person receives the benefits of



Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar speaking at a meeting in Vikarabad on Friday

government welfare and development schemes, he assured.

He further explained that the allocation of Indiramma houses in the state was underway, and the beneficiaries should commence and complete the construction work immediately.

He promised to see that the bills related to Indiramma

houses would be credited directly to the beneficiary's bank accounts in four instalments without any intermediaries. He said that if the construction work such as the basement, walls, or slab is completed, the beneficiaries themselves could take photos and upload them on the mobile app, and the funds would be directly transferred to their accounts.

He also highlighted that the state budget has allocated Rs 22,500 crore for the construction of 4.4 lakh houses this year.

He mentioned that Vikarabad would receive a special allocation of 7,000 Indiramma houses. He assured that people in his constituency who did not own a house

Six arrested in kidnapping of DCCD director

PNS ■ NIRMAL

Police have solved the sensational kidnapping case of District Co-operative Central Bank (DCCB) director Harish Kumar and the arrested six individuals on Friday. The police seized two cars, a gold chain, six mobile phones, two knives, and Rs 2,000 in cash from the accused. Providing details to the media, Nirmal District Superintendent of Police Janaki Sharmila revealed that those arrested include Shaik Haidar, a former driver of Harish Kumar, along with Banala Prince, Thatturi Ravi, Kalakanti Suresh, Gudem Koteswar Rao, and Madusudhan.

BRS leaders, activists stage protest, demand arrest of accused

PNS ■ MANCHERIAL

MLA Nadipelli Diwakar Rao on Friday said that the police should take strict action against the rowdy politics.

He demanded the arrest of Congress leaders who attacked a Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader last night.

Diwakar Rao, along with leaders and activists, staged a protest at Bellampalli centre in Mancherial town.

The police whisked away the protesters in a police vehicle, which led to another protest in front of the Mancherial Town Police Station. During this protest, former MLA Nadipelli



BRS leaders staging a protest in Mancherial on Friday to protest against attack on party activist in Mancherial on Thursday night

Diwakar Rao said that rowdiness in politics had never been seen in Mancherial before. He accused Congress leader Prem Sagar Rao of using his influence to attack the BRS activists.

He also alleged that the police were siding with the ruling party. He demanded the immediate arrest of those who

attacked Dagula Madhu last night and called for strict punishment.

On Thursday evening, unidentified persons attacked a BRS youth leader in Mancherial. The victim, Dagula Madhukar, suffered neck injuries on neck and was rushed to a local hospital with severe bleeding. His condition is reported to be stable.

Madhukar alleged that Congress leaders targeted him for exposing their illegal activities. He expressed concern for his family's safety and requested the police to file a case and take strict action against the culprits.

Minister vows to improve standards of health, education in Wanaparthy

PNS ■ WANAPARTHY

Minister for Animal Husbandry Vakiti Sridhari, has directed Wanaparthy District Collector Adarsh Surabhi to take measures for the development of Atmakur and Amarachinta areas under the Makthal constituency in Wanaparthy district.

On Friday, after assuming office as Minister, Vakiti Sridhari visited the Atmakur and Amarachinta municipalities in the Makthal constituency for the first time.

District Collector Adarsh Surabhi welcomed the Minister Vakiti and extended his greetings on his first visit to Wanaparthy district as Minister.



Minister for Animal Husbandry Vakiti Sridhari being welcomed by Wanaparthy Collector Adarsh Surabhi in Atmakur on Friday

On the occasion, the Minister stated that necessary steps would be taken to develop the education and healthcare sectors in Atmakur and Amarachinta areas in the district. He emphasised that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is a

strong supporter of farmers and has launched initiatives like Indiramma housing and free bus services for the poor. He added that the Chief Minister is working with great determination.

Later, Minister Sridhari participated in a programme held on the premises of Amarachinta Zilla Parishad High School, where he distributed cheques and approval letters of Indiramma houses to beneficiaries under the Kalyana Lakshmi, Shaadi Mubarak, and Indiramma housing schemes.

The event was attended by Atmakur Municipal Commissioner Shashidhar, Tahsildar Chand Pasha, and others.

Essential medical equipment donated to MGM Pediatric Department

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Warangal District Collector Satya Sharada commended the contributions of donors who supported the Pediatric Department at MGM Hospital by providing essential medical equipment. The inauguration ceremony took place on Friday. The Collector, accompanied by representatives of the Collector Foundation, unveiled equipment worth Rs 60 lakh, donated under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in collaboration with Billion Hearts Beating Foundation and Janapriya.

Speaking on the occasion, Collector Satya Sharada said that the newly provided equip-



Warangal Collector Satya Sharada speaking at a meeting at MGM Hospital in Warangal on Friday

ment would significantly enhance the functioning of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and Special Newborn Care Unit (SNCU), thereby improving pediatric healthcare services. She emphasized the hospital's pivotal role in serving not only North Telangana but also neighboring states such as Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh.

Maoist bandh fails to make any impact in Telangana

PNS ■ MULUGU / BHADRADRI KOTHAGUDEM

The Maoist call for shutdown led to a high alert in the agency areas of Telangana on Friday.

The Telangana State Committee gave a call to make the shutdown on June 20 a success across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, condemning the BJP and Hindutva fascist "Operation Kagar" attack.

The shutdown called in protest against the killings carried out by the security forces, which they described as acts of repression. Among those killed were Comrade TLNS Chalam alias Anand alias Sudhakar alias Gautam—a senior state committee member with 45 years of revolutionary experience—and Comrade Mailarapu Adella alias Bhaskar.

Following this, in another



Security forces patrolling tribal areas in the Mulugu district

encounter that took place two days later, the top Maoist leader and Central Committee representative from Telangana, Gajjala Ravi, and senior Maoist leader

Aruna were killed. Although no formal statement has been issued by the Maoists following this incident, the shutdown was meant to demonstrate the party's existence.

Meanwhile, police forces intensified search operations. The shutdown failed to make much impact in the State.

Collector warns Panchayat Secretaries against interfering in civil disputes

PNS ■ NALGONDA

District Collector Ila Tripathi has issued a stern warning against interfering in civil disputes or cases that are under judicial consideration. In an official statement, she emphasised that any such interference would invite strict disciplinary action.

The Collector noted that it has come to the notice of the officials that some Panchayat Secretaries in the district were meddling in civil disputes, especially in cases that are pending in court.

She pointed out that in several instances, secretaries were seen allocating house numbers or making unilateral decisions on disputed lands or houses even while the matter was sub judice. Such actions are not only unauthorised but also beyond the scope of administrative jurisdiction.

Collector Tripathi warned that these activities disrupt legal processes and lead to serious legal complications at the village level. She also noted



that such interference is bringing unwanted legal trouble to the Panchayat Raj Department and district administration, and drawing criticism from the public.

Therefore, she has directed the Panchayat Secretaries to immediately stop issuing house numbers or certificates in disputed areas or in cases under litigation. The Collector made it clear that the district administration will no longer tolerate such unauthorised actions.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL DEPUTY COLLECTOR, LA, HAML, HYDERABAD FORM-F Notification by the Collector (LA), HAML (See rule 7 (c))				
File No.:	CE/16/2025-LHS-17/3	Dated:	20.06.2025	
Where as the following notifications were issued and published in the Gazettes for the acquisition of land under Extension of Metro Rail Project, Hyderabad Airport Metro Limited, Phase-II, from MGBS to Chandrayangutta, Corridor-VI, situated at Share-E- Hyderabad Village, Bahadurapur Mandal of Hyderabad District for the Public purpose.				
In response to the said Notifications the following affected persons (Property owners and others) have come forward to settle their claims through Negotiations.				
The details of the willing affected persons/Land Owners are as follows:				
S.NO.	NOTIFICATION NO. & DATE	GAZETTE NO. & DATE		
I	CG/16/2024-LHS (276 to 287)	PM HAML No.28 dated:02-11-2024	DO HAML No.57 dated:24.03.2025	
Sl. No.	Name and address	Sketch No.	Premises No.	Extent in Sq.yds.
1	2	3	4	5
1	1. Sri. Jehangir Khan, S/o. Roshan Khan, Rio.20-7-44/23/A, Qazi Pura, Channarayana, Shaibanda, Hyderabad-500065	LHS-265 (Part-A)	23-6-956	4.51
2	2. Mitesh Sharma, W/o. Late Chandra Kishore Sharma Rio. 21-1-279, Ghansi Bazar, Channarayana, Hyderabad	LHS-265 (Part-C)	23-6-958	4.09
S.NO.	NOTIFICATION NO. & DATE	GAZETTE NO. & DATE		
II	CG/298/2024-LHS (301 to 325)	HAML No.45 dated:07-12-2024		
Sl. No.	Name and address	Sketch No.	Premises No.	Extent in Sq.yds.
1	2	3	4	5
1	1. Sir Avadhoota Shankar, S/o Late A. Narasimha, Rio.23-6-918/21, Shaibanda, Channarayana, Hyderabad.	LHS-315	23-5-459	19.40
2	2. Sri Avadhoota Mahesh, S/o Late A. Yadagiri, 3. Sri A. Rajesh, S/o Late A. Yadagiri, Rio. 23-6-918/21/A, Shaibanda, Hyderabad	LHS-315	23-5-459	8.97
S.NO.	NOTIFICATION NO. & DATE	GAZETTE NO. & DATE		
III	CG/283/2024-LHS (370 to 400)	HAML No.48 dated:07-12-2024		
Sl. No.	Name and address	Sketch No.	Premises No.	Extent in Sq.yds.
1	2	3	4	5
1	1. Smt. N. Savithri, W/o Late N.Om Prakash, Rio.18-4-651, Alibada, Hyderabad.	LHS-376	18-4-650 and 651	14.11
It is hereby notified calling for claims and objections if any, to be filed before the District Collector, Hyderabad District / Special Deputy Collector, LA, HAML, Rasoolpura, Hyderabad within the Seven days of publication of this Notification.				
Signature of: Special Deputy Collector, LA, HAML, Rasoolpura, Hyderabad. Date: 19.06.2025				
DIPR No. 273/LA/PP-Advt/Agency/2025-26				

ACROSS THE STATES



Rajnath to attend Yoga Day celebrations in J&K

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday said he will attend the International Day of Yoga celebrations in Jammu and Kashmir on June 21 and also interact with the armed forces personnel at Udhampur Cantonment. He shared the update in a post on X. "Leaving New Delhi for Udhampur in Jammu and Kashmir. Shall attend the International Yoga Day celebrations tomorrow morning. Also, looking forward to interact with the Armed Forces personnel at Udhampur Cantt," Singh said in a post. The defence minister will be on a two-day visit to the Jammu region. The main IDY celebrations, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will be in Andhra Pradesh's Visakhapatnam.



BJP leader seeks help to rescue man stranded in Iran

BJP leader and former Rajya Sabha MP Avinash Rai Khanna has sought the help of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and the Ministry of External Affairs for the safe return of a Ludhiana man stranded in Iran amid heightened tensions in the region. Khanna said that Simardeep Singh, son of Jaspal Singh, owner of Shahpuri Industries, had travelled to Tehran to participate in a trade exhibition held from June 10 to 13, according to a press note issued on Friday. However, due to the ongoing hostilities between Israel and Iran, he has reportedly become stranded in the Shomal region of Iran and is facing difficulty returning to India. Following a plea from the family, Khanna said he initiated formal communication with the PMO and the MEA, urging swift diplomatic efforts for Simardeep's evacuation. He added that the Centre is committed to the safety of its citizens abroad and expressed hope that Simardeep would return home safely.



Bengal Irrigation Minister inspects Durgapur barrage

West Bengal Irrigation minister Manas Bhuiyan on Friday inspected the Durgapur Barrage to assess water release mechanism amid concerns over potential flooding due to discharge from Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) reservoirs. In the wake of heavy downpours over the past few days in some districts, downstream rivers have swelled, and the state administration was cautious about flood threats in case of a heavy release of water, officials said. Bhuiyan said he has been holding regular discussions with departmental officials on the issue, and said that although water is being released from DVC system, the Durgapur Barrage is ensuring a gradual discharge to help mitigate any flood risk.

UNVEILS ODISHA VISION DOCUMENT

Modi launches 105 projects worth over Rs 18,600 cr

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday launched 105 development projects valued at over Rs 18,600 crores, unveiled the "Odisha Vision Document" and flagged off new trains during his visit to the state.

He also felicitated several people, including 'Lakshpati Didis' and others.

Modi, who visited Odisha for the sixth time since the BJP government was formed in the state in June 2024, launched the projects at a function at Janata Maidan here.

The projects launched by the Prime Minister included drinking water and irrigation, health infrastructure, rural roads and bridges, national highways and railway infrastructure.

Modi flagged off the first passenger train to Boudh district after inaugurating the Sonepur-Purunikatak railway line.

Railway projects such as the third and fourth rail lines between Sarla-Sason and the fourth rail line between Jharsuguda-Jamga were also launched.



This apart, Modi also flagged off 100 electric buses under the Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) system, promoting eco-friendly urban mobility.

Prepared following people's feedback, the Prime Minister unveiled the 'Odisha Vision Document', the roadmap for the state's development goals, anchored around the centenary of Odisha's formation as a linguistic state in 2036 and India's 100 years of independence in

2047. The vision aims to transform Odisha into a Dollar 500 billion economy by 2036 and a Dollar 1.5 trillion economy by 2047.

The Prime Minister also launched 'Baraputra Aitiha Gram Yojana', an initiative to transform birthplaces of Odia icons into memorials, featuring museums, interpretation centres, statues and libraries, thereby promoting cultural tourism and preserving her-

DECLINED TRUMP'S INVITE FOR COMING TO LAND OF LORD JAGANNATH: PM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said he had declined an invitation from US President Donald Trump to visit Washington, and instead chosen to come to Odisha, the sacred land of Lord Jagannath.

Addressing a rally in Bhubaneswar, Modi said, "I was in Canada for the G7 Summit when US President Trump had called me and invited me to Washington for a discussion and lunch. I thanked him for the invitation, saying I have to visit Odisha, the land of Lord Jagannath. I humbly rejected his invitation." Modi participated in the first anniversary function of the BJP's maiden government in the state and launched development projects worth over Rs 18,600 crore.

Modi also felicitated some women achievers from across the state, who included some 'Lakshpati Didis'.

Union Min Sukanta writes to LS Speaker alleging 'threat to life'

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Union minister Sukanta Majumdar on Friday wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla alleging a "grave breach of privilege" and a "threat to life" after his convoy was allegedly attacked in the Budge Budge area in West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district on the previous day.

Majumdar, who is also the BJP's West Bengal unit president, was visiting the area on Thursday to meet party work-



ers who were reportedly injured after being attacked outside the Budge Budge-1 BDO office on Wednesday.

His visit triggered tensions in the area, where TMC supporters allegedly surrounded his convoy, raised slogans, and pelted it with stones.

In a letter written to the Speaker under Rule 222 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, Majumdar, the Balurghat MP, described the attack as a serious threat not only to his life but also to the

safety of those accompanying him.

He stated that the mob, reportedly comprising TMC workers, gheraoed and violently attacked his convoy, damaging vehicles and injuring several individuals.

"The attack posed a direct and serious threat to my life and the lives of those present," the letter said.

Majumdar said Diamond Harbour Police District Superintendent of Police Rahul Goswami was physically present at the spot but "failed to take any preventive or protective action," which the minister termed as "wilful negligence" and "dereliction of duty."

He also noted that the SDPO of Diamond Harbour was absent from the scene despite prior intimation of his scheduled visit.

"The situation was brought under control only due to the timely intervention of CISF personnel assigned to me as I have Z category security cover provided by the Union government," Majumdar wrote.

Panel to examine reliance of coaching, fairness of entrance exams

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Education has set up a nine-member panel to examine issues relating to coaching and the emergence of 'dummy schools' besides the effectiveness and fairness of entrance examinations, according to officials.

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

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

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

The panel will study the effectiveness and fairness of competitive entrance examinations in the context of the

school education system and their influence on the growth of the coaching industry.

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



towards coaching institutes," he said.

Evaluating the awareness levels among students and parents regarding multiple career pathways and the impact of this lack of awareness on the over-dependence on a few elite institutions; assessing the availability and effectiveness of career counselling services in schools and colleges and suggesting measures for strengthening career guidance frameworks are among other terms of reference of the committee, the official said.

'WON'T TOLERATE DISRESPECT TO DALIT ICON' PM Modi slams RJD for 'insulting' Ambedkar

PNS ■ SIWAN (BIHAR)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday slammed the RJD for allegedly insulting Babasaheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar and asserted that the people of Bihar would not tolerate any disrespect to the Dalit icon.

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

In a nearly 45-minute-long

speech that followed the launch of projects worth more than Rs 5,900 crore and the flagging off of a Vande Bharat train, the Prime Minister cautioned the people against "attempts to recapture economic resources of Bihar" by the RJD-led opposition in the upcoming assembly polls.

"Ambedkar was against dynasty rule. But they (RJD and its allies) do not like it. So they have his portrait placed at their feet. On my way, I saw posters demanding an apology for this insult to Babasaheb," said Modi.

He added, "But there has been no apology. This is because they hold Dalits in contempt.

In contrast, Modi has Babasaheb in his heart and would like to keep his portrait close to his chest."

Modi, who did not mention RJD chief Lalu Prasad by name, referred to the instance of a portrait of Ambedkar being placed close to the feet of the ailing septuagenarian, for which he (Prasad) has been drawing flak from the BJP-led NDA.

"The reason is that the RJD-

Congress people have little respect for people belonging to the deprived castes, the Dalits, the OBCs and the EBCs. They consider themselves above Babasaheb Ambedkar.

But they must remember that the disrespect to Babasaheb Ambedkar will not be forgiven by the people of Bihar," the PM said.

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

SC stays Madurai temple demolition

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

A bench of Justices Ujjal Bhuyan and Manmohan sought the response of the civic body on a plea of the residents through their body, Visthara Welfare Association in Madurai, challenging the Madras High Court order directing the temple's demolition.

"The high court has directed the demolition of the temple. Issue notice, returnable in eight weeks. In the meanwhile, the demolition of the temple shall remain stayed," the bench ordered.

55-year-old man marries woman once engaged to his son

PNS ■ RAMPUR (UP)

A 55-year-old man in Uttar Pradesh's Rampur district allegedly married a woman who was initially engaged to his 17-year-old son, leaving his family shocked and distraught, officials said on Friday.

The incident occurred recently in Bansnagali village and came to light on Thursday following the family's claims.

Shakeel, a father of six and grandfather to three, frequently communicated with a 22-year-old woman, Ayesha (name changed), from a nearby village, after their daughter's wedding last month, his wife Shabana said.

When questioned, Shakeel claimed he was arranging Ayesha's marriage with his son, Aman (name changed).



Initially, the family resisted the union citing both financial constraints and Aman's age, but Shabana alleged that Shakeel forced the match by being verbally and physically aggressive.

Aman, however, said that he grew suspicious of his father's behaviour after noticing fre-

quent calls between him and Ayesha.

"Once, I checked his phone and found some objectionable content involving him," Aman explained, adding that he later refused to proceed with the wedding.

Last week, Shakeel left for Delhi on the pretext of work.

Azamgarh got new identity under BJP govt: Adityanath

PNS ■ AZAMGARH (UP)

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday said people of Uttar Pradesh were earlier scared of taking the name of Azamgarh or identifying with the place but under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, it has become the fortress of "indomitable courage".

Azamgarh had to earlier beg for its identity but now the situation has changed, he claimed while speaking at the inauguration of the Gorakhpur Link Expressway.

"Uttar Pradesh is making its identity from a 'BIMARU' state to an expressway state. Remember what the conditions were eight years ago.

The youths of Uttar Pradesh and the residents of the state would suffer from an

identity crisis. People used to feel scared to take the name of Azamgarh and Uttar Pradesh," he said.

"Azamgarh has given two chief ministers and this Azamgarh had to beg for identity But, today in a span of eight years under the guidance of PM Modi, now Azamgarh does not have to beg for identity," Adityanath said.

He was apparently referring to former chief ministers Mulayam Singh Yadav and his son Akhilesh Yadav, who contested from the Azamgarh seat.

"Azamgarh has now become the fortress of indomitable courage. Now, it has integrated (itself) with the mainstream of development," he said.

The 91.352-km-long Gorakhpur link expressway has been built at a cost of Rs 7,283 crore.



Refugee status a reminder of unfinished battle for justice: Kashmiri Pandits

PNS ■ JAMMU

Panun Kashmir, an organisation advocating for displaced Kashmiri Pandits, said on Friday that refugee status was not an identity but a reminder of the "unfinished battle for justice".

At a function to mark World Refugee Day, Panun Kashmir organising secretary B L Kaul denounced the "global silence around the genocide of Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir" and urged the community to consolidate its demand for rightful restitution, not symbolic gestures.

"The refugee status is not an identity but a reminder of the unfinished battle for justice. Today is not a day of mourning, but of assertion. We gather not to seek pity but to remind the world of the betrayal we continue to endure," Kaul said.

Former director general of J-K Police S P Vaid spoke on the Pahalgalam attack, in which 26



people were killed by terrorists. All but one of those killed in the attack were tourists.

"The threats were real, the targets were known, yet the system failed. Why?" he said.

Referring to his time in the police, he said every operation meant to safeguard Kashmiri Pandits was either delayed or diluted. "I witnessed how the machinery was systematically programmed to ignore red flags. Pahalgalam wasn't a failure of intelligence. It was a failure

of intent," he said.

Legal luminary and former chairperson of the Jonaraja Institute of Genocide and Atrocities Studies, Tito Ganju, spoke on the international framework of genocide studies. "Kashmiri Hindus are not just victims of displacement but of a systemic and prolonged genocide," he declared.

He warned against any attempt at forced reconciliation without justice, saying it would be a "second wound inflicted

on an unhealed scar."

Drawing upon international conventions, he said that the 2005 UN basic principles on the right to remedy and reparation prohibit enforced reconciliation without recognition of the crime and yet, that is precisely what is being attempted in the name of symbolic return and political adjustment.

"We are caught in the deadly triad of genocide, denial of genocide, and now, the consolidation of genocide.

The perpetrators are being mainstreamed, and the victims are being told to forget," he said.

Ganju categorically rejected the call for a moment of silence, saying, "Our silence has been weaponised for 35 years. Today, we speak, we name, and we indict."

Chairman of Panun Kashmir Dr Ajay Chrungeo said, "The massacre at Pahalgalam is part of the same uninterrupted genocidal campaign.

China, Pak, Bangladesh hold inaugural trilateral meet

PNS ■ BEIJING

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

It is the second such trilateral that China has established in India's neighbourhood after its foreign ministers' mechanism with Pakistan and Afghanistan last month.

On Thursday, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong, Bangladeshi Acting Foreign Secretary Ruhul Alam Siddique and Additional Foreign Secretary of Pakistan Imran Ahmed Siddiqui attended the meeting held at

the Chinese city of Kunming, capital of Southern Yunnan province.

Pakistani Foreign Secretary Amna Baloch participated in the first phase of the meeting via video link, a Chinese Foreign Ministry press release said here on Friday.



In his address, Sun Weidong said Bangladesh and Pakistan are both good neighbours, good friends, and good partners in high quality Belt and Road cooperation, the Foreign Ministry's press release said.

Editor's TAKE

Iran-Israel conflict could devastate world peace

Rising Iran-Israel tensions, likely US involvement, and Putin's warning cast a dark shadow over global peace

The drums of war are beating louder than ever. As tensions between Iran and Israel escalate to alarming levels, fresh reports suggest that US President Donald Trump has approved military strike plans on Iran — though final orders are still pending. The world now watches with bated breath as a volatile triangle of Tel Aviv, Tehran, and Washington threaten to spiral into an all-consuming regional war. This isn't just a matter of political one-upmanship; it's a global concern with deep implications for security, energy, diplomacy, and humanity itself. The current situation in the Middle East is a dangerous mix of ideological enmity, nuclear ambitions, and historical grievances. Iran and Israel have long viewed each other as existential threats. Add the United States — a global superpower — to the mix, and the stakes become dangerously high. Recent developments, including President Trump's consideration of a military strike on Iran, signal a major turning point. It could also lead to China and Russia pitching in. Russian President Putin has already warned the US to keep away from it. While the White House maintains it is weighing all options, including diplomatic ones, preparations for a potential weekend strike indicate how close the world is to the edge.

The war, if once started, could lead to dire economic consequences too. The Strait of Hormuz, a vital chokepoint for the world's oil supply, lies at the heart of any Iran conflict. If war erupts, Iran could retaliate by disrupting this route, choking global oil flow and causing energy prices to skyrocket. Iran has deep ties with regional militias and proxy groups — from Hezbollah in Lebanon to the Houthis in Yemen and militias in Iraq and Syria. A military strike on Iran could unleash a chain reaction of asymmetric retaliation, dragging multiple countries — including Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and even Turkey — into a broader regional conflict. An outright war would destabilise international institutions like the United Nations and cause a breakdown of diplomatic channels. In a world already dealing with crises in Ukraine, Gaza, and Taiwan, another warfront would overstretch peacekeeping capabilities and reduce trust in multilateralism.

While Trump's statement — "If it's a choice between fighting and having a nuclear weapon, you have to do what you have to do" — may appeal to hardliners, it oversimplifies a highly complex geopolitical dilemma. True strength lies in de-escalation, diplomacy, and long-term vision, not reactionary force. This moment demands global leadership. The European Union, India, China, Russia, and Gulf nations must step forward to mediate. The Iran nuclear deal, though imperfect, was a framework that kept dialogue alive. Walking away from it without a viable replacement is not a good idea. Beyond the missiles and politics, it is the ordinary citizens who suffer the most. Iranian civilians, already grappling with economic sanctions and political repression, could face mass casualties and humanitarian disaster. Israelis, too, would live under constant threat of retaliatory rocket fire. Missiles do not differentiate between uniforms and schoolchildren. The time to act is not after the war is declared. It is now — through restraint, reason, and relentless diplomacy.

Coexistence must prevail over conflict

Whether acknowledged or ignored, interdependence lies at the heart of existence; life thrives not in isolation, but in interconnectedness. Yet, history is rife with conflict — a result of ego, domination, and the failure to honour this fundamental truth

Whether one accepts it or not, one needs each other. Interdependency is the essence of life. The sooner one realises this, the more effective one's range is. Goodwill for each other is needed not just for the other person but for oneself.

Life itself begins with interdependency when the infant needs the mother and then the father, not only to feed oneself but also to be free from disease, ill health, and more. As one changes because of changes in age, life, and status, the nature of interdependency changes, but dependencies continue. In such a scenario, the scope for arrogance and self-adulation can have little or no space.

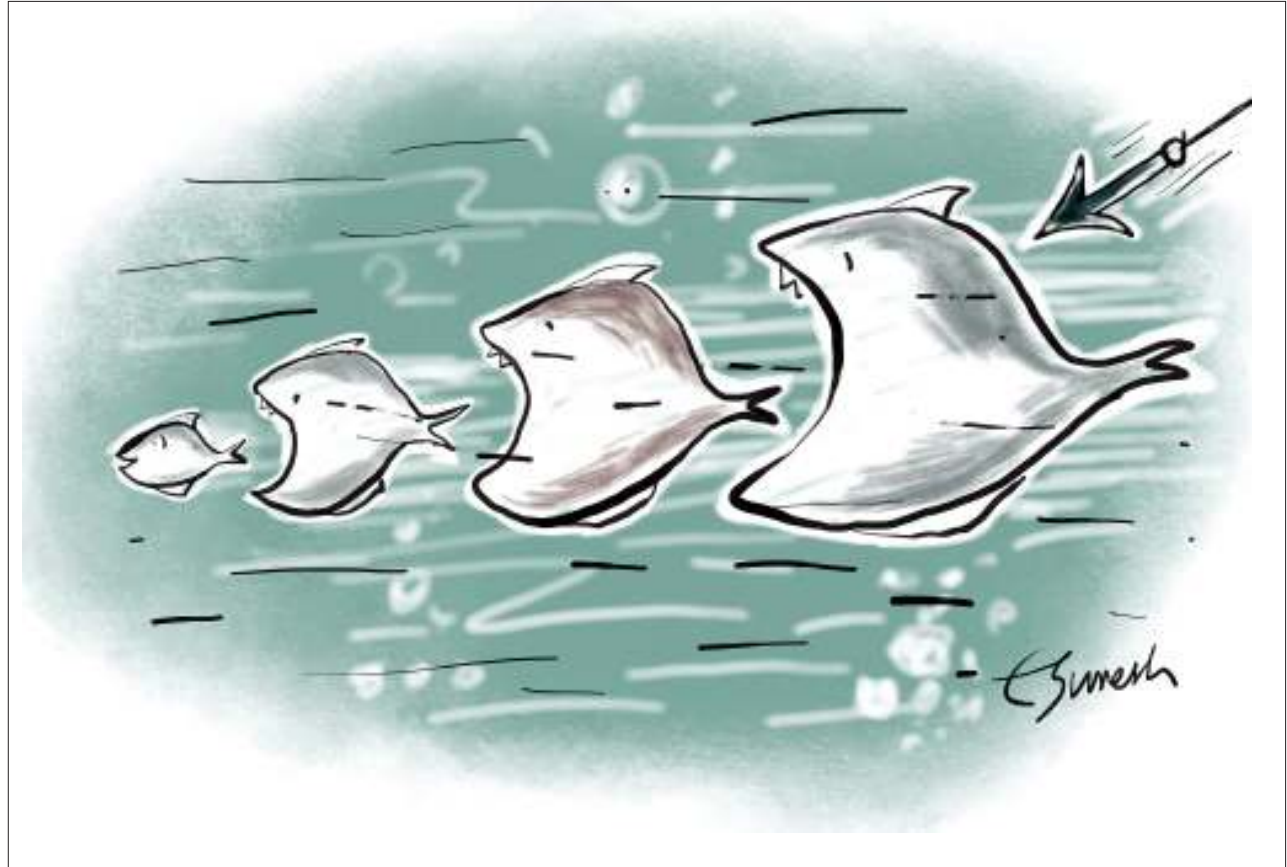
It is unrealistic and impractical. Humility, therefore, becomes the key. Humility is only partly modesty. Essentially, it is a realisation of interdependency that is a hallmark of maturity. This is the core of the existence of living creatures, living beings. Many schools of philosophy across the world have expounded on this.

This approach is true for all living entities and not just human beings. It applies to non-living entities too. Water needs land, and land needs water. Together, they give life to living entities of plants, trees, and more, which in turn bear fruit for living beings. Clearly, interdependence is the key. Together with interdependency is a sense of the requirement of modesty, proportion, and respect for the other entity's needs. Unfortunately, this simple truth is not recognised sufficiently in operation, and some entities destroy another entity's existence in the interest of so-called self-preservation.

A reaction can and does set in. This is a dilemma that is yet to be resolved. Empathy may provide a route to it. Therefore, one of the crucial questions of life is: where does interdependency recede, and the dominant takeover to establish their hegemony?

Attempts at hegemony can and do meet with a reaction sooner or later. This is the origin of war and the struggle for dominance takes on a violent shape. It is not surprising, therefore, that the story of different parts of the planet is dotted with anecdotes of wars, violence, and worse. If the theory of inter-dependencies is so obvious — which indeed it is — why does it escape attention? Philosophers have dila- ted upon this from the hoary past in Asia to the more recent past from the Renaissance onwards in the West.

The Chinese, the Indian, and subse- quently the European thinkers have done their bit to plough the theme of inter-



dependency, but no one has been able to convert this into practical terms for every- one's welfare and everyone's growth. There is a Sanskrit dictum to the effect 'Sarve bha- vantu sukhinah; sarve bhavantu niramaya' (freely translated, it means: May all become satiated, may all become without attachment).

This too has often remained a distant ideal, and people do get attached, and peo- ple do identify with things material and otherwise. 'This is mine and that is thine' is a driving philosophy.

This has the roots of much conflict at many levels. This includes, as explained, conflict at an interpersonal level, group level, and at a larger social level, leading to wars and more.

Many people talk of wars and conflicts as not helping in solving problems, but they still indulge in wars or conflicts and

worse. The tendency for domination over- takes the feeling of co-existence. To pos- sess more than one's share becomes a need for many. The pursuit of this need over- takes the pursuit of co-existence. The feeling and the realisation that whether one likes it or not, one needs each other, becomes a distant dream.

This planet is divided into races, colours, religions, and other distinctive categories. These constitute groups and periodically one or the other tries to dominate. It may not be fantasy to say that the history of this planet is also the history of wars.

Since time immemorial, groups have coalesced with weaponry and more to dominate other groups.

Dominating other groups has also become the route to access to resources and, therefore, greater physical comfort and material prosperity.

The matter does not stop there. Access to more resources leads to a desire for even more: not just resources but also comforts. This is then converted into more luxuri- ous living, more luxurious housing, palaces, and luxury haunts.

Perhaps reversing this is a time-consum-

ing and foundational effort. Many saints and philosophers have tried to do so by talking about peace, goodwill, and more. That movement is equally strong, and the names of many philosophers, thinkers, and enunciators come to mind.

The names of Buddha, Confucius, Moses, and others are but a few among lit- erally dozens and hundreds of leading thinkers who would have preached the route and practice of peace and mutual goodwill. Thus, it is the interdependency and conflict that seem to run on parallel lines. Sometimes one seems to have the upper hand; sometimes the other.

Be that as it may, the history of the plan- et runs between co-existence and conflict. It is for the sake of the sanity of the species and the race that one must support the forces of coexistence and interdepen- dence. This alone will bring to the fore and perpetuate the achievements of the race which dominates this planet. Being 'human' is perhaps the biggest achievement of it all.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. Views are personal)



On the 10th International Day of Yoga last year, people gathered to perform yoga on the Yamuna River at Sonia Vihar. PANKAJ KUMAR

India's race to superpower needs more than GDP & missile

SECOND Opinion

For a nation to rise to the level of a superpower, it must possess not only military might, scientific innovation, economic strength, and industrial depth, but also something far less tangible — soft power. In the 20th century, the notion that a newly independent and economically fragile India could one day stake its claim as a global superpower seemed far-fetched. Today, that vision is not only conceivable — it's within reach. Since 1947, India has come a long way.

With a GDP that ranks fifth globally and expected to become the third-largest by the end of the decade, with one of the world's largest and best-trained armed forces, India has many of the hard power ingredients necessary for superpower status. Technologically, India is advancing rapidly, especially in sectors like digital payments, space exploration, and pharmaceuticals.

Yet history tells us something crucial: hard power alone does not create enduring superpowers. True global influence comes when a nation captures not just territory or markets, but the imagination and affection of people around the world. It's here that India must focus its next leap on soft power.

The British Empire understood this well. Alongside its colonial exploits, it spread games like cricket and tennis, cultural symbols like the Christmas tree,

and, of course, the English language, which today connects billions. In the 20th century, America mastered soft power through Hollywood, jazz, jeans, and the global appeal of its democratic ideals. South Korea is now a case study in how cultural exports — K-pop, Korean cuisine, and Samsung's technological prowess — can transform global perception. Even China, often criticised for its authoritarianism, has found admiration through exports like Chinese cuisine, TikTok, and cutting-edge electric vehicles.

India, with its immense cultural wealth, has a deep reservoir of soft power waiting to be tapped. Yoga and meditation have already found a vast following across the West. Bollywood is now a recognised global brand. Indian cuisine, from North Indian tandoori to South Indian vegetarian dishes, is increasingly mainstream in cities like London, New York, and Sydney. The philosophical legacy of Mahatma Gandhi continues to inspire peaceful resistance movements across the globe.

Then there are unique cultural treasures like the Kama Sutra, a historical celebration of human intimacy, and architectural marvels like the Taj Mahal, among the most visited monuments in the world. India could position itself not just as a cultural superpower but as a "Superpower of Peace," exporting harmony, wellness, and heritage. But to do so, India must confront a critical internal contradiction: its soft power cannot flourish if its artists, thinkers, and come-



ADJI DJ BAKAS

(The writer is a Global Trendwatcher, Futurist and Bestselling Author based in the Netherlands. Views are personal)

Letters to the Editor

Women in Espionage

Espionage, the clandestine art of gathering intelligence for national security, has existed since the dawn of states, as seen in ancient texts like Kautilya's Arthashastra and the Mahabharata. Spies played vital roles in safeguarding frontiers against unknown threats.

Historically, espionage was a male-dominated field. That's what makes the appointment of Blaise Metreweli as the first female head of Britain's Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) in over a century particularly noteworthy. Since its formation in 1909, MI6 has operated globally to counter terrorism, cyber threats, and hostile states — often invisibly.

Though rare, history records remarkable female spies. Virginia Hall of the US outwitted the Gestapo during WWII, while Melita Norwood passed crucial British atomic secrets to the Soviets over four decades. India too produced brave women like Noor Inayat Khan and Saraswati Rajamani, who contributed significantly to wartime intelligence, with the latter thwarting British plans against Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.

Interestingly, life now imitates art — MI6's historic decision echoes the 1995 James Bond film GoldenEye, where a woman heads the intelligence service. While symbolic, this move challenges entrenched norms. Yet, whether it transforms real-world espionage or merely scratches the surface of male-centric structures remains to be seen.

VIJAY SINGH ADHIKARI | NAINITAL

Rising Covid cases is a cause of concern

The number of active COVID-19 cases is steadily rising across the country and in Haryana, prompting health authorities to intensify surveillance and testing. Hospitals are being urged to resume antigen and RTPCR testing to detect infections early.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), the recent surge in cases is linked to the Omicron sub-variant NB 181, which is showing rapid transmissibility. In response to the growing threat, the Haryana government has extended COVID-related restrictions until March 31, 2026. Governor Bandaru Dattatreya has invoked Sections 2, 3, and 4 of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, to implement precautionary measures aimed at containing the spread.

Health Minister Arti Singh Rao has appealed to both citizens and health officials to remain alert and proactive. The central and state Governments have reiterated the importance of adhering to COVID protocols, including wearing masks, maintaining social distancing, and avoiding large gatherings.

While the Government is responsible for ensuring the availability of medical infrastructure and resources, individual responsibility remains critical. Public cooperation and vigilance are essential to curb the spread and avoid another health crisis.

YUGAL KISHORE SHARMA | FARIDABAD

Trump's bizaare ceafire claims

I fail to understand what kind of leader Donald Trump is. Just yesterday (June 18), Prime Minister Narendra Modi clarified to Trump that India has never accepted third-party mediation on the Kashmir issue and never will.

Yet, only hours later, Trump claimed he "stopped the war" between India and Pakistan after Operation Sindoor, crediting not just PM Modi but also Pakistan's Army Chief General Asim Munir — not their elected PM Shabbaz Sharif.

This alone reveals who really calls the shots in Pakistan, exposing it as a military-run state. More troubling is Trump's false equivalence: comparing PM Modi, leader of the world's largest democracy, to a Pakistani military general. It's insulting. Why hasn't India objected? Why is our elected leader being likened to someone from a nation that harbours terrorists?

The truth is murky. If a ceasefire happened, was it due to US pressure? Or did Modi act at Pakistan's request? And if so, why didn't he demand the extradition of terrorists hiding in Pakistan, including those behind the April 22 attack?

It's time for PM Modi to be transparent with Indians. Trump may be playing his own game, America is no one's true friend.

BIDYUT KUMAR CHATTERJEE | FARIDABAD

CAN PAKISTAN EXPLOIT THE GEOPOLITICAL SITUATION?

Giving a communal twist to the ongoing Iran-Israel War, can Pakistan join hands with Turkey to unite the Muslim countries in the name of Ummah or the whole community of Muslims bound together by ties of religion? Can it use this trick to put geopolitical pressure on India and blackmail it in any future escalation of tension or on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir? These questions surfaced after a senior military commander and member of Iran's National Security Council, Mohsen Rezaei, claimed that Pakistan had assured the Shia nation it would attack Israel with a nuclear bomb. Pakistan has used the bogey of Jammu and Kashmir in the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Though it has failed almost every time, Islamabad can use the issues of "fight against Zionism" and "Islam in danger" in the Iran-Israel War. It also should be kept in mind that Islamabad has always defended its own nuclear programme as

"Islamic bomb". I strongly feel that it is almost impossible to unite the Muslim countries in the name of the Islamic world or Ummah. They cannot be united even in the name of "fight against Zionism" and "Islam in danger" because each of them prioritises its own interests. Many Muslim countries are upset with the treatment of Muslims, the Citizenship Amendment Act, the National Register of Citizens and the rise of Hindutva and majoritarianism in India. Pakistan wants to exploit the situation for its own strategic needs.

The way Turkey and Azerbaijan joined hands with Islamabad in the recent clashes with India has raised the alarm bells. Should India chalk out its own strategy to checkmate Pakistan's design by seeking help from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia and Malaysia? Should India stop backing Israel and reach out to Iran and mend its own domestic policies?

BHAGWAN THADANI | MUMBAI

Please send your letter to the letterstopioneer@gmail.com. In not more than 400 words. We appreciate your feedback.

India’s quiet power: How yoga became the world’s breath of unity

From UN halls to public parks across continents, yoga has become more than exercise; it’s a shared language of breath and balance. And in a fractured world, that quiet connection may be India’s most revolutionary contribution yet

FIRST
Column

In a world constantly jostling for attention, through missiles, money, and media, India has managed to slip something quietly into the global bloodstream: yoga. Not just the stretch-on-a-mat version that floods Instagram, but the real thing, an ancient, rooted philosophy that has slowly become one of the most persuasive tools of soft power diplomacy in the 21st century. It’s not flashy, it doesn’t demand loyalty, but it lingers; and that’s where its magic lies.

For the past 10 years, yoga’s rise has been deliberate, strategic, and honestly, quite beautiful to watch. The turning point came in 2014 when Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed the idea of an International Day of Yoga at the United Nations.

177 countries backed it, not because they wanted to do India a favour, but because yoga had already embedded itself in their societies. That was the win, not just the declaration itself, but the global readiness to accept that this was more than India’s past; it was part of humanity’s future.

In 2024, that symbolic circle came full with PM Modi leading the Yoga Day celebrations at the UN Headquarters in New York, in the very halls where he had first proposed it.

Over 180 nationalities came together in a collective breath, a rare moment of unity in a fragmented global order. American singer Mary Millben’s soulful rendition of India’s national anthem at the event added a layer of cultural grace that moved many to tears.

It wasn’t just a diplomatic spectacle; it was a deeply human moment, where art, breath, and belief converged into something much larger than protocol. In that gathering of movement and stillness, India didn’t just host the world, it held it.

Since then, June 21 has transformed from a cultural celebration into something much deeper, a show of presence, not power; of balance, not bluster. And that’s what makes yoga such an exceptional soft power tool.

It doesn’t yell, it invites. It doesn’t push a product; it offers a practice. While other cultural exports often come dressed in capitalism or carry subtle imperial agendas, yoga feels clean, disarming even. Its strength lies in its quietness.

From New York to Nairobi, Tokyo to Toronto, the sight of thousands moving together in breath and stillness is not just aesthetic, it’s symbolic. In a time where nations scream over each other, yoga listens, and people respond.

Back home, the Ministry of Ayush has played a crucial role in deepening this influence. From local wellness programs and school modules to international MOUs and yoga certification frameworks, the past two decades have seen real, measurable investment in making yoga accessible, authentic, and global. This isn’t



just branding, it’s cultural stewardship, and it matters. Because when a country not only preserves but exports its deepest values, and does so with humility, it earns something far more valuable than visibility; it earns trust.

This year, the International Day of Yoga 2025 campaign is themed “Yoga for One Earth, One Health”, a line that captures, in five words, everything the world is craving: connection, sustainability, healing.

After years of pandemic panic, mental health breakdowns, and climate anxiety, the idea that the health of our bodies is directly tied to the health of our planet doesn’t feel like a philosophy anymore; it feels like a necessity.

Ayush’s campaigns this year reflect that urgency. Over 30,000 organisations are joining the ‘Yoga

JUNE 21 HAS TRANSFORMED FROM A CULTURAL CELEBRATION INTO SOMETHING MUCH DEEPER, A SHOW OF PRESENCE, NOT POWER; OF BALANCE, NOT BLUSTER. AND THAT’S WHAT MAKES YOGA SUCH AN EXCEPTIONAL SOFT POWER TOOL. IT DOESN’T YELL, IT INVITES

Sangam’, turning parks, schoolyards, hospitals, and railway platforms into yoga grounds. These aren’t token events; they’re public declarations that India’s contribution to global peace and wellbeing will not be transactional, it will be transformative.

And then there’s YogAndhra 2025, one of the most ambitious state campaigns we’ve seen in years. Two crore people, a month-long activation, a mass event along the Visakhapatnam coastline; it’s massive, and honestly, deeply moving.

Not because of the numbers, but because of what they represent: ordinary people coming together, voluntarily, in a moment of pause.

That’s the real diplomacy, not the flags, not the official handshakes. Just breath, stillness, surrender; and in that shared silence, India speaks louder than any press release ever could.

What makes all of this even more powerful is the tenor of yoga itself. It’s not ornamental, it’s



CHAITANYA K PRASAD

Mainstreaming Climate Resilience and Disaster Management

Recent incidents of floods in North East India and cloudburst in Sikkim have resulted in loss of human lives, damage to houses, roads and other infrastructure. It has disrupted normal life and has significant impact on business and industries in these states. The incident of forest fire in Uttarakhand — reported to be 11,256 incidents in the year 2023-2024 and spread in many districts — has caused heavy damage to the biodiversity of the region. These incidents highlight the need to look into the approach followed by Government in dealing with disaster and climate resilience and whether there is need for course correction to contain such massive loss of life, property, business, beside other long-term impacts on the environment and ecology. As per the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction, 2025 (GAR) published by UN Office on Disaster Risk Reduction, the economic cost of disaster is increasing every year. From an average of \$70-80 billion a year (1970-2000), the annual cost is now \$180-200 billion. The real cost of disaster is estimated to be \$2.3 trillion when other related aspects are taken into account. India itself suffered economic losses of about \$12 billion in 2023 against an average of \$8 billion (2013-2021).

Some estimates project the loss of about 2 per cent GDP due to disaster in the medium term. The trend is showing substantial increase in losses and likely to increase in future. Disaster happens almost in all countries across the world and has become a very regular phenomenon, thus affecting the community, infrastructure, flora and fauna, environment and economy. In India, the Disaster Management Act, 2005 provides the framework for effective management of the disasters which include, besides the responses to deal/manage after the occurrence of event, provision for implementing measures in prevention of danger or threat of any disaster. Section 6 of the Act inter alia authorises the NDMA/SDMA — national/state authority — to lay down guidelines to be followed by all departments by integrating the disaster plan in their existing schemes and programmes. It also prescribes for making disaster plan at various level/department of the Government and also allocating the resources in their budget proposal for the same.

Has the Act and its provisions been able to enthuse every departmental functionary at all levels to appreciate and understand the need to take steps necessary for mitigating and addressing the causes and factors leading to disaster? Though the response of the administrative machinery has been laudable after the event (disaster/calamity) has happened, their support in addressing the causes/factors has not been very encouraging. The seriousness to be taken by every department of the Government in designing and developing programmes and making them integral part of their functioning does need a lot of

improvement. The committee approach at various levels has not been able to mainstream the disaster mitigation and related issues addressed appropriately and with desired sincerity in view of large scale and long-term consequences.

There are six main types of disasters — earthquake, floods, storms, heatwaves, forest fire and droughts — which accounted for more than 95 per cent of direct losses noticed/accounted in disasters across the world. The losses include environmental, human displacement cost, health impact, and other social cost including loss of education and business. Disaster impacts almost every walk of life. Almost every sector of the economy — from agriculture, forest, fisheries, small and medium industries and labour — are affected in disaster. In case of special children and Divyang, disaster is a way of life for them as they encounter it every day. This means that every department/institution of the Government needs to design programmes/schemes for mitigation of disaster. For example, a disaster by flooding will require measures from Irrigation Department (to design control measures), Public Works, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Food and Civil Supplies, Education, Forest, Social Welfare/Revenue, Education, Police, Health. This reflects the need for dovetailing the disaster and climate resilience programmes in every department so as to facilitate preventative as well as effective management aspects of such events.

Central level and state level bodies with mainly coordination function do not seem to suffice this requirement. Most Government bodies think that disaster and climate resilience are issues to be addressed by Disaster Department or Forest and Environment Departments.

The exigencies of dealing with climate resilience are not integral to their functioning. Disasters destabilise national economy, strain public finances, deepen poverty and inequality and disrupt long-term development gains, beside social and psychological impact on the community. One example of the disaster is on children — most vulnerable section of the society. At least 242 million pre-primary and upper-secondary students have experienced school disruptions due to climate events in 2024 across 85 countries or territories and three-quarters (74 per cent) of those affected students are in low- and lower-middle-income countries.

In India too, schools are generally the first one affected in any disaster — closed or used as shelter. Nowadays extreme weather events such as heatwave, pollution especially in the urban areas are having serious and long-term impact on the students. The main events leading to nationwide school disruptions in 2024 in at least 20 countries were heatwaves, tropical cyclones, storms, and floods large-

ly influenced by ongoing climate change. It is estimated that globally 90 per cent of children are exposed to one or more major climate and environmental hazard.

Another major sector affected by disaster and climate change is Health. Globally around 4.2 million premature deaths take place due to air pollution. The emergence of new strain of virus — COVID — also poses serious disaster impacting large and vulnerable population. Unpreparedness of the Health Department infrastructure and, in some cases, a total collapse was noticed during the COVID outbreak.

With such long-term consequences, can disaster management be left to a “postmortem approach” — deal with it after occurrence of the disaster event — or does it need to be looked at differently in view of the serious impacts these disasters have on communities and nations? Presently, climate resilience approach has not been integrated in a manner that every department of the Government follows a focused and continuous approach in addressing the same. At one point of time, a similar approach as adopted by the NDMA Act was followed for dealing with matters relating to North Eastern States. North Eastern Council (NEC) was set up as a statutory body in 1972. Persuading every department to provide for specific component of their schemes for NE states despite issuance of guidelines/advisory was not found to be very effective. Despite NEC having all state Governors, Chief Ministers, Union Minister (Chairman) as members, the approach of exciting/persuading every department in Government was not found to be highly satisfactory. It was thereafter decided in 1998-99 to prescribe allocation of 10 per cent of total budget of each department for NE states. The unutilised portion of earmarked funds is maintained in a “non-lapsable pool” of resources. Ministry of Development of NE implements various schemes/programmes from the non-lapsable pool. Re-appropriations or diversion of funds from such allocation is strictly prohibited.

This has really helped and supported in mainstreaming the developmental issues related to NE states. Some of the most affected states — coastal, hilly, adjoining main rivers — do take a proactive approach in bringing stakeholders to appreciate the impact/consequences of such disaster on community, flora and fauna and other economic consequences. However, mainstreaming climate resilience in every agency of Government functioning still remains a challenge. The impact of climate disruption and disaster on future generations is going to be far more due to the significant environmental changes noticed due to various factors such as receding glaciers, rising temperature, forest fire, pollution of land and sea, water crisis and certain emerging technologies such as AI.

(The writer is a retired IAS officer. Views expressed are personal)

World has woken up to the power of Yoga

As we observe the 10th Anniversary of International Day of Yoga (IDY), it is a matter of immense pride for every Indian to see how an ancient Indian tradition has transformed into a global wellness movement. June 21, known as the Summer Solstice in the Northern Hemisphere marking the longest day of the year, is now observed globally as the International Day of Yoga, a day to raise awareness about the benefits of Yoga. While numerous IDY events will be held across India, globally it will be the largest ever spectacle of Yoga. Spearheaded by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), the cultural arm of the Ministry of External Affairs, Yoga sessions, events and programmes will be held in 191 countries, practically covering every nation across the globe.

More than 2,000 Yoga events are being organised in 1,300 cities covering all the continents.

The theme for this year’s IDY is — “Yoga for One Earth, One Health.” This theme echoes a vital truth about the interconnectedness of health, sustainability, and the environment — aligning with India’s “One Earth, One Family, One Future” vision highlighted during its G20 presidency. It is due to Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision that Yoga today has gained international recognition. It is one of India’s greatest cultural diplomacy achievements. The rage for Yoga has grown exponentially over the years, not only in India but across the world. People have taken to Yoga for their well-being and to beat stress. Yoga has become a daily ritual for crores of people across the globe. The success of IDY can be gauged from the fact that in 2018 around 9.60 crore people participated globally, while the participation jumped to almost 25 crores in IDY-2024. This year, when the largest ever participation of people is expected across the globe, new records will surely be set this time.

In India, while various Yoga events are being organised, the signature event of IDY-2025 will be “Yoga Bandhan” where 17 Yoga Gurus and practitioners from 15 countries including Brazil, Argentina, Russia, China, South Africa, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Singapore and South Korea, will be leading the IDY events across India. These Yoga practitioners are those training others in their countries. To make this even more memorable, iconic locations have been chosen to host “Yoga Bandhan” programmes.

For instance, in Delhi, Yoga events are being led by these foreign Yoga gurus at Jantar Mantar, Qutub Minar, Purana Kila and Humayun’s Tomb which showcases our National Capital’s rich cultural and architectural heritage. Similar “Yoga Bandhan” programmes are being organised in iconic locations in Lucknow; on the ‘ghats’ of Ayodhya and Varanasi; at the marvellous locations in Jaipur,

foundational. Yoga doesn’t demand performance, it demands presence.

And in a hyper-digitised, algorithm-driven world, that’s revolutionary. Yoga has no nation, but it does have an origin; and every time someone anywhere rolls out a mat and begins their practice, they are, whether they know it or not, engaging with India, not politically, but spiritually and philosophically. That’s legacy, and that’s how soft power works.

Health diplomacy is another layer in this story that often gets overlooked. In a time when the world is buckling under non-communicable diseases, burnout, and post-pandemic trauma, India’s offering isn’t just ancient, it’s relevant.

Yoga is preventive and sustainable; it teaches you to listen to your body, manage your mind, and regulate your breath.

That’s public health without a prescription. It’s affordable, scalable, and deeply human. The fact that international bodies like the WHO are now aligning with Ayush to explore integrative health models is no coincidence; it’s recognition.

But to fully understand yoga’s impact, you have to go beyond the policy speak.

Yoga isn’t about flexibility; it’s about balance. It’s not about how you look, it’s about how you feel. It doesn’t sell transformation in 21 days; it teaches you to surrender to slow, patient evolution.

When someone in Buenos Aires Berlin or Bengaluru sits in silence, they’re not just accessing a wellness tool; they’re entering a cultural portal, one that leads, always, back to India.

And that’s what makes yoga such a rare diplomatic asset. It doesn’t just generate influence; it generates affection. It’s not transactional. It’s not about lobbying.

It’s about resonance, and resonance lasts. India, through yoga, is not trying to dominate global narratives. It’s anchoring them, centring them, reminding the world that wellness, at its core, is not a luxury; it’s a right. And that stillness, in a fractured, frantic world, is not weakness; it’s power.

So as India gears up for another powerful edition of IDY, it’s not just about the scale of participation or the number of countries involved. It’s about what yoga continues to signify: that even in a global order shaped by conflict, chaos, and competition, there is space, sacred, silent, strong; for something slower, deeper, and more human. Yoga isn’t just India’s cultural gift; it’s its geopolitical signature. Not loud, but lasting.

And maybe that’s the whole point. In a world obsessed with speed and spectacle, yoga reminds us that the real revolution begins when we learn to just stop, breathe, and listen; to ourselves, and each other.

(The writer is former Civil Servant. Views are personal. Inputs provided by Zoya Ahmad & Vaishnavie Srinivasan)



DINESH KUMAR TYAGI



SANDEEP JOSHI

and cooperation.

India also believes in “Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah” (May all be happy, may all be free from illness, may all see what is good, may none experience suffering). We believe that we are all made of energy vibrating in different frequencies, but we are all made of the same energy. We are one, and Yoga is the best expression of that belief and value system. If we want peace, harmony and well-being in the world, then humanity has no option but to go to Yoga. Yoga is the need of the hour. The reason why Yoga is growing in popularity is because people globally are looking up to Yoga to boost their well-being. Today there is increasing burnout, although we live in the most comfortable of times. But spiritually and mentally, we are the most isolated, and in most unease. Yoga is helping people discover the inner peace; you have to be still, you have to be quiet, you have to delve within. It is then you realise that we can have a peaceful world only when we have peaceful human beings, because the world is us.

(The writer is a freelance journalist. Views are personal)

MONEY MATTERS



Panel reduces short term lending rate

RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra suggested that a change in monetary policy stance to neutral will provide the necessary flexibility to the central bank to 'cut, pause or hike policy rate' in response to the evolving domestic and global economic conditions, as per the minutes of the rate-setting panel meeting issued on Friday. On June 6, the RBI governor-headed six-member panel reduced the benchmark short-term lending rate by 50 basis points, taking the total reduction to 100 bps in quick succession, besides a change in the policy stance to neutral from accommodative. "This package of measures will provide some certainty in times of uncertainty and is expected to support growth," Malhotra said during the three-day meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC). While five members voted for a 50 bps reduction in the repo rate, an external member of the panel, Saugata Bhattacharya, suggested a 25 bps cut.



Chandrasekaran pays homage to crash victims

Tata Motors Chairman N Chandrasekaran on Friday led the management and the company's shareholders in paying homage to the victims of the Air India plane crash by observing a one-minute silence at the company's 80th annual general meeting (AGM) here. Chandrasekaran, who is also chairman of Tata Sons, stated that the Tata Group will miss out its former chairman Ratan Tata, who died last year. This was the first AGM of a Tata Group company that Chandrasekaran has attended since the June 12 plane crash. He had not attended the AGMs of two other group companies -- TCS and TCEPL -- which took place earlier this week.



5 paisa Capital launches Model Context Protocol

5 paisa Capital, one of India's leading discount broking firms, has officially launched its Model Context Protocol (MCP). This framework integrates Claude, a state-of-the-art large language model (LLM), with 5paisa's internal APIs. This launch represents a strategic integration aimed at enhancing user experience and brings AI-powered trading capabilities to 5paisa users. With MCP, 5paisa users can now perform a wide range of trading tasks — from placing orders and analyzing market data to backtesting strategies — simply by interacting with Claude via natural language. This rollout aligns with 5paisa's vision to simplify advanced trading tools for everyday investors. With the MCP, users can now harness the power of cutting-edge LLMs to make more informed trading decisions using real-time market data and their own custom datasets. By enabling intelligent prompt-based trading through 5paisa XStream Open APIs, MCP empowers users to bring any data source — be it weather, crop yield, or macroeconomic indicators — into the decision-making process for personalized stock market analysis. "We believe the future of investing lies in empowering users with intelligent tools that are not just data-driven, but context-aware."

COOP SECTOR GREW UNEVENLY

Govt taking steps for its symmetrical growth: Shah

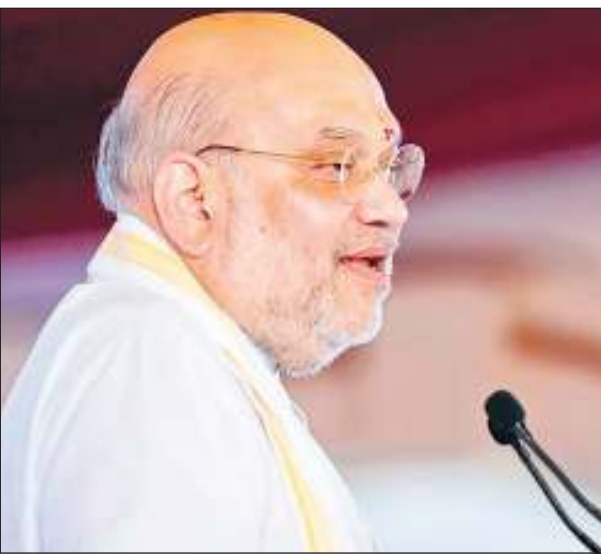
PNS ■ MUMBAI

Union minister Amit Shah on Friday said the cooperative sector grew unevenly in India as it stabilised only in the western parts but remained weak in northern and eastern regions, and added that the government intends to make its growth symmetrical.

Addressing a cooperation sector conference organised by the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED), he also said the cooperative sector boosts the economy by providing more profit with limited capital.

"The cooperative movement weakened in the northern and eastern parts of India and was stable only in western parts of the country. But we are already taking steps to transform the sector by making it grow symmetrically from its present uneven growth," the Union Home and Cooperation Minister said.

"We will make the co-operative sector progress by strengthening it at all levels in the country," he said. GDP is not the only para-



"The cooperative movement weakened in the northern and eastern parts of India and was stable only in western parts of the country. But we are already taking steps to transform the sector by making it grow symmetrically from its present uneven growth," the Union Home and Cooperation Minister said

meter for growth. Cooperative sector boosts growth and economy by providing more profit and employment opportunities with less capital, Shah added.

The cooperative movement revolutionised the rural economy. In Gujarat, 36 lakh women associated with Amul (dairy cooperative), did not even have Rs 100 as capital, but today its turnover of Rs 80,000 crore, he said.

According to Shah, the cooperation ministry has compiled the data of cooperative units in the country so the government knows where the vacuum is and takes steps towards the expansion of the sector.

Two lakh new primary agricultural credit societies (PACS) will be formed and made multi-dimensional, he said.

Organic farming will also get a boost, the minister

said, adding that protection and conservation of seeds is being done and emphasis will be given on increasing the production of seeds.

"We plan to give a boost to the sector in export, organic food and seeds in the next 10 years," he added.

Farmers can sell dal, maize and oilseeds to NAFED if they register on its app. But if the market rate is more, they can sell the produce directly, Shah said.

MAHE rises in global rankings, excels in sustainability, research

PNS ■ BANGALORE

Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), an Institution of Eminence Deemed-to-be-University, has once again demonstrated its global academic and research excellence by securing improved positions in three of the world's most prestigious university rankings:

the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings 2026, Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings 2025, and the U.S. News & World Report Best Global Universities Rankings 2025-26. These achievements reflect MAHE's unwavering commitment to academic quality, sustainability, and international collaboration. MAHE has demonstrated exceptional progress across multiple performance indicators, marking a historic milestone in its global recognition.

The overall global ranking has improved substantially, with MAHE now positioned in the 851-900 band, advancing from the 901-950 band in

2025. This represents a significant leap in global standing among the world's leading universities.

Commenting on MAHE's remarkable achievement, Lt. Gen. (Dr.) M. D. Venkatesh, VSM (Retd), Vice Chancellor, MAHE said: "This remarkable progress across multiple global rankings signifies MAHE's



steadfast dedication to excellence in education, impactful research, and global collaboration.

We view rankings as vital indicators for growth and transformation."

QS World University Rankings 2026

MAHE advanced to the 851-900 band globally, up from the 901-950 band in 2025, among 1,501 ranked institutions worldwide.

Delhi-Pune Air India flight suffers bird hit

PNS ■ MUMBAI

An Air India Pune-bound flight from Delhi suffered a bird hit on Friday, forcing the airline to cancel its return journey.

The aircraft landed safely and the bird hit was detected after it touched down in Pune, the airline said in a statement.

It has been grounded and extensive checks are being carried out by the engineering team, Air India said.

"Flight AI2470 scheduled to operate from Pune to Delhi on June 20 has been cancelled due to a bird-hit which was detected after the incoming flight landed safely in Pune," it said.

The airline also said it is making all arrangements, including providing accommodation for the stranded passengers. Refunds on cancellation or complimentary rescheduling is also being offered to passengers who opt for it, the airline said, adding that alternative arrangements are being made to fly the passengers to Delhi.

MARKETS SNAP 3-DAY LOSING RUN

Sensex jumps 1,000 pts as financial, telecom shares gain

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded sharply by over 1 per cent on Friday after sliding for the past three sessions, propelled by bargain hunting in financial, telecom and tech stocks amid a correction in global crude prices.

A largely supportive trend overseas and renewed foreign capital inflows supported domestic equities following signs of easing tension in the Middle East, traders said.

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

The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 319.15 points or 1.29 per cent to 25,112.40.

As many as 2,463 stocks advanced while 1,484 declined and 147 remained unchanged on the BSE. This week, the BSE benchmark gauge jumped 1,289.57 points or 1.58 per



cent, and the Nifty surged 393.8 points or .59 per cent. "Equity indices surged as Middle East tension moderated with risk of immediate military actions reduced as US dialogue with Iran is expected to take place. The development led the crude price to correct, favouring domestic markets and boosting foreign investors' sentiments."

"In the broader market, rapid fall in VIX index and buying was witnessed in rate sensitives and consumer-oriented sectors like Finance, Auto and Realty and in anticipation of better Q1FY26 results led by rate cuts benefits, drop in inflationary pressure and rebound in consumer spending," Vinod Nair,

Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

From the Sensex firms, Bharti Airtel, Nestle, Mahindra & Mahindra, Power Grid, Reliance Industries, NTPC, Eternal and HDFC Bank were among the biggest gainers.

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

Gold declines Rs 600 to Rs 99,960/10 g; silver plunges

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices slipped below the Rs 1 lakh-mark, falling Rs 600 to Rs 99,960 per 10 grams in the national capital due to selling by jewellers and stockists in line with weak global cues, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had settled at Rs 1,00,560 per 10 grams in the previous market session.

Gold of 99.5 per cent purity dipped Rs 550 to Rs 99,250 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). The yellow metal had closed at Rs 99,800 per 10 grams on Thursday.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

NIT No. 37/REG-2/UPPL/GHMC/2025-26. Date: 19-06-2025

Name of Work: For 18 Works: Laying of CC Road top to Marimannampally temple beside H No. 2-15-95, Beerapagadda, W.No.7 Chiknaganam Uppal Circle-2, GHMC. (Reserved for SC community Individuals and Societies). Construction of Box culvert at Venkat Sai Nagar in Sak Krishna Colony in Ward No.9, Ramamthapur, Uppal Circle-2, GHMC. Estimate Amount: Rs. 206.56 Lakhs. Last Date & Time for Receipts of Bids: 01-07-2025 @ 03.00 PM. Name & Address of Officer: Sh. V. Harilal, Executive Engineer, Uppal, Div No-2, GHMC. Further details can be seen at e-procurement @ <http://www.tender.telangana.gov.in> Sd/- Executive Engineer Circle-2, Uppal, GHMC.

DPN R.O. No: 38/5APPL/AB/T/11/2025-26, Dt: 20-06-2025

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

NIT No. 37/REG-2/UPPL/GHMC/2025-26. Date: 20-06-2025

Name of Work: For 18 Works: Maintenance of BT Roads, CC Roads and Storm Water Drains (Catchpit repairs) for 5 months in Ward No.7, Chiknaganam Uppal Circle-2, GHMC. Maintenance of BT Roads, CC Roads and Storm Water Drains (Catchpit repairs) for 5 months in Ward No.10, Uppal in Uppal Circle-2, GHMC. Estimate Amount: Rs. 31.30 Lakhs. Last Date & Time for Receipts of Bids: 20-06-2025 @ 03.00 PM. Name & Address of Officer: Sh. V. Harilal, Executive Engineer, Uppal, Division No-2, GHMC. Further details can be seen at e-procurement @ <http://www.tender.telangana.gov.in> Sd/- Executive Engineer Circle-2, Uppal, GHMC.

DPN R.O. No: 38/5APPL/AB/T/11/2025-26, Dt: 20-06-2025

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA IRRIGATION & CAD DEPARTMENT E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

Tender Notice No: 26/2025-26, (1st Call) Dt: 19-06-2025

Name of the Work: I&CADD: Permanent restoration to the bund at Branchad and Scour of Pedda Cheruvu, Ravinola(V), Nellokur (M) of Mahabubnagar District -506101, Estimated Cost/Value: Rs. 36.96,785/-, Tender Documents Available: From 21-06-2025 at 11.30 AM onwards Upto 25-06-2025 at 3.00 PM. For more details and for downloading tender documents please visit: <https://tender.telangana.gov.in> Sd/- Superintending Engineer, I&CADD, Irrigation Circle, Bhadrachalam

DPN R.O. No: 38/5APPL/AB/T/11/2025-26, Dt: 20-06-2025

Sebi mulls guiding principle for usage of AI, ML for market integrity

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sebi on Friday proposed guiding principles for responsible usage of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) applications in securities markets to safeguard investors and market integrity.

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

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

At present, AI/ML is being used by market participants mainly for advisory and support services, risk management, client identification and monitoring, surveillance, pattern recognition, internal com-



pliance purposes and cyber security.

"While AI/ML has the potential to improve productivity, efficiency and outcome,

it is also important to manage these systems responsibly as their usage creates or amplifies certain risks which could have an impact on the efficiency of

financial markets and may result in adverse impact to investors," Sebi said.

Accordingly, Sebi proposed high-level principles to provide guidance to the market participants for having reasonable procedures and control systems in place for supervision and governance of usage of AI/ML applications or tools. T

The proposed guiding principles were suggested by a Sebi-constituted working group after studying the existing AI/ML guidelines in India as well as globally.

As a part of the proposal, the working group suggested that market participants using AI/ML models should have an internal team with adequate skills and experience to monitor the performance, efficacy and security of the algorithms deployed throughout their lifecycle, as well as maintain auditability and explain interpretability of such models.

Furthermore, the team should establish procedures for exception and error handling related to AI/ML-based systems.





Sunita Sekhar



Kairali Education Society, a non-profit NGO established in 1993, has launched "Twinkle Tots Pre-Primary School" in Venkateswara Nagar Colony, AS Rao Nagar. The school, affiliated with Kreedo, a leading Montessori educator, aims to provide quality education at affordable costs. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Suma Kanakala, a prominent TV presenter, actress and producer, along with Sunita Sekhar Yadav, Corporator of Moulaali Division.

Suma Kanakala



Divya



Sunder, Sukumaran and RV Sharma



PARTY

Photos by- SV Chary



Bhaswati Mukherjee



Tollywood upcoming actress Hima Varma, known for her role in Annapurna Talkies, inaugurated the 5-day National Silk Expo 2025. She was joined by organizer Jayesh Kumar Gupta at the Kalinga Cultural Centre in Banjara Hills. The event is organized by Jagdishwar Hastkala, showcasing a wide array of silk products.



Hima Varma



Sailishmi



Aruna Jyothi



Reshma

83% of Firms Appoint Dedicated AI Executives: Study

Amazon Web Services (AWS) released a study commissioned in collaboration with Access Partnership, which reveals that generative AI (Gen AI) adoption in India surged in 2024. A top finding is that 83% of organisations in India have appointed a dedicated AI executive, namely a Chief AI Officer (CAIO), to accelerate adoption and manage implementation complexity, with another 15% planning to do so by 2026. The research study titled, "Generative AI Adoption Index" identifies patterns and insights from organisations in India successfully moving Gen AI from experimentation to full-scale implementation, revealing actionable strategies for accelerating business value. While Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), Chief Technology Officers (CTOs), and Chief Innovation Officers (CIOs) currently lead most generative AI innovation initiatives, leadership structures are evolving to meet new demands and creating new career opportunities for AI-skilled talent at the highest levels of organisations. The appointment of a dedicated AI executive is a result of organisations having Gen AI as the top priority in their budget for 2025 (64%), followed by security (21%) and compute (10%).

LISTENINGS

Eastman Expands Clean Energy Footprint in Telangana

Eastman Auto & Power Limited, a leading manufacturer of Solar Energy products, is expanding its footprint in Telangana with a powerful lineup of high-performance solar products. In response to the state's growing demand for reliable and sustainable energy, Eastman now offers a comprehensive range including Grid Tie Inverters, Hybrid Inverters, Off Grid Inverters, Lead Acid & Lithium Batteries, and Solar Panels — all tailored to meet the needs of residential, commercial, and industrial users. Eastman's inverter range is engineered to integrate seamlessly with rooftop solar systems, enabling users to generate and export surplus solar energy back to the grid — effectively lowering electricity bills and promoting greener energy consumption. As Telangana accelerates its solar energy efforts, Eastman's advanced solar solutions aim to reduce reliance on conventional energy sources and contribute to the state's clean energy goals.

Gauvansh Welfare on the Rise

More than 2000 gauvansh have been rescued from the clutches of cattle mafia in just last two months from different districts of Telangana with combined efforts of Gau Gyan Foundation, Telangana Police & State Government and more than 50 FIRs have been registered. The gauvansh are put through harsh living conditions, rough handling, and often outright abuse and cruelty. They are routinely castrated, dehorned, and hot-iron branded without anaesthetics. Those transported to feedlots and slaughterhouses are often shocked with electric prods, beaten, kicked, dragged and deprived of food and water for long periods. Cramped in trucks during transport, their limbs get broken, they sustain multiple injuries and infections. Young calves are slaughtered in front of their mothers and kin, one can imagine the horror and trauma that sets in.



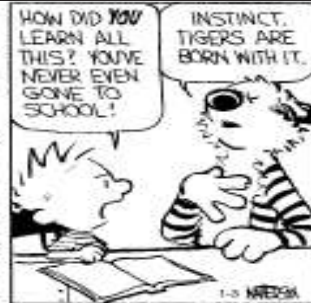
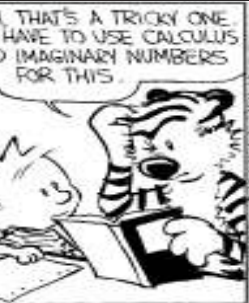
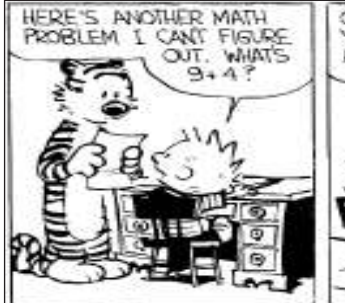
Hyderabad witnessed two remarkable world record moments. Four-year-old Vasa Ishan, a student at GD Goenka School, broke the record for the Youngest Chess Coach (Basics), previously held by Advith Reddy of Oakridge International School. Meanwhile, five-year-old Dhanwinn Reddy Vangeti of Srinidhi International School created a new record for the Youngest to complete 4.5 km River Kayaking, finishing in 35 minutes at Kotipalli River, Vikarabad. Both records were adjudicated by Noble Book of World Records and mentored by Learnorama Technologies Pvt. Ltd.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



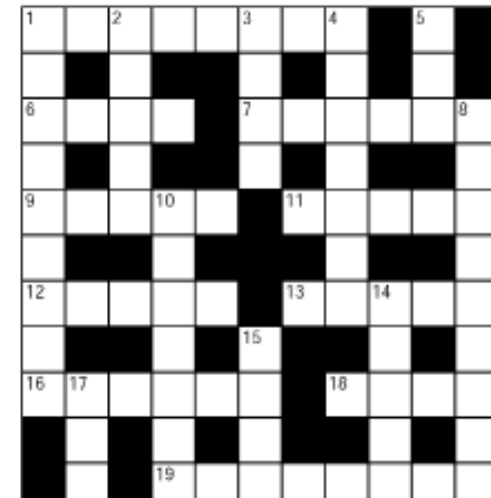
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



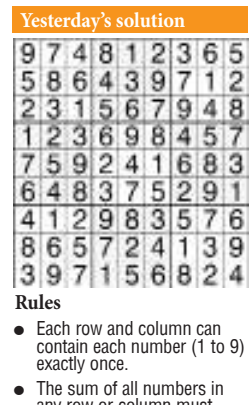
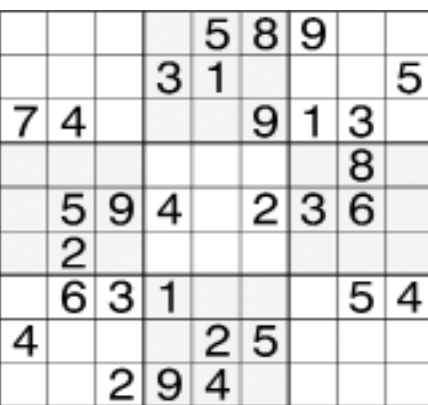
NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



SUDOKU



Rules

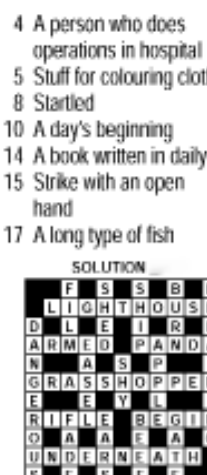
- Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
- The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

ACROSS

- These cover birds
- Small animals that followed the Pied Piper
- Ride on these animals
- Opposite of best
- Not as many
- Circular in shape
- Below
- A story in episodes
- A planet
- Gave jobs to

DOWN

- Entertaining explosives watched at night
- Change
- Sound coming back again



Kuberaa: A strong message wrapped in a stretched runtime

SURESH KAVIRAYANI
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Sekhar Kammula is known for his sensible storytelling, and a section of the audience eagerly awaits his films. After a five-year hiatus, he returns with *Kuberaa*, featuring Dhanush and Nagarjuna in lead roles. Rashmika Mandanna plays the female lead, and music is composed by Devi Sri Prasad. Bollywood actor Jim Sarbh makes his Telugu debut with this film. This marks the first time Sekhar has directed a high-budget film with big stars. *Kuberaa* is a bilingual made in both Telugu and Tamil. Here's a look at the story and how it fares.

PLOT

Deepak (Nagarjuna), a former CBI officer, is wrongly convicted and sent to jail. Despite wanting to fight his case legally, he remains imprisoned. Neeraj (Jim Sarbh), a billionaire and powerful businessman, offers him a job in exchange for helping him out. Deepak, burdened by concern for his family, accepts the offer.

Neeraj, in conversation with a central minister, tries to privatize a newly discovered oil field. In return, he agrees to pay Rs 1 lakh crore to certain politicians—half in white, half in black. He entrusts Deepak with the task of distributing the money. Neeraj instructs him to open four benami accounts in a Swiss bank. Deepak recruits four beggars from different parts of India; among them is Deva (Dhanush) from Tirupati.

Once the accounts are set up, Deepak transfers the money into Indian accounts to convert it into white. Then, they begin eliminating the beggars after the transfers are completed. But when it comes to Deva, something unexpected happens. He escapes Deepak's team and encounters Sameera (Rashmika Mandanna), a girl waiting for her boyfriend at a railway station, planning to elope. Did her boyfriend show up? Did Deepak find Deva and complete his mission? What Deva and Sameera do next to confront Deepak and Neeraj forms the crux of the story.

ANALYSIS

With *Kuberaa*, Sekhar Kammula presents his first pan-Indian film.



REVIEW

Known for directing romantic and college-backdrop films, this marks a shift as he works with stars like Dhanush and Nagarjuna and handles a big-budget project. Staying true to his storytelling roots, he focuses more on characters than stardom.

The story explores the world of money laundering and the corrupt nexus between political leaders and business tycoons. It highlights how corporate giants manipulate resources like oil, acquire them through underhanded means, and resell them to the government at higher prices—ultimately burdening the middle class. Sekhar uses the character of Deepak to shed light on how even honest officers are manipulated for unethical agendas. A fresh narrative angle comes from involving beggars as benamis for a top businessman, bringing in a unique socio-economic perspective.

The first half moves engagingly, especially scenes between Nagarjuna, Jim Sarbh and Dhanush, showing how black money is laundered. Rashmika's entry before the interval adds a lighter, humorous touch. Her exchanges with Dhanush offer some comic relief.

However, the film suffers from its excessive length. At 3 hours and 15 minutes, it feels like a four-hour watch. The second half, especially the chase sequences, could have

been trimmed by at least 40 minutes for better impact.

True to Sekhar's signature, the characters feel authentic, with actors behaving naturally rather than theatrically. A few cinematic liberties—like lorryloads of cash dumped in front of Neeraj's house—veer into implausibility. The climax also falls a bit flat. Nevertheless, cinematography, dialogues, and music remain strong assets throughout.

PERFORMANCES

Dhanush once again steals the show with a remarkable performance as Deva, the beggar. He truly inhabits the character, making it hard to imagine anyone else in the role. A National Award-winning actor, he delivers yet another compelling portrayal.

Nagarjuna's role marks a significant shift from his usual image. As a disgraced CBI officer, he delivers a solid and restrained performance. Jim Sarbh is another highlight—his portrayal of Neeraj is stylish, composed and impactful. His debut in Telugu cinema is a promising one, and he's likely to attract more roles.

Rashmika Mandanna plays her role with charm. Her character is lighter and she delivers it well, particularly in scenes with Dhanush. Dalip Tahil as Neeraj's father adds some unintentional humour, especially in scenes where he offers diamond crowns to Lord Venkateswara. Sunaina, as Nagarjuna's wife, and the supporting cast deliver strong performances.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS

Technically, *Kuberaa* is well-crafted. Niketh Bommireddy's cinematography enhances the narrative, syncing perfectly with the mood of the film. Devi Sri Prasad's music and background score elevate the film's impact. The dialogues, written by Sekhar himself, are thought-provoking and layered.

VERDICT

Kuberaa carries the hallmark of Sekhar Kammula's sincerity in storytelling. Tackling themes of money laundering and corruption, he delivers a film that is both relevant and performance-driven. Despite its unnecessarily long runtime and a few dragging sequences, the film remains watchable, thanks largely to its strong performances—especially by Dhanush, Jim Sarbh, and Nagarjuna.

Cast: Nagarjuna, Dhanush, Rashmika Mandanna, Jim Sarbh, Dalip Tahil, Sunaina Yella, Hareesh Peradi and others
Cinematography: Niketh Bommireddy
Music Director: Devi Sri Prasad
Producers: Suniel Narang, Puskar Rammohan Rao
Story, Screenplay, Dialogues and Direction: Sekhar Kammula
Rating: 3/5



Rajamouli builds ₹50-crore Varanasi set for Mahesh Babu's epic adventure

Top director SS Rajamouli is directing superstar Mahesh Babu in an untitled period drama, reportedly an adventurous tale in the vein of Indiana Jones. A few months ago, the team shot crucial sequences in the dense forests of Odisha with Mahesh Babu, Priyanka Chopra and Prithviraj Sukumaran.

Now, the makers have erected a massive Varanasi set at Ramoji Film City, where the next schedule is set to begin. The lavish set, estimated to cost around Rs 50 crore, includes replicas of the Kashi Vishwanath temple, the ghats and the bustling streets of Benaras, according to sources.

Reports also suggest that Tamil actor R. Madhavan has joined the cast of this big-budget film. Initially, the makers approached Vikram for a key role, but he declined to play the antagonist. Subsequently, Madhavan was brought on board.

Rajamouli is reportedly planning a grand action sequence on the Varanasi set. Known for his extensive use of VFX, the director has been in talks with multiple Hollywood companies for the visual effects, which are expected to require a hefty investment. The next schedule is expected to be filmed in Kenya, after which the team will return to shoot on the Varanasi set in Hyderabad. Sources reveal that the film will be released in two parts, with the first installment slated for a 2027 release. Recently, pictures of the elaborate set have surfaced on social media, sparking curiosity among fans.



Arvind Krishna shines as the only south star at NBA India's First BudX Celebrity Game



South Indian actor and athlete Arvind Krishna made headlines at the first-ever BudX NBA House Celebrity Game, held at the Dome, Mumbai. Sharing the court with national icons like Disha Patani, Badshah, Rannvijay Singha and Varun Sood, Arvind stood out as the only South Indian celebrity in the elite lineup—representing Telugu cinema and the Southern entertainment industry on one of basketball's biggest platforms.

Wearing jersey No. 3, Arvind brought his signature blend of athleticism and cinematic charm to the court. The moment was especially significant, marking his comeback after a year-long recovery from a serious knee injury. From enduring intense rehabilitation to sprinting across an NBA court in front of a packed arena, his performance was a powerful display of resilience,

determination, and undeniable star power.

What made the moment even more remarkable was NBA India's official spotlight on Arvind. Among dozens of participating celebrities, he was one of the few to receive a dedicated, sponsored highlight reel—shared across NBA India's, NBA Style's and Budweiser India's official social media platforms. In a striking caption, NBA India described the moment as "A Masterpiece"—a poetic nod not only to Arvind's commanding presence on the court but also to his upcoming superhero film *A Masterpiece*, which is already generating significant buzz.

From being a young boy inspired by the NBA to becoming a rising star celebrated by the league itself, Arvind Krishna's journey is one of vision, transformation, and a new-age crossover between cinema and sport. Whether he's donning a superhero mantle on screen or competing alongside basketball legends like Derek Fisher and Gary Payton, Arvind is emerging as a rare talent who effortlessly bridges multiple worlds.



Viraatapalem: PC Meena reporting to stream on Zee5 from June 27

Telugu web series have frequently explored superstitions and super-themes. Continuing that trend, *Viraatapalem: PC Meena Reporting* is set to stream on Zee5 from June 27.

The series stars talented actress and social media sensation Abhignya Vuthaluru in the lead role. Set in the fictional village of Viraatapalem, this suspense thriller is directed by Poluru Krishna and produced by KV Sriram.

The trailer offers a glimpse into the eerie world of Viraatapalem, where newlywed brides are mysteriously found dead within a day of their wedding. The villagers blame a curse that haunts

the village. Enter Police Constable Meena, who arrives to investigate and unravel the truth behind these suspicious deaths. Her quest plunges her into a web of superstitions and hidden secrets, where she risks her life to uncover the facts.

Abhignya leads the cast as Meena, supported by a talented ensemble that includes Charan Lakkaraju, Lavanya Sahukara, Ramaraju, Gowtham Raju and Satish. The series is written by Divya Thejaswi Pera, with the screenplay by Vikram Kumar Kandimalla. The background score is composed by Rohit Kumar.

Viraatapalem promises to be an edge-of-the-seat thriller catering to audiences across age groups.

Ayan Mukerji: Crafting Hrithik vs NTR face-off took the most time in War 2

War 2, directed by Ayan Mukerji and produced by Aditya Chopra under Yash Raj Films, is one of the most anticipated films of 2025. The action-packed spectacle is the sixth installment in the blockbuster YRF Spy Universe, a franchise that has consistently delivered commercial and critical successes.

Ayan Mukerji, making his directorial debut in the spy universe,

opened up about the creative process behind *War 2*, especially the effort that went into building a compelling face-off between two of Indian cinema's biggest superstars—Hrithik Roshan and NTR Jr.

"It's a huge responsibility to take forward a franchise as beloved as *War* and still leave your own creative imprint. I saw directing *War 2* as a thrilling opportunity to pay homage to the first film. You can't

have fun otherwise when stepping into such a massive blockbuster world. You take what's already been built, and then elevate it—crafting a new journey that excites both fans of the film and fans of these gigantic superstars. As a director, I immersed myself in delivering this experience."

He adds, "Everything about *War 2* has been designed with meticulous planning to enhance the theatrical

experience. Most of our time went into developing the action set pieces and especially the storyline and central conflict needed to mount a face-off worthy of Hrithik and NTR. That was the biggest creative challenge—and the most rewarding one."

Ayan describes *War 2* as a celebration of the scale and power of Indian cinema, promising an adrenaline-fueled spectacle that brings together two cinematic

titans like never before.

He says, "*War 2* is truly a coming together of Indian cinema, with these two huge actors joining forces. We were very aware of the expectations this pairing would generate. Every moment in the creative process was spent thinking about how to deliver a once-in-a-lifetime experience to fans in theatres."

War 2 is set to release in cinemas worldwide on August 14, 2025.

Indian archers return with 9 medals in Asia Cup Leg 2

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■
Singapore

India's junior archers returned with nine medals — two gold, six silver, and one bronze — from the Asia Cup Leg 2 here on Friday. It seemed a successful outing on paper, but a deeper look once again highlighted a troubling trend that has come to define Indian archery at all levels — faltering when it matters the most.

Despite making seven of the 10 finals across recurve and compound disciplines, Indian archers finished on top of the podium just twice.

The rest of the finals — five in all — ended in heartbreak,

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

As usual, the results were particularly alarming in recurve the Olympic discipline — where India failed to win a single gold. In fact, apart from two silver medals in team events, the recurve archers returned empty-handed.

The men's team, top-seeded after the qualification round, simply fell apart against Japan

in the final. Vishnu Choudhary, Paras Hooda and Juyel Sarkar failed to touch the 50-mark in two of the three sets, bowing out in straight sets 6-0.

It was a similar story in the recurve mixed team final. Fourth-seeded Choudhary and Vaishnavi Pawar were error-prone throughout their clash against Indonesia.

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

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

The women's recurve team, along with all individual recurve entries, failed to even



reach the medal rounds, an outcome that underlined India's deepening struggle in the discipline while they continue to chase a maiden Olympic medal. If the recurve results were disheartening, the compound section offered some respite, albeit not without its own share of missed chances.

Incidentally, they bagged both their gold medals here.

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

In the women's event, the gold was assured as it featured two Indians -- second-seeded Tejal Salve prevailing over the higher-ranked Shanmukhi Naga Sai Budde 146-144.

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

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

Jaiswal has the game to succeed in England, feels Rahane

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■
Mumbai

Month after rumours about a rift between them dominated headlines, out-of-favour India batter Ajinkya Rahane is backing the flamboyant Yashasvi Jaiswal to shine on the tour of England thanks to his ability to perform multiple roles as opener. The five-match Tests series begins at the Headingley from Friday.

"Personally, I'm really looking forward to seeing Yashasvi Jaiswal do well because opening the batting in England is really important," Rahane said

in a video on his YouTube channel.

"He has the game for it - he can control one end and also go on the attack when needed. So I'm really looking forward to seeing Jaiswal perform in England."

There were reports in April that Mumbai teammates Jaiswal and Rahane had a fall out during the last Ranji Trophy season after the side's defeat to Jammu and Kashmir.

While Rahane last played for India two years ago against the West Indies, Jaiswal has been the team's first-choice opener since making his Test debut in the Caribbean in July

2023. Rahane, who led an injury-plagued Indian team to a memorable Test series win in Australia in 2020-21, has also placed his bets on lead pacer Jasprit Bumrah to live up to his expectations with Mohammed Siraj too chipping in with plenty of wickets.

"I also want to see Mohammed Siraj and Jasprit Bumrah do well because, as senior campaigners, they have the responsibility to lead the attack and pick up wickets for the team," Rahane said.

"We all know Bumrah is an excellent bowler and a proven

wicket-taker, but I'd like to see him take that extra responsibility and help the team get through challenging situations, because winning a Test series in England is always very special."

The last time India won a Test rubber in England was way back in 2007, only the third such instance (after 1971 and 1986) in that part of the world since start of bilateral engagements in 1932.

Shubman Gill will lead the Indian team in England and Rahane said the young skipper will live up to the challenge of making the transition from T20 cap-

taincy to Test leadership. "I think it's going to be a challenging task for Shubman because in Test cricket I always believe you have to be proactive as a captain. I'm sure Shubman will do well, but it will take time because captaining in T20s and ODIs is completely different.

"In the Test format, sometimes you have to stay one or two steps ahead of your opponents, talk to your bowlers, and plan things with them. So, it's going to be a challenging task for him, but I'm sure he will do well as both a skipper and a batter," Rahane said in the video.



Indian players during first cricket test match between England and India in England on Friday PTI

India, England players observe silence for Air India crash victims

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■
Leeds

India and England players along with on-field umpires observed a minute of silence in remembrance of the victims of the tragic plane crash in Ahmedabad ahead of the first Test here on Friday.

In the gruesome accident of the Air India flight to London, 241 passengers and crew on board were killed on June 14.

"What happened in the aircraft (crash), I think the whole India was disheartened but at the same time the only thing from our side... We are going to be sticking with them, how we can make India happy again," vice-captain Rishabh

INDIA LOSE TWO QUICK WICKETS TO REACH 92/2 AT LUNCH ON DAY 1 AGAINST ENGLAND

Leeds: India lost KL Rahul (42) and debutant B Sai Sudharsan (0) in quick succession shortly before lunch to reach 92/2 after the first session's play on day one of the opening Test, here on Friday.

Yashasvi Jaiswal was batting on 42 off 74 balls with eight fours as the twin strikes took some sheen off an impressive session for the visitors.

Rahul put on 91 runs for the first wicket with Jaiswal, making

42 from 78 balls with eight fours.

In the penultimate over before lunch, Brydon Carse had Rahul caught at first slip and Ben Stokes then had Sudharsan caught behind for a four-ball duck to provide the breakthroughs for England

Brief scores: India 92/2 in 25.4 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 42 not out, KL Rahul 42; Brydon Carse 1/23, Ben Stokes 1/20) vs England.

Pant had told media here on Wednesday. On the cricketing front, top-order batter B Sai Sudharsan became the latest Test entrant for India, and he

will bat at Number 3.

India under new captain Shubman Gill are searching for their first Test series win on England shores since 2007.

Playing alongside Rahul, Prasidh very comforting: Nair

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■
Leeds

On comeback trail, Karun Nair says the presence of childhood companions KL Rahul and Prasidh Krishna in the Indian dressing room adds a layer of comfort as he seeks to capitalise on the chance that came his way after eight years.

The five-match Test series against England, starting here on Friday, is an opportunity for Karun to cement his place in the side, years after becoming only the second Indian batter to score a triple century in Test cricket.

"I try to keep it very simple, always think about the positive, have certain goals in mind, visualize things and have real belief in what you visualize."

"Playing alongside Rahul and Prasidh is also a very comforting factor. We've played cricket for so many years since probably we were young kids and grew up together," Karun told BCCI in a video posted on its website.

Karun and Rahul, both 33, have



played age-group cricket together and have been close friends since then.

"Life has come a full circle because I went out of the team in England and now I am coming back into the team in England. It's been a while and I

embrace that." He was dropped from the Indian team in 2017.

"My first thought when I woke up (after being dropped) was I want to play Test cricket, I want to play for India again. That's probably what

kept me going, kept me hungry and was the driving force to train and practice everyday.

"I had a goal to play Test cricket again. Everyday, every morning I used to wake up thinking what should I do to reach that goal. Never losing that belief and having that target to reach was something that helped me," he added. In the 2024-25 domestic season, Karun amassed 863 runs in nine matches at an average of 54, helping Vidarbha clinch their third Ranji Trophy title.

The season revived his Test career as he made his return to the Indian Test side for the tour of England.

"Mentally I am more patient and I am more forgiving of myself. I have learnt to enjoy small things a little more and also not trying to be not someone that I am not. I have tried to keep it very simple. I always think about positives, have certain goals in mind, visualise things and have real belief," Karun said.

Saptak Talwar tied at 18 in Hotel Planner Tour

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■
Pleneuf Val Andre (France)

Saptak Talwar started his week at the Golf Bluegreen de Pleneuf Val Andre with a steady round of 1-under 69 to place himself at tied 18 in the standings at the Blot Play9 in Brittany here.

Talwar has been playing as many events as possible on the Hotel Planner Tour, the second rung of the DP World Tour and has had modest results but has made seven cuts in nine previous starts. His best finish has been T-37 in the UAE Challenge. Talwar began his round on the front nine and had two bogeys against one birdie by the turn of the round.

On the back nine he picked up the pace and picked up shots on the 11th and 14th holes to close the day at one under. Max Kennedy played 10-under 60 to set the course record and moved four shots

clear of his closest rival, James Morrison of England, who shot 64. The Irishman Kennedy started his day on the back nine with a birdie and followed that with an eagle on the 11th and a second birdie on the 12th.

He made birdies on the 15th and 18th holes as well. Once he moved onto the front nine, he picked up shots on the first and fifth holes with two more birdies.

He also had his second eagle of the day on the seventh hole. Overall, he had six birdies and two eagles and no bogeys.

The 23-year-old had his season best finish at the Raiffeisenbank Golf Challenge just last week when he finished in 11th place and will be hoping to capitalise on the strong form. In the second place four strokes behind the leader is James Morrison of England.

He shot a strong round of 6-under 64, with six birdies, one eagle and two bogeys.

Bhatia makes modest start with 70, Scheffler leads with 62 at Travelers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■
Cromwell (US)

Indian-American golfer Akshay Bhatia dropped a double bogey on way to an even par start for a tied 43rd place at the Travelers Championship, the final USD 20m Signature event of the season here.

Scottie Scheffler, the world No. 1, carded 62 for his second-lowest opening-round score of the season, for a share of the lead with Austin Eckroat here on Thursday.

Bhatia has had a fair season with three top-10 finishes, including a tied third at the Players, while playing with the former Open winner, Brian Harman. Bhatia had nine pars on the front nine and dropped a double bogey on the 10th. He got his shots back on the 14th and the 17th and was tied



43rd at even par 70 in an event that does not have a cut.

Bhatia is just coming off a missed cut at the US Open, but was T-16 at Memorial and T-22 at the Charles

Schwab Challenge. Aaron Rai, the Indo-British player, was T-26 with 2-under 68 that had four birdies against two bogeys.

Scheffler's lowest this sea-

son is 61 at the CJ CUP Byron Nelson. Scheffler has not finished out of the top 10 since THE PLAYERS in March, a stretch of eight tournaments.

Indian men's, women's hockey teams seek positive results

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■
Antwerp (Belgium)

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

The Indian men's hockey team will take on world Number 3 Belgium in consecutive matches here on Saturday and Sunday. After a good outing in the home leg earlier this year, the Indian men entered the European leg with high hopes, but they had a horrendous outing instead.

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

Netherlands, India lost 1-2 and 2-3, followed by defeats against Argentina (2-3, 1-2) and Australia (2-3, 2-3). It was not that India played badly throughout the European leg, but what cost them dearly was their perennial habit of conceding late goals.

The Indian defence crumbled under pressure at late stages, evidence of which was their opponents scoring most of their winners in the last 13 minutes of the match. India's senior players committed elementary mistakes when put under pressure. Harmanpreet has stood tall in defence but the likes of Amit Rohidas and Sumit need to buckle up to support young goalkeeper Krishan Bahadur Pathak and Suraj Karkera. The Indian forward line too needs to convert the chances that comes their way.

Cheif coach Craig Fulton would also be worried about the team's penalty corner conversion rate, although Harmanpreet scored a few from them.

US advances in CONCACAF Gold Cup

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■
Austin

The United States is moving to the knockout rounds at the CONCACAF Gold Cup, like it always does.

Yet two wins in two matches have been far from consistent and still raise questions about the young squad coach Mauricio Pochettino is guiding into the quarterfinals. The Americans advanced out of Group D with a match still to play with Thursday night's 1-0 win over Saudi Arabia thanks to defender Chris Richards' left-footed goal off a free kick from Sebastian Berhalter.

"We need to be calm," Pochettino said. "This is the second victory in a row in the competition. We still need to be improve. The competition is going to be tougher." Richards' goal was the lone

moment of finesse from a US attack that scored five goals against Trinidad and Tobago, and then looked mostly stagnant and stifled by Saudi Arabia on a steamy night in Texas. There were a couple of glaring defensive lapses, as well. Richards had to track back to save the US from an early deficit when a mistake by Alex Freeman nearly surrendered a goal in the first half.

The Americans' two wins in the tournament so far have come against a Trinidad and Tobago team ranked Number 100 in the world, and Number 58 Saudi Arabia. They will end Group D play Sunday against No. 83 Haiti in Arlington, Texas. Pochettino dismissed the low ranking for Saudi Arabia, noting its first-round victory over eventual champion Argentina in the 2022 World Cup.

"It wasn't an easy game. They are very competitive," Pochettino said.

"They have quality."

The US will have to navigate a tournament that will only get tougher with a roster Pochettino stitched together with many of the usual stars and starters sitting out for personal reasons, injuries or playing in the Club World Cup. Missing the tournament for the U.S. Are regulars Christian Pulisic, Yunus Musah, Weston McKennie, Tim Weah, Gio Reyna, Antonee Robinson, Folarin Balogun and Sergio Dest.

And forward Haji Wright did not suit up for the match against Saudi Arabia because team officials said he has an "issue" with his left Achilles tendon. The team did not elaborate.

Richards, who scored his second career goal for the Americans, said he sees a roster that is growing as it navigates the Gold Cup in its last competitive matches before the 2026 World Cup, which the US will co-host with Mexico and Canada.

Atlético beats Seattle 3-1 in Club World Cup

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■
Seattle (US)

Pablo Barrios scored twice and Atlético Madrid beat the Seattle Sounders 3-1 in the Club World Cup.

Giuliano Simeone found Barrios at the top of the penalty box in transition to open the scoring in the 11th minute on Thursday. Madrid pushed the lead to 2-0 in the opening minutes of the second half as substitute Axel Witsel scored off an assist by Robin Le Normand in the 47th. Albert Rusnak got Seattle on the scoreboard in the 50th, but Barrios got his second of the



game in the 55th to restore Madrid's two-goal lead.

The attendance was 51,636 at Lumen Field, which has a capacity of 68,740.

Key Moment

Atlético Madrid was initially awarded a penalty kick around the 35th minute, but it was overturned after video review

determined that the foul occurred outside the box.

Takeaways

The Sounders need Paris Saint-Germain to lose against Botafogo later Thursday to have a chance to advance out of Group B.

What they said

"The players showed courage today. I mean, they were down, and they were able to come back and still fight and play brave. You know Atlético's strength is in their transition, their counterattacks, but we weren't afraid to attack. And that opened us up a few times, but at the end of the day, the players played to win, and that was courage," said Seattle Sounders head coach Brian Schmetzer.

"The most difficult thing in football is creating chances. We created many opportunities today, but weren't fortunate enough to score more goals. But that's in the past now, and we're already focusing on Botafogo."