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'No pensioner should face problems to get dues' 5



RBI MAY REDUCE REPO RATE 8



HHVM faces yet another DELAY 11

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The Pioneer

The deaths of 26 cows at the Vemulawada temple in five days are a bad omen for the state. Revanth swore in the name of the gods that he would waive farm loans, but did not do it. This has turned into a curse on Telangana. If the government cannot protect the cows at the Vemulawada temple, let them hand over the responsibility to the BRS. We will take care of them. The indifference of the administration is bringing misfortune upon the state



- Harish Rao, BRS MLA

P2

DON'T MISS...

Food poisoning cases rise to 92 at IMH

In the suspected case of food poisoning, the cases of those fallen sick has reached 92 from 70 at the Government Hospital for Mental Care also known as Institute of Mental Health (IMH) in Hyderabad. The water is 95 per cent pure. The primary source said that there is a problem with diet, so the diet contractor services have been terminated with immediate effect and duty RMO has been relieved while appointing another officer and show cause notice issued to the sanitation department. State Health Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha...

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'One of the best things I've ever done'

Errol Musk, father of tech billionaire Elon Musk, visited the Ram temple in Ayodhya on Wednesday afternoon and described the experience as "wonderful" and one of the "best things" he has ever done. Errol also paid obeisance at the Hanumangarhi temple nearby. He was initially scheduled to visit the Taj Mahal in Agra as well but the plan may be dropped due to extreme heat in the region. "It's wonderful, absolutely wonderful (Ayodhya visit). It's one of the best things I've ever...

-PAGE: 5

Stock markets rebound after fall

Indian benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty snapped the three-day losing streak and settled in the positive territory on Wednesday, mirroring a rally in global markets and supported by buying in blue-chips Reliance Industries and HDFC Bank. Market analysts said Indian equities closed with gains on better-than-expected US job market data and optimism over trade talks between the US and Chinese President this week also added optimism to markets recovery. The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed...

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Gukesh loses Hikaru in Norway Chess

American Grandmaster Hikaru Nakamura broke world champion D Gukesh's run of classical wins by comprehensively beating the Indian to earn three full points even as Arjun Erigaisi roared back to contention with victory over Fabiano Caruana in Norway Chess here. India's Erigaisi trapped his opponent Caruana in a time scramble in the eighth round of the prestigious tournament on Tuesday. World Number 2 and former Norway Chess champion Nakamura pressed home the early advantage he got...

-SPORTS



RCB victory parade turns tragic

11 dead, 33 injured in stampede at Bengaluru cricket stadium

Govt announces Rs 10 Lakh compensation, orders magisterial probe



PNS ■ BENGALURU

The celebrations for the RCB's first-ever IPL win turned tragic on Wednesday as at least 11 persons died and more than 30 were injured in a stampede outside the Chinnaswamy Stadium after thousands of RCB fans gathered to catch a glimpse of the team.

"11 are dead and 33 injured due to stampede near Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru...More than 2-3 lakh people came, and no one expected this much crowd," Karnataka chief minister Siddaramaiah said at a press conference.

He also said that the stadium could only accommodate 35 thousand spectators.

The chief minister announced a magisterial inquiry into the incident and a Rs 10 lakh compensation to the kin of the deceased.

The stampede took place when thousands of fans attempted to enter the stadium from various gates. Police had a tough time 2



'Government committed to resolving staff issues'

Will present report to Cabinet today, says DCM Bhatti

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu on Wednesday assured that the government is committed to resolving all pending issues of employees and will place a detailed report before the Cabinet on Thursday.

Addressing a meeting of the Joint Action Committee (JAC) of employee unions at the secretariat, Bhatti reiterated that the Revanth Government considers employee welfare a priority and will act positively.

Joined by ministers Sridhar Babu, Ponnam Prabhakar, and government advisor Keshava Rao, the Deputy CM said the Chief Minister had constituted both a ministers' subcommittee and an officers' committee specifically to address employee grievances.

"We have reviewed your demands. The financial backlog from previous years made it difficult to resolve everything at once, but the government is determined to act without further delay," he explained.

We have reviewed your demands. The financial backlog from previous years made it difficult to resolve everything at once, but the government is determined to act without further delay

He added that Thursday's Cabinet meeting will include deliberations with the employees themselves in addition to the officials' report.

"You are not separate from the government. The welfare of employees is integral to the delivery of services and welfare schemes," he told the JAC members.

Explaining the government's approach, he said, "We are trying to meet your demands while ensuring no extra burden falls on the people. The government is working on fiscal adjustments to accommodate employee welfare."

He also said that this intention was reflected in the government's move to pay salaries on the first day of the month after coming to power.

Despite the financial pressures left behind by the BRS, Bhatti said the government had introduced numerous new welfare schemes and was simultaneously pursuing solutions for employees' long-pending issues.

"We have already held several rounds of consultations and are aligning financial resources accordingly," he added.



He assured the union leaders that the Chief Minister is fully aware of the difficulties faced by employees, particularly regarding marriage and medical expenses, and said there was consensus within the Cabinet on resolving these challenges.

"We will place the report prepared by the three-member officers' committee, in consultation with the Finance Department and other officials, before the Cabinet. A solution will emerge," he said.

Centre announces schedule for Census with caste enumeration

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Census exercise with caste enumeration will be carried out with the reference date of October 1, 2026, in snow-bound areas like Ladakh and of March 1, 2027, in the rest of the country, the Home Ministry announced on Wednesday.



It has been decided to conduct Population Census-2027 in two phases along with the enumeration of castes, it said.

"The reference date for Population Census - 2027 will be 00:00 hours of the first day of March 2027.

"For the Union Territory of Ladakh and the non-synchronous snow-bound areas of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir and states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, the reference date will be 00.00 hours of the first day of October 2026," the ministry said in a statement.

The notification for the intent of conducting the Population Census with these reference dates will be published in the official gazette "tentatively on 16.06.2025, as per provision of section 3 of Census Act 1948", it said.

The Census of India is conducted under the provisions of the Census Act, 1948 and the Census Rules, 1990.

The last Census was conducted in 2011 in two phases.

Census 2021 was also proposed to be conducted in two phases with phase I during April-September 2020 and the second phase in February 2021.

TG asks Centre to supply urea urgently amid shortage

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has raised serious concerns over the shortage in the supply of urea by the Centre. Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao asked senior officials to visit New Delhi to pursue the matter in person.



Despite allocations, the state received significantly less urea than planned during April and May, resulting in a deficit of 1.14 lakh tonnes just ahead of the Kharif season.

Official data says that while the Centre allocated 9.80 lakh tonnes of urea to the state for the entire season, only 1.22 lakh metric tonnes were supplied against the 1.70 lakh MT allocated for April, and just 0.94 lakh MT against 1.60 lakh MT for May. June has seen a negligible supply so far, with only 0.03 lakh MT received out of the allocated 1.70 lakh MT.

Officials pointed out that a major part of the allocations was dependent on imported urea, the delay of which has caused disruption.

"Last year, we ensured five lakh metric tonnes were stocked ahead of the season. This year too, we planned accordingly and nominated TG MARKFED as the nodal agency to ensure seamless availability. Yet the shortage in Central supply created serious challenges," said a senior agriculture official.

Tummala has already written to the Centre twice seeking compensation for Continued on Page 2

Justice Ghose arrives ahead of KCR, Harish & Eatala cross-examination

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose, heading the inquiry commission looking into the execution of the Kaleshwaram Project during the BRS administration, arrived in Hyderabad on Wednesday.

The commission will commence formal proceedings on Thursday, as a week of crucial cross-examinations is lined up.

Sources said the commission has scheduled the cross-examinations of prominent political figures. BJP MLA Eatela Rajender will appear before the commission on Friday, followed by BRS MLA Harish Rao on Monday. Former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao is slated to appear on Wednesday.

The depositions are expected to shed Continued on Page 2

It is not Kaleshwaram, but Congress Commission: Kavitha

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS MLC Kavitha launched a fierce counterattack against the Congress Government for issuing notices to former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao in connection with the Kaleshwaram Project.

Addressing a massive maha dharna at the Indira Park, organised by Telangana Jagruthi, Kavitha said the notices were a product of 'political vendetta' and an 'insult' to the people of Telangana.

"What wrong did KCR commit? Providing water to our lands? Making Telangana number one in development?" she asked, asserting that the notices issued to KCR amounted to issuing notices to the entire state.

Dismissing the Commission of Inquiry as politically driven, she said it was not a Kaleshwaram Commission but a "Congress Commission" and that it 'lacks' credibility.



Thousands of people and Jagruthi activists attended the protest, where Kavitha passionately defende the Kaleshwaram Project. "It's not just three barrages, it is 21 pump houses, 15 reservoirs, 200 km of tunnels, and 1500 km Continued on Page 2

JUSTICE VARMA'S REMOVAL

Govt reaches out to political parties; wants everyone on board

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Wednesday underlined the government's resolve to take all political parties on board in moving an impeachment motion against Justice Yashwant Varma, saying corruption in the judiciary cannot be approached through a "political prism".

He said the government wants the exercise aimed at axing Justice Varma, embroiled in a case of alleged corruption and indicted by a Supreme Court-appointed committee, a "collaborative effort".

Rijiju told reporters here that he has already initiated discussions with all political parties to bring the motion in Parliament's Monsoon session, starting from July 21, against the Allahabad High Court judge.

He said the government wants all parties to "jointly" move the motion to remove Justice Varma.

Rijiju said he will reach out to smaller parties, while all major parties have already been informed about the plan to bring a motion of impeachment against Justice Varma.

"The government feels that the matter related to corruption is not one political party's agenda. It is a stand of all parties to fight against the menace of corruption, whether it is the judiciary or any other space," he said.

The minister underlined that the government would like to take all political parties Continued on Page 2



'Useful to resolve people's problems'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar said that a Face-to-Face with Ministers programme is being organised at the Gandhi Bhavan to solve public problems. The Face-to-Face programme with ministers is useful to resolve problems quickly, he added.

Ponnam said the Face-to-Face programme with Ministers is very useful for Congress workers who had worked hard Continued on Page 2

Seethakka vows to overhaul Anganwadis

Launches preschool video & new initiatives

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



Every item here reflects creativity. We will ensure these learning kits reach every Anganwadi centre," she said. The materials were developed by women's groups and are intended to improve cognitive development among children aged 3 to 6

Women and Child Welfare Minister Seethakka on Wednesday unveiled a comprehensive roadmap to transform Anganwadi centres across Telangana into vibrant, child-friendly spaces that rival private playschools in quality.

Participating in the Medho Madana Sammelan 2025 at the Telangana State Institute of Rural Development (TSIRD) campus in Rajendranagar, she praised the efforts of Anganwadi staff and assured them of structural and systemic reforms.

Inspecting stalls set up by district wings of the Women and Child Welfare Department, Seethakka lauded the creativity behind new teaching materials designed to attract children.

"Every item here reflects creativity. We will ensure these learning kits reach every Anganwadi centre," she said. The materials were developed by women's groups and are intended to improve cognitive development among children aged 3 to 6.

In a symbolic gesture, she tasted Balamrutham and Anganwadi-distributed snacks, and asked officials to switch packaging from pouches to more user-friendly boxes.

She also visited stalls showcasing tribal food prepared by Anganwadi workers from Adilabad and appreciated their efforts to bring native nutrition into children's diets. "These are not just foods, but heritage meals," she said while interacting warmly with supervisors and volunteers.

At the Sangareddy stall, she reviewed educational tools and games curated to improve mental development in young children. Later, she launched a preschool video designed to integrate primary education within Anganwadi centres and initiated a plantation drive by planting native saplings on the TSIRD campus.

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Ponnam reviews arrangements for fish prasadam distribution

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



Minister for Civil Supplies Ponnam Prabhakar on Wednesday inspected the arrangements at Nampally Exhibition Grounds ahead of the annual distribution of the traditional fish prasadam, scheduled for June 8. He directed officials to ensure that the event is conducted smoothly and that devotees do not face any inconvenience.

The fish prasadam, which draws thousands of asthma patients from across the country every year, is distributed as part of a tradition by the Bathini Goud family. To support the event, the Telangana State Fisheries Corporation has prepared 1.5 lakh fingerlings for the preparation of the prasadam.

Accompanied by Fisheries Corporation Chairman Mettu Sai Kumar, the Minister issued key instructions on logistics, queue management, and safety protocols. He interacted with police officials to review the security measures and crowd control strategies, especially in view of past complaints regarding long queues and stampede-like situations.

Minister Ponnam emphasized the need to provide drinking water facilities at the venue and instructed officials to coordinate with voluntary organizations offering free meals to visiting patients and their families. He said all necessary support must be extended to ensure that their service continues uninterrupted.

Anticipating early arrivals from other states by June 6, the Minister urged departments to prepare contingency plans to accommodate interstate visitors and facilitate their stay. "There should be no distress for anyone who comes seeking relief," he stated.

The government is working in coordination with multiple agencies to ensure that the centuries-old tradition of fish prasadam distribution is held in a safe, orderly, and humane manner.

Deaths of 26 cows at Vemulawada temple bad omen: Harish

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



Senior BRS MLA Harish Rao came down heavily on the TG Congress Government on Tuesday, accusing it of gross negligence towards both farmers and in ensuring the sanctity of temples.

Speaking during his visit to Narsapur, Harish expressed deep anguish over the deaths of 26 cows at the Vemulawada Temple in just five days and described it as a bad omen for the state.

"If the government cannot protect cows at the Vemulawada Temple, let them hand over the responsibility to the BRS. We will take care of them," he said.

Criticising Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's approach, Harish said the administration's indifference is bringing 'misfortune' upon the state.

Turning to issues facing farmers, Harish lashed out at the delay in disbursing Rythu Bandhu dues. He demanded the release of Rs 18,000 per acre for the three crop seasons of the previous Vanakalam, Yasangi, and the upcoming Vanakalam.

He said the government had failed to honour its promises and that it was instead prioritising paying contractors over farmers.

Harish said that paddy procurement payments had been delayed by over 48 days, despite promises of payment within 48 hours. He said not even a single rupee had been paid for jowar purchases made over two months ago in Medak, Kamareddy, and Nizamabad districts. He demanded the release of the Rs 1,100 crore pending towards fine rice procurement.

Harish's politicking using heifers' deaths exposes him: Adi Srinivas

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Senior BRS MLA T. Harish Rao's use of the deaths of heifers at the Vemulawada Goshala for gaining political mileage exposes his incompetence, Government Whip Adi Srinivas said. Harish has no moral right to speak about the deaths of the heifers, he added.

Addressing the media on Wednesday, he said that donating heifers to the Vemulawada Goshala depends on the religious faith of the donors. Devotees are donating calves that are still drinking milk, and some are donating sick heifers. Using the deaths of heifers for politicking exposes Harish's objectives, he said.

AICC in-charge Meenakshi sore over Mallu Ravi's rally

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

AICC in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan reacted angrily over the new TPCC Disciplinary Action Committee Chairman Mallu Ravi organising a huge rally from the airport to Gandhi Bhavan, it is learnt.

It may be recalled that Mallu Ravi directly reached Gandhi Bhavan from the airport after returning to Hyderabad from New Delhi, and took charge from the outgoing chairman, Dr G. Chinna Reddy.

However, Mallu Ravi came to the Gandhi Bhavan leading a huge rally of his followers. After reaching Gandhi Bhavan, Mallu Ravi's followers distributed sweets and burst crackers on Gandhi Bhavan premises. Later, he met AICC in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan.

However, Meenakshi took the hungama seriously and reacted angrily at Mallu Ravi, it is learnt. It is learnt that Meenakshi asked Mallu Ravi whether this much hoo-ha was needed for taking over as the Disciplinary Action Committee Chairman.

KCR behind Kavitha's letter drama, says Vishweshwar

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



The BJP's Chevella MP, Konda Vishweshwar Reddy, said that BRS chief K. Chandrasekhar Rao is behind BRS MLC Kavitha's letter. He said that Kavitha achieved what she wanted with her letter drama. KCR planned the 'letter drama' from his farmhouse, he added.

Addressing the media on Wednesday, Vishweshwar said that Kavitha enacted the letter drama as the BRS was losing ground. However, Kavitha achieved what she wanted by attracting attention and hitting the headlines.

He said that all KCR family members are professional politicians and they will touch feet if they need to, otherwise they will chase away people.

"We will kick the KCR family out if they come to the BJP's gate. There is no question of the BJP joining hands with the BRS. In politics, equations change, but this equation will not change. KCR's drama will remain a drama, and he will not succeed. KCR considers his family first, party second and Telangana last," he added.

Vishweshwar said that in reality, there was an alliance between the BRS and the Congress, and it was proved in the Munugode by-poll.

He said the BJP-led Centre's investigative agencies arrested Kavitha. "But did the TG Congress government arrest KCR or KTR," he asked.

Australia backs India's fight against cross-border terrorism

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Australia backs India's fight against terrorism and it considers ties with New Delhi crucial for Canberra's national interest, Australian Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles said on Wednesday.

During talks with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Marles welcomed the cessation of military actions between India and Pakistan, and described it as "an act of Indian leadership".

In the meeting, India and Australia agreed to expand their strategic cooperation for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

The Pahalgam terror attack and Pakistan's support to cross-border terrorism figured in the Singh-Marles talks. In his remarks, Singh hailed Canberra's unequivocal support to New Delhi's resolute response to the Pahalgam attack.

"We acknowledge and welcome the stoppage in military activity. We see this as an act of Indian leadership," Marles said in his televised opening remarks.

On his part, Singh highlighted India's right to respond in self-defence against Pakistan-backed terrorism and its actions following the dastardly attack were measured, non-escalatory and responsible.

The Australian leader said Canberra's relationship with New Delhi is of the "highest priority" and that it is profoundly significant to Australia's national interest.

The visit to New Delhi by Marles coincides with the fifth anniversary of the firming up of India Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership that facilitated deeper bilateral defence ties.

High courts can't *suo motu* enhance punishment in appeal: SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



The Supreme Court on Wednesday held high courts cannot exercise suo motu revision powers either to enhance the sentence or to convict an accused on any other charge in the absence of appeal filed by the victim, complainant or the state.

A bench of Justices B V Nagarathna and Satish Chandra Sharma passed the verdict on an appeal filed by one Nagarajan, challenging an order of Madurai bench of the Madras High Court which convicted him for abetment of suicide of a woman and sentenced him to five-years rigorous imprisonment.

He was also convicted of charges of outraging the modesty and house trespass.

The top court noted that the trial court acquitted him of the charges of Section 306 of IPC for abetment of suicide and convicted him only for outraging the modesty of the woman and house trespass.

Nagarajan appealed in the high court, which upheld the trial court's order of conviction but suo motu initiated proceedings for his conviction under Section 306 of the IPC and convicted him.

It came on record that no appeal was filed by the state, victim or complainant for enhancement of sentence or acquittal under section 306 of the IPC.

"An appeal filed by the accused/convict and in the absence of any appeal filed by the victim, complainant or the state, the high court cannot exercise suo motu revision either to enhance the sentence or to convict the appellant on any other charge," the bench said.

As a result, the bench set aside the conviction and sentence of the appellant under Section 306 of IPC but confirmed his conviction for "outraging the modesty of woman" and "house trespass".

"The appellant is directed to undergo the sentence and to pay the fine as imposed by the sessions court," it held.

The top court noted that the sentences were ordered to run concurrently by the high court.

"Thus, a conviction awarded for offences under Sections 354 and 448 of IPC has also resulted in a conviction under Section 306 of IPC and an enhanced sentence, that too, in an appeal filed by none other than the appellant," it said.

According to the bench "the rationale of the above can be explained in simple language by stating that no appellant by filing an appeal can be worse-off than what he was".

"That is exactly what we are seeking to reiterate in our judgment having regard to the facts of the present case."

Bengaluru stampede: From celebratory chants to wails of pain

PNS ■ BENGALURU



A mound of shoes and sandals lying here and there and some pieces of what appeared to be sports apparel and merchandise were the telltale signs of the stampede that broke out in the immediate vicinity of the Chinnaswamy stadium here, leading to the deaths of 11 persons and injuries to 33 enthusiasts.

As the celebratory mood kicked in to commemorate the first ever IPL title win by the RCB, massive crowds of young men and women, touching lakhs, gathered just outside the stadium.

Many youths managed to climb branches of huge trees and frenzied young men clung to poles and even scaled huge walls to gain entry into the stadium to catch a glimpse of their stars, all at the same time.

Nothing could deter them and crowds continued to swell and the chants of 'RCB' in the busy area brought in an atmosphere of carnival on the streets of Bengaluru.

As jubilation intensified, the crowds turned frantic and were uncontrollable, steadily leading to a stampede. Soon, wails and shouting began to be heard and even before one could realize what was happening, people fell down and became unconscious, who had to be rushed to nearby hospitals.

While all this was happening, many youths still chose to continue to sit on compound walls near the Saint Mark's Cathedral and not even the continuous blare of sirens of police vehicles could stop them from shouting to cheer their beloved cricket team.

RCB victory ...

Continued from page 1

controlling the crowd, triggering chaos and turning a joyful event into a tragedy.

Police used mild force to control the crowd and bring the situation under control ahead of a special felicitation at the stadium for the Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) team organised by the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA).

Meanwhile, the felicitation of the players went ahead nonetheless as the stadium was packed to the rafters despite the chaos outside the stadium.

People were seen collapsing, visuals showed police shifting the injured persons and those who fell unconscious in ambulances to nearby hospitals. Visuals also showed some of those who were in an unconscious state being administered cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) by those nearby.

The injured were hospitalised at Bowring and Lady Curzon Hospital in Shivajinagar and other hospitals. According to hospital sources, deaths could have been caused due to suffocation. There were also heart-wrenching scenes at the hospitals, where people were crying over the death of their loved ones.

"The stampede incident shouldn't have happened, and the government expresses grief over it," Siddaramaiah said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi described the stampede as "absolutely heartrending".

"In this tragic hour, my thoughts are with all those who have lost their loved ones. I pray that those who are injured have a speedy recovery," Modi said on X.

Justice Ghose ...

Continued from page 1

light on the critical decisions taken during the BRS government, particularly concerning large-scale projects and administrative practices.

As all three leaders had important roles during the BRS government, their statements are likely to be closely watched by political observers and the public alike.

Musical, cultural programmes held at Govindaraja Swamy temple

PNS ■ TIRUPATI



The religious, musical and cultural programmes organized on the occasion of the annual Brahmotsavams of Sri Govindaraja Swamy temple in Tirupati on Wednesday entertained the devotees. Mangaladhvani was organized by the SV College of Music and Dance from 5.30 am to 6.30 am at the Sri Govindaraja Swamy temple. The peacock dance, Kuchipudi, Bharatanatyam, Kolatam, Chakkabhajana stood as a special attraction during Vahana Sevas. The ongoing annual brahmotsavams in Sri Govindaraja Swamy temple in Tirupati witnessed the Utsava deity seated majestically atop the ferocious Simha Vahanam.

TG asks Centre ...

Continued from page 1

the deficit, and has now issued fresh directions to the Agriculture Director to visit New Delhi and press for immediate redressal.

The Minister is also understood to have appealed that June allocations should be supplied primarily from domestically produced urea to avoid further complications.

While Telangana requested that the pending 1.14 lakh MT from April and May be added to June's allocation, the Centre has again allocated 67 per cent imported urea for the current month.

With the early arrival of the monsoon and farmers already beginning sowing, the state emphasised the urgent need for adequate urea supply. Tummala, in a third letter to the Centre, urged it to ensure that the full June allocation reaches the state promptly to avoid disruptions in the cropping cycle.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:	Sukla Paksha
Tithi:	
Dashami:	Jun 04 11:54 PM to Jun 06 02:16 AM
Ekadashi:	Jun 06 02:16 AM to Jun 07 04:48 AM
Nakshatram:	
Hasta:	Jun 05 03:35 AM to Jun 06 06:33 AM
Rahukalam:	1:52 PM to 3:29 PM
Yamagandam:	5:44 AM to 7:22 AM
Varjyam:	01:02 PM to 02:49 PM
Gulika:	8:59 AM to 10:37 AM
Amritakalam:	11:49 PM to 01:37 AM
Abhijit Muhurtham:	11:48 AM to 12:40 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Mostly Cloudy
Temp: 32°c
Humidity: 62%
Sunrise: 5:41 AM
Sunset: 6:49 PM

Updated: June 4, 2025 5:00 PM

It is not ...

Continued from page 1

of canals. The sheer scale of the project rivals world wonders," she said, adding that it could irrigate 40 lakh acres, permanently provide 40 TMC water to Hyderabad, and supply water to industries.

Kavitha asked why Megha Krishna Reddy, whose company executed major portions of the pump house work, was not summoned by the Commission. "Ninety per cent of the pump house work was done by his firm. Why hasn't the government called him for questioning? Is Revanth Reddy scared?" she said, demanding transparency and fairness.

Slamming the silence of BJP leaders, she asked why they were not demanding the national project tag for Kaleshwaram or challenging Andhra Pradesh's Banakacharla Project.

"Even a 'small' crack in Kaleshwaram made the NDSA rush in. But when the SLBC tunnel collapsed, there was no reaction from either the NDSA or the Centre," she pointed out.

Kavitha also targeted Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, asking why he had not written to the Centre opposing the Banakacharla Project or the Godavari-Penna linkage. "It's clear now that Congress and the BJP are allied," she said.

She reminded that earlier, Congress governments used to hand over most irrigation contracts to Megha. She said that officials were now prioritising commissions and contractors, instead of providing irrigation. "It's time Telangana shows its spirit," she said.

She concluded by reaffirming Telangana Jagruthi's commitment to fight for the state's rightful share of 1000 TMCs of Godavari water and national project tag for Kaleshwaram.

"KCR built this project with Rs 80,000 crore. Where is the Rs 1 lakh crore corruption Revanth talks about?" she asked.

Many of the Telangana Jagruthi, its district units and the United People's Front (UPF) joined the protest, pledging their support.

'Useful to resolve ...

Continued from page 1

for the party and helped it to form the government.

He said that the AICC's TG in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan has resumed the face-to-face programme on behalf of the government to find out and resolve public problems.

Appeals regarding public problems are being received at the Praja Bhavan. The Gandhi Bhavan is like a temple for the Congress, he said.

He said the Face-to-Face programmes held at the Gandhi Bhavan to find out public problems had helped the Congress to come to power.

He appealed to Congress workers and the public to come to Gandhi Bhavan and reveal their problems.

He said that just as there is no village without a Hanuman Temple, there is no village without a Indiramma house. We are working with the same slogan again, he said.

Govt reaches out...

Continued from page 1

on board on the issue as corruption in the judiciary cannot be approached through a "political prism".

He said most parties will revert after discussing the issue internally.

To a query, Rijiju said the decision on whether the motion will be brought in the Lok Sabha or the Rajya Sabha will be taken based on the business of each House.

According to the Judges (Inquiry) Act of 1968, once a motion to remove a judge is admitted in any of the Houses, the speaker or the chairman, as the case may be, will constitute a three-member committee to investigate the grounds on which the removal (or, in popular term, impeachment) has been sought.

The committee consists of the chief justice of India (CJI) or a Supreme Court judge, the chief justice of one of the 25 high courts and a " distinguished jurist".

Rijiju said the present case is "slightly different" as an in-house committee formed by then CJI Sanjiv Khanna has already submitted its report.

"So what is to be done in this matter, we will take a call," he said.

The minister said the process has to be followed, but how to "integrate the inquiry already conducted" needs to be decided.

"As per the rule, a committee has to be constituted and then the committee has to submit a report and the report will be tabled in the House and discussions will start to impeach. Here, a committee has already been constituted, not by Parliament. But it cannot be brushed aside" as it was constituted by the CJI, he said.

Responding to questions that a committee has to be mandatorily formed under the Judges (Inquiry) Act, Rijiju said the speaker will take a decision in this regard.

He said reconciling the report of the in-house panel and the one under law is a "secondary matter". The primary objective is to bring the impeachment motion.

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City Pioneer

The Pioneer

HYDERABAD | THURSDAY | JUNE 5, 2025

03



CITY EVENTS

20th Anniversary Celebrations Org
By Niganetram
Venue
Ravindra Bharathi
June 5, 1:30 pm.

Perini Natyam Workshop final day celebrations
By Sri Manidweepa Arts Academy
Venue
Ravindra Bharathi
June 5, 9 am.

Padhya Natakotsavam
By Aradhana Cultural Association
Venue
Sri Thyagaraja Gana Sabha
June 5, 5 pm.

Irumanangalin Sangamam
Mega Tamil Matrimonial Event
Venue
Waves Dining Hall
June 5, 10 am.

Food poisoning cases rise to 92 at IMH

Duty RMO relieved, diet contractor terminated

DEEPIKA PASHAM
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HYDERABAD

In the suspected case of food poisoning, the cases of those fallen sick has reached 92 from 70 at the Government Hospital for Mental Care also known as Institute of Mental Health (IMH) in Hyderabad.

The water is 95 per cent pure. The primary source said that there is a problem with diet, so the diet contractor services have been terminated with immediate effect and duty RMO has been relieved while appointing another officer and show cause notice issued to the sanitation department.

State Health Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha has inspected the premises of the Government Hospital for Mental Care. He toured the hospital on Wednesday morning and interacted with the superintendent and other health officials.

Later addressing the media, Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha said, "At around 6:30 pm on June 2 there was an incident reported with alleged food poisoning for nearly 92 people at the Institute for Mental Health.

We will soon be knowing about the cause as samples have been sent because there is a doubt whether it is food poisoning or water contamination. The samples of water, food and stools sent to different government hospitals and institutes. As it was Telangana Formation Day additional sweets were prepared on June 2."

Among the 92, 74 are stable at the institute and 18 are shifted to Osmania General Hospital (OGH). A forensic report is awaited to be accountable to the incident.

The institute has the capacity of 600 intake and the current admitted are 318 patients.



Health Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha inspects the Institute of Mental Health

In the orders issued by the Health Department secretary and Superintendent of the institute, Dr D Padmaja has been relieved from her duties as Incharge Civil Surgeon RMO at the Institute of Mental Health.

Dr B Shankar from Osmania General Hospital is appointed as her replacement, effective immediately.

In another order, there is an outbreak of acute Gastroenteritis at the IMH on June 2. One patient has tragically passed away and 92 others are currently receiving treatment for symptoms including vomiting and diarrhea.

Of these, 18 patients have been transferred to Osmania General Hospital for more intensive care.

In response to this critical incident, which underscores severe negligence, the hospital administration has terminated the services of G Jaipal Reddy, the diet contractor responsible for the hospital's food services, effective immediately.

ISB, Samunnati to host Agri-Tech Learning Table

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a collaborative effort to accelerate inclusive innovation in Indian agriculture, the Indian School of Business (ISB) Centre for Business Innovation, in partnership with Samunnati Agri Innovations Lab (SAIL), will host an Agri-Tech Learning Table on June 9 at the ISB campus in Hyderabad.

The high-level roundtable, titled "Scaling Agri-Tech for FPOs - Innovations for Growth and Sustainability," will bring together over 50 selected thought leaders and practitioners to discuss actionable strategies for strengthening Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) through technology.

The discussions will focus on three key areas: affordability and scalability of agri-tech, strengthening Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and promoting climate-smart innovations.

Prof Rajendra Srivastava, former Dean and Novartis Chair Professor of Marketing Strategy and Innovation at ISB, said, "This learning table is designed to move beyond discussion into actionable collaboration - connecting the dots between innovation, policy and rural markets."





TGSWREIS Secretary Dr VS Alagu Varsini with the JEE Advanced 2025 qualified students at the Hyderabad HQ on Wednesday

JEE qualified students told to aim for holistic learning

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Social Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society (TGSWREIS) held a 'Success Meet' on Wednesday to award the students who qualified in the JEE Advanced 2025, earning spots among India's top engineering aspirants.

TGSWREIS Secretary Dr VS Alagu Varsini appreciated the students for their dedication, discipline and determination. "Getting into an IIT is not easy. Your achievement reflects years of hard work, focus and belief in your potential," she said.

Known for her role in transforming education for marginalised communities, Dr Varsini advised students to go beyond textbooks. "Success in national exams needs more than just reading material. You must think critically, apply knowledge, and develop problem-solving skills," she stressed.

She also reminded students to stay humble and resilient. "Hard work opens doors, but clarity and mental strength help you walk through," she added.

Dr Varsini encouraged students to share any academic, emotional, or technical support they may need. "We are committed to giving you the best learning environment," she assured.

The event also saw senior officials, principals and advisors, who applauded the students' efforts and reaffirmed TGSWREIS's mission to empower first-generation learners through quality education and opportunity.

Doc affirms Miss World Opal had breast lump removed, not cancer

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Dr P Raghu Ram, Managing Director of KIMS-Ushalakshmi Centre for Breast Diseases, clarified that Miss World 2025, Opal Suchata, had a benign breast lump removed at the age of 16, not breast cancer. He stressed that it was a non-cancerous lump and not related to any cancer diagnosis.

After her surgery, Opal started a non-profit foundation called "Opal For Her" to raise awareness about the early detection of breast cancer. Her foundation offers free breast screenings and supports breast cancer treatment for women in Thailand.

Dr Raghu Ram pointed out that 9 out of 10 breast lumps are benign, meaning they are not cancer and do not lead to cancer. He emphasised that Opal never had breast cancer, and the false information being shared online must stop to avoid causing embarrassment to her and her family.

He added, "I met Opal Suchata in Hyderabad and was deeply impressed by her dedication to breast cancer awareness.

As Miss World 2025, I hope she continues this mission globally. Promoting early detection can help save many lives."



FOCUS ON TRAFFIC, SANITATION AND HOUSING

Projects worth Rs 7,042 cr to make Hyd a world class city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

At the outset of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) general body meeting held on Wednesday, 58 development projects worth Rs 7,042 crore were tabled. These include initiatives aimed at creating signal-free traffic corridors to tackle congestion in the city. Meanwhile, BJP and BRS corporators raised concerns regarding street lighting and road conditions during the rainy season due to waterlogging with banners, placards.

A major portion of the infrastructure push comes under the H-City (Hyderabad City Innovative Infrastructure, Development & Transparency) initiative. Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi stated that the State government would fully fund the projects without placing any financial burden on the GHMC.



She described the initiative as a turning point in transforming Hyderabad into a world-class city. The government's proactive steps, especially in traffic decongestion and civic infrastructure, were lauded.

In preparation for the monsoon, the GHMC has also launched an extensive Sanitation Drive across the city to prevent seasonal diseases. Public representatives, including MLAs, MLCs and MPs, were urged to support and actively participate in this effort.

Other key announcements included the construction of Indiramma houses for the shelterless poor, the supply of subsidised rice and loan disbursements under the Rajiv Gandhi Yuva Vikasam scheme to support unemployed youth.

A special mention was made of Telangana's pioneering BC census, which was highlighted as a point of pride. It was noted that this effort even inspired Prime Minister Narendra Modi to consider a nationwide BC enumeration, showcasing Telangana's leadership in inclusive governance.

Key accused in Rs 4,215 cr Falcon Scam arrested in Hyd

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a major breakthrough, the Telangana Crime Investigation Department (CID) arrested Sandeep Kumar, a key accused in the multi-crore Falcon Invoice Discounting scam, in Hyderabad on June 3. The scam, which duped over 7,000 depositors across the country, involved fake invoice discounting schemes promising high returns through an online platform created by Capital Protection Force Pvt Ltd.

Sandeep Kumar, younger brother of company chairman Amardeep Kumar (A2), was the Operational Head of the company and was apprehended along with his associate Ravi Kumar. This is the latest in a string of arrests in the high-profile financial fraud case that has rocked multiple states. The CID had previously arrested seven other accused in the same case.

According to the CID, the accused collected approximately Rs 4,215 crore from 7,056 unsuspecting depositors by creating a fraudulent web portal-www.falconsgrup.com-and luring people with fake deals allegedly backed by reputed multinational corporations. Initial investigations reveal that at least 4,065 victims were cheated to the tune of Rs 792 crore.

Sandeep Kumar had initially fled to Dubai following the registration of the case but later returned to India through the Nepal border illegally. He was on the run across Bihar, Odisha, Goa, and finally Hyderabad, where he was given shelter by cousin Ravi Kumar.

Based on credible information, both were arrested in Hyderabad. The CID seized three luxury vehicles-Mercedes Benz GLS 400d, Range Rover Velar, and Innova Crysta-worth Rs. 2.5 crore, along with 14 property documents valued at Rs. 10 crore, mobile phones, ID cards, and cash.

The scam involved the creation of a sophisticated façade using social media advertisements on platforms like Google, YouTube, and Instagram, combined with aggressive telecalling. Victims were issued fake invoice receipts and agreements that appeared legitimate. Sandeep Kumar allegedly diverted Rs. 845 million from company funds to his personal accounts and shell entities.

He and co-accused Yogendra Singh, CEO of Falcon Invoice Discounting Company, had earlier fled to the UAE. Efforts are underway to trace and arrest the remaining accused.

The investigation is being led by CID Director General Shikha Goel, IPS, under the supervision of SP Venkata Lakshmi and DSP N. Ashok Kumar of the CID's Economic Offences Wing.

Overseas scholarship scheme launched for Minority students

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has launched the "Chief Minister's Overseas Scholarship Scheme for Minorities" to support minority students pursuing Post-Graduation or Ph.D. abroad. This scheme applies to students admitted to universities in the USA, UK, Australia, Canada, Singapore, Germany, South Korea, Japan, France and New Zealand.

Selected students will receive up to Rs 20 lakh in scholarship, along with one-way airfare of Rs 60,000 or the actual ticket cost, whichever is lower. Students can apply online at www.telanganaepass.cgg.gov.in.

The Minorities Welfare department is inviting applications for the Spring Season 2025 from June 1 to June 30, 2025.

The deadline for submitting applications is June 30, 2025, by 5:00 pm. Eligible students who have taken admission between January 1, 2025 and June 30, 2025, can apply. All certificates will be verified later. If any documents are found to be fake, strict legal action will be taken.

HYDRAA pushes to rejuvenate six water bodies without delay

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Protection Agency (HYDRAA) Commissi oner AV Ranganath said that in a push to rejuvenate the city's water bodies, six lakes identified under Phase I of the project must be fully restored and made accessible without delay. During inspections conducted on Tuesday and Wednesday, the Commissioner visited Bathukamma Kunta, Bamruknu ddowla Lake, Tammidikunta and Sunnam Cheruvu, reviewing the ongoing works and progress.

At Tammidikunta, which spans 14 acres, Ranganath proposed expanding the water-holding capacity to 26 acres and dedicating an additional 4 acres for ecological development. He stressed the importance of strengthening the lake bund to ensure durability and safety, especially considering the presence of nearby residential areas.

He directed the construction of a concrete wall outside the bund to safeguard lower-lying areas and instructed officials to prevent any disruptions to the ongoing works.

At Sunnam Cheruvu, originally spread over 32.20 acres, only 14.18 acres are currently retaining water. The Commissioner called for full restoration of the lake's capacity and an increase in depth to enhance water retention. As part of the cleanup effort, HYDRAA has already removed sewage and foul-smelling silt from the lake bed.



Intermediate first-year textbooks being dispatched

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a major step towards improving academic preparedness, the Department of Intermediate Education, Government of Telangana, has begun timely printing and distribution of textbooks for the academic year 2025-26.

This ensures that students enrolled in government junior colleges receive their textbooks without delay - an improvement over previous years where delays extended into July or August.

Over 9.5 lakh students across the State, including nearly 1.7 lakh students in government junior colleges, will benefit from this initiative. A multi-phase, structured strategy was adopted to streamline the process of printing and distribution.

The Telugu Academy has completed printing of first-year textbooks, which are already being dispatched and are expected to reach colleges by the first week of June. Printing for second-year textbooks will also be completed by the first week of June. Special officers have been assigned to coordinate with college principals to ensure timely delivery and distribution.

Early collection of requirements (indents) from principals enabled advance planning, while leftover stock from the 2024-25 academic year is being rationally redistributed to minimise waste. A logistics partnership with Telangana State Road Transport Corporation is facilitating State-wide delivery.

Daily monitoring is being conducted by officers from the Directorate of Intermediate Education, the Telangana State Board of Intermediate Education (TGBIE), and designated librarians. Principals have been instructed to issue textbooks immediately upon receipt and to commence academic instruction without delay.

TG Forensic Lab gets notified as govt examiner

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Forensic Science Laboratory (TGFSL) has achieved a landmark milestone by being officially notified as a "Government Examiner of Electronic Evidence" under Section 79A of the Information Technology Act, 2000. The notification was issued by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India.

This recognition gives TGFSL enhanced legal authority to examine, analyse, and certify digital and electronic evidence-significantly boosting the admissibility and credibility of such material in courts of law across the country.

The move comes as a testament to the laboratory's growing stature in the field of digital forensics and scientific service delivery.

Guv felicitates civil services and IFS exam achievers

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Governor Jishnu Dev Varma felicitated the successful candidates of the 2024 UPSC Civil Services and Indian Forest Service exams from the two Telugu states on Wednesday. The ceremony took place in the Durbar Hall of Raj Bhavan.

Congratulating the achievers, the Governor said their success came from discipline, determination and hard work. He called them torchbearers of public service and asked them to serve with humility, honesty and kindness. "You are not just future officers but builders of India's future," he said.

The Governor appreciated the long tradition of civil servants from the Telugu states. He also thanked the families and mentors who supported the candidates.

Later on, Jishnu Dev Varma also met the 2024 batch of IAS officers assigned to Telangana, who are currently training as Assistant Collectors. He encouraged them to stay connected with the people by travelling, meeting them and understanding their problems. "This is the true meaning of public service," he added.

He congratulated the officers and noted that Telangana offers many chances for innovation and making a real difference.

The trainees were accompanied by MCRHRDI Vice Chairman & DG A Santhi Kumari, and Course Director Dr K Usha Rani. The group included Saurabh Sharma, Saloni Chhabra, Harsh Choudhary, Carolyn Chingthianmawi and Koyyada Pranay Kumar.

Principal Secretary to the Governor M Dana Kishore also explained the roles and duties of Raj Bhavan to the trainees.



Governor Jishnu Dev Varma felicitating 2024 UPSC Civil Services and IFS candidates at Raj Bhavan on Wednesday

Indiramma govt will fulfil all promises: Ponguleti

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

The Indiramma housing scheme is a continuous process aimed at fulfilling the housing dreams of all eligible poor people in a phased manner, said Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy.

On Wednesday, the Minister laid the foundation stone for the construction of cement concrete roads with a budget of Rs 1 crore from municipal general funds in Division 60, Ramannapet under Khammam Municipal Corporation, and for several road construction works in Khammam Rural Mandal.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Srinivas Reddy said that the foundation stone was laid for a bitumen road from Daredu to Kotapadu with an estimated cost of Rs 4.9 crore and sanctioned a BT road from Daredu to Koyachilka with Rs 3.74 crore. A total of Rs 8 crore has been sanctioned by the Indiramma government for the two roads in Daredu village, he added.

He said that the foundation was also laid for a 2-kilometre BT road from Maddivarigudem to Polishettigudem at a cost of Rs 3.3 crore, and works would begin within a week. The Minister instructed the officials to complete the work on time with high quality.

He stated that under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the people's government is simultaneously implementing welfare and developmental programmes as promised to the people. The Minister explained that the government is paying monthly instalments of Rs 6,500 crore towards the debts incurred by the previous government, while also implementing welfare schemes and fulfilling the promises made to the public.

He highlighted several welfare initiatives including 200 units of free electricity for the poor, cooking gas cylinders for Rs 500, and distribution of fine rice through the ration system from Ugadi and othes.

The Minister stated that in just one year, the people's government has spent nearly Rs 21,000 crore to waive crop loans up to Rs 2 lakh, and provided a Rs 500 per quintal bonus for fine variety paddy. Under the Rythu Bharosa scheme, investment support per acre has been increased from Rs 10,000 to Rs 12,000.

He added that the government has sanctioned Rs 22,500 crore for Indiramma houses to help poor families achieve the dream of owning a home.

Khammam Municipal Commissioner Abhishek Augustya, Revenue Divisional Officer Narasimharao, Khammam Rural Tahsildar Ramprasad, public representatives, Divisional Panchayati Officer Rambabu, Panchayati Raj Engineering officials, and other concerned authorities.



Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy laying the foundation stone for road works in Khammam on Wednesday.

Mandal surveyor, chainman in ACB net

PNS ■ MANCHERIAL

In a case of alleged corruption in the Mancherial district, Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) officials on Wednesday arrested a Mandal surveyor who allegedly not only accepted a bribe but also demanded additional money to complete the land survey. A case has been registered against her and an investigation is underway.

A person had approached surveyor Manjula in Mancherial, requesting a land survey and the issuance of a certificate. However, Manjula allegedly demanded a bribe to carry out the survey. Initially, she was paid Rs 16,500 through PhonePe and another Rs 10,000 in cash.

Not stopping there, she further demanded an additional Rs 30,000, stating that the work would only proceed if the extra payment was made.

Based on a complaint from the farmer, the ACB officials conducted a raid at the Mancherial Tahsildar office and caught Mandal Surveyor Manjula and chainman Uday red-handed while allegedly accepting the bribe.



Mandal surveyor Manjula and chainman Uday

ACB Deputy Superintendent of Police Vijay Kumar revealed that the duo had demanded Rs 50,000 in total from the complainant and agreed to settle the matter for Rs 30,000. As part of this, Rs 16,500 was paid through PhonePe and Rs 10,000 in cash.

Since the officials insisted that the land survey would only be conducted if the remaining Rs 30,000 was paid, the victim reported the matter to the ACB.

Following this complaint, the two accused were taken into custody and questioned.

The duo will be produced before the Karimnagar ACB Court on Thursday.

Protest against ethanol factory turns violent

PNS ■ JOGULAMBA GADWAL

Tension has escalated in Jogulamba Gadwal district as a large number of farmers staged a protest against the establishment of an ethanol factory at Peddadhanwada village, Rajoli mandal. The farmers began protesting again after the company attempted to resume construction activities secretly, without informing the local community.

Farmers from several nearby villages joined the protest, leading to a volatile situation.

As the protest intensified, demonstrators vandalised vehicles and tents belonging to the Gayatri Ethanol Company. Some tents and container boxes at the construction site were set on fire by the protesters. Laborers working at the site were driven away by the agitating farmers.

The company's vehicles at the site were also damaged during the agitation. Farmers from 10 villages took part in the protest after the company, which had earlier claimed it would withdraw, resumed construction activities.

The factory work, which restarted secretly in Peddadhanwada, once again triggered strong opposition. The entire village turned into a protest zone, with the protest committee urging villagers to remain alert.

Elephant herd threat looms over Asifabad district

PNS ■ ASIFABAD
KUMRAM BHEEM

Forest officials are issuing warning to villagers in district through drum beating about the possibility of elephants straying into border villages at any moment.

"There is a chance that a herd of elephants may cross the Pranahita river from Maharashtra," the Forest Department officials has alerted villagers in the the Kagaznagar forest division, as there is a likelihood of elephants entering these areas. Officials estimate that a herd of elephants is currently located in a forest area in Maharashtra, about 60 kilometers away.

Through beating of drums, the Forest Department has issued an alert in villages along the Maharashtra border in Asifabad Kumaram Bheem district.

The Forest Department says that there is a possibility of a herd of elephants crossing over from the borders of Gadchiroli and Chandrapur districts of Maharashtra into the Kagaznagar corridor. People living along the banks of the Pranahita river are being urged to remain alert.



A wild elephant had trampled two farmers to death in April 2024.

According to forest officials and wildlife activists, the two male elephants have been spotted in the forests of Sindewahi taluka in Chandrapur district, Maharashtra, in recent days.

The duo was recently seen moving through the roads of Gadchiroli district before entering Chandrapur on Wednesday.

Wildlife experts believe that the elephants drifted away from the group and wandered into Maharashtra from eastern Chhattisgarh, likely due to increased mining activities in 2023.

Forest officials in both Maharashtra and Telangana are actively coordinating to track and manage the movement of the tuskers to prevent further casualties or crop damage.

Municipal employees told to strive for development of Wanapathy

PNS ■ WANAPARTHY

Wanaparthy MLA Tudi Megha Reddy has said that all officials and staff working in the Wanaparthy Municipality should quit their "old habits" and work towards the development of the town.

He assured them that he would stand by them in resolving any issues they face in this endeavour.

On Wednesday, the MLA participated in a 100-day programme held at the Wanaparthy Municipality.

Speaking on the occasion, he appreciated the municipal staff for their continuous services to the people of Wanaparthy town, including ward officers, MEPA (Mission for Elimination of Poverty in Municipal Areas) Resource Persons, and municipal security personnel.

He noted that the Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, is paying special attention to the Wanaparthy and emphasised that everyone should be a stakeholder in the rapid development of the town.

He urged the staff to work with renewed commitment from now on, putting aside how things may have been handled in the past. He stressed the importance of identifying and correcting any mistakes that occur during duty and ensuring quality services are delivered to the public.



Thudi Megha Reddy

He specifically instructed officials to focus on the voter list, identify genuine urban voters, and remove duplicate entries.

The MLA warned that staff working in the municipality should not neglect their responsibilities and must perform their duties properly.

Later. The MLA visited the Government Junior College in Wanaparthy town.

Internal strife in Siddipet BJP surfaces again

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

The internal strife within the BJP's Siddipet district unit has resurfaced once again. Several leaders competed for the position of BJP district president. However, aspirants expressed their discontent on social media, claiming that the leadership overlooked those who were loyal to the party. They also alleged that the requirement of having active party membership was not even considered during the selection process.

The BJP state leadership is accused of favouring Bairi Shankar, who recently joined the party from Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), over long-time loyalists — a decision that has sparked strong opposition from senior leaders and grassroots workers.

Dissatisfaction over the selection of the district president, which began three months ago, has only intensified. Party cadres protested on Monday, demanding that the state in charge fulfil the promise made during the formation of the district committee. Around 150 senior leaders and workers from the district staged a protest at the BJP state office at Nampally in Hyderabad, opposing the appointment of Bairi Shankar Mudiraj as district president.



Senior leaders expressed outrage over the appointment, questioning how someone who recently migrated from the BRS party to the BJP could be given such a key position, bypassing long-serving party loyalists. Massive protests were held three months ago as well, demanding immediate cancellation of Shankar Mudiraj's appointment.

At that time, BJP organising secretary Chandrasekhar Tiwari pacified the protesters, assuring them that the matter would be reported to the central committee and that a decision would be taken accordingly. He also instructed Shankar Mudiraj to halt further appointments to the district committee until a final decision was made.

Focus on humane approach towards patients: Collector

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

District Collector Pamela Satpathy has urged the doctors and paramedics to show kindness and adopt a humane approach towards patients who approach government hospitals.

She made a surprise visit to the Huzurabad Government Area Hospital on Wednesday. She inspected the dialysis centre, ICU, wards, and outpatient departments (OPD). She also visited the neonatal ward and inquired about the health issues faced by infants.

Inspecting the labour room and other wards, she interacted with pregnant women and new mothers. She collected details about the services being provided by hospital staff. She explained to the women the importance of breastfeeding and natural delivery. She also interacted with patients in various wards.

Following this, a review meeting was held at the hospital's conference hall with medical officers and health authorities.

In the meeting, Collector Pamela Satpathy instructed the hospital superintendent to submit a detailed report on vacancies and the facilities need to provide a comprehensive service to patients. She stressed the need to increase the number of deliveries in government hospitals and to prioritise normal deliveries.

She reviewed the outpatient footfall across departments like ophthalmology, radiology, and dentistry, and examined the monthly reports. She instructed the staff to serve patients with compassion and empathy.



Karimnagar Collector Pamela Satpathy interacting with a patient at Huzurabad Government Area Hospital on Wednesday

She noted that although all kinds of medicines are available in government hospitals, people are unfortunately spending thousands of rupees buying them from private stores. In particular, medicines related to hypertension and diabetes are available in government hospitals, yet people are purchasing them from outside. She suggested creating awareness among the public to utilise the free medicines available at government hospitals.

She also insisted on the uninterrupted and efficient functioning of 108 ambulance services and instructed officials to ensure all necessary facilities were in place.

Earlier, District Collector Pamela Satpathy and Additional Collector Prapul Desai planted saplings on the hospital premises.

The meeting was attended by DCH Chandrasekhar, Hospital Superintendent Narayana Reddy, RMO Ramesh, Superintendent Srikanth Reddy, Deputy DMHO Chandu, Revenue Divisional Officer Ramesh Babu, and Municipal Commissioner Sammayya.

Two-wheeler rider caught with 119 pending chalans

PNS ■ WARANGAL

While travelling on his two-wheeler in Warangal Tri-City, a rider blatantly violated traffic rules, moving freely around the city by jumping traffic signals, riding without a helmet, and ignoring several other traffic regulations. As a result, the city traffic police had been issuing challans online against him.

These challans were not just in double digits, but shockingly in triple digits, which came to light this evening.

On Wednesday evening, Hanamkonda Traffic Inspector Sita Reddy, along with her team, was conducting a check for pending challans on two-wheelers at Ashoka Junction. During the check, they stopped a two-wheeler belonging to a person named Bikshapathi from the Hanamkonda area.



Two-wheeler rider Bikshapathi after being caught by the police in Warangal on Wednesday

When the traffic police verified the vehicle on the police web portal, they were shocked to find that the vehicle had 109 pending challans. Immediately alerted, the traffic police handed over the challan receipts amounting to a total fine of Rs 26,310 to the vehicle owner, Bikshapathi.

REVENUE CONVENTION

Shocking incident: ASI shoves aside elderly farmer

PNS ■ NIRMAL

An inhumane incident took place at Old Yellapur under Khanapur mandal in Nirmal district. An elderly farmer from the village went to the Mandal Revenue (MRO) office to express his grievances at the Bhu Bharti revenue convention. An Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) showing no compassion, rudely dragged the farmer out of the MRO office and threw him aside. Several people present there recorded videos of the incident and shared them on social media, and it quickly went viral.



Police officer dragging an elderly farmer out of the MRO office at Yellapur village in Nirmal distict on Wednesday

On knowing the incident Nirmal District Superintendent of Police G Janaki Sharmila reacted immediately and placed the ASI under suspension. She assured the people that the ASI would be punished after an inquiry.

Reacting to the incident, former minister T Harish Rao questioned, "Is this how you treat an elderly farmer who simply came to the Tahsildar's office to pour out his grievance? Is this the public governance you speak of? Are such overzealous actions necessary from the police?" He urged the DGP to take immediate action against the police officer who shoved aside the farmer.

Private hospitals under scanner for unwarranted C-section

SRINIVAS GUDUPALLI
■ HYDERABAD

Alarming practices in several private hospitals across Rangareddy district have come to light, with reports revealing a growing trend of unnecessary cesarean sections being performed for profit. Many doctors are allegedly exploiting the fears and vulnerabilities of expectant mothers and their families to push for C-section deliveries, even when natural births are medically feasible.

Driven by financial motives, some hospitals are charging between Rs 1.5 lakh to Rs 2 lakh for cesarean procedures far higher than the Rs 25,000 to Rs 30,000 typically charged for a natural birth. While a normal delivery can take two to three hours, a C-section is completed within ten minutes, prompting many doctors to favour surgeries to increase patient turnover.

Some women, influenced by the desire to deliver at an "auspicious time" or to avoid labour pain, are voluntarily opting for cesarean deliveries. However, many others are being misled with claims such as reduced amniotic fluid, low maternal haemoglobin, fetal weight concerns, or the baby's position. These tactics are being used to justify surgical interventions, despite no critical need.

The health implications are serious. Babies born through premature surgical deliveries are experiencing physical complications, including respiratory issues. Mothers face extended recovery periods, infections due to abdominal incisions, excessive bleeding, and chronic health challenges. Many are forced to remain home for weeks, giving up their routines and work, leading to further complications such as weight gain and postnatal health issues.



More than 13,000 deliveries are registered annually in various private nursing homes, multi-speciality hospitals, and gynaecology centres in the district, with a significant proportion being cesarean sections. This disproportionate rise has triggered concern among public health authorities.

District Medical and Health Officer Dr Venkateswara Rao stressed the need for societal awareness and a shift in mindset. "Families must move away from superstitions and prioritize natural childbirth after a full term.

We have initiated a surveillance mechanism to monitor the rate of cesarean sections in both government and private hospitals. Stringent action will be taken against those who violate medical ethics," he said.

As investigations continue, authorities hope to curb exploitative practices and bring the focus back to ethical, patient-centred maternity care.

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ACROSS THE STATES



India wins presidency of Belgium-based IIAS

In a first, India has won the presidency of the Belgium-based International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS), an official statement issued on Wednesday said. The IIAS, a global non-profit organisation, is a federation of 31 member countries, 20 national sections and 15 academic research centres jointly collaborating for scientific research on public administration. The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) has represented India as a member state of the IIAS since 1998. For the 2025-2028 presidency of IIAS, Prime Minister Narendra Modi nominated the Indian candidacy of Secretary DARPG V Srinivas in November 2024. The hearings for the IIAS presidency were held in February 2025 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. Four nations -- India, South Africa, Austria and Bahrain -- submitted their nominations for the IIAS presidency for the period 2025-2028 and participated in the hearings before the Council of Administration of IIAS, which were held on the sidelines of the Annual IIAS Conference 2025.



13 Bangla nationals arrested in Tripura

A total of 13 Bangladesh nationals have been arrested in West Tripura's Hapania area, police said on Wednesday. Out of the 13 Bangladeshis, two are women and the rest are men. Acting on a tip-off, police conducted a raid in a rented accommodation near Tripura Medical College and Hospital at Hapania on Tuesday night and apprehended thirteen people, Amtali Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO), Sakar Chandra Das said. Initially, they claimed they were residents of Tripura's Gandacherra subdivision adjoining Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT) and had come to Hapania for treatment. "However, they could not produce any valid document substantiating their claim of being residents of Tripura. During search, we found some Bangladesh documents indicating that they were actually Bangladesh nationals. "Accordingly, they were arrested for illegally entering India without valid documents," he said.



India thanks Iran for safely rescuing its 3 nationals

India on Wednesday thanked Iran for safely rescuing its three nationals who went missing in the country last month, saying Tehran's support reflects the "true spirit of friendship" between the two nations. They were "freed in a police operation against the hostage takers in Varamin in south Tehran," the Tehran-based Tasnim news agency reported on Tuesday. "The 3 kidnapped Indian citizens have been safely rescued & are now under the care of the Embassy of India, which is facilitating their early repatriation," the Embassy of India in Iran posted on X. "We sincerely thank the Government of Iran for their swift and effective efforts in securing their release. Your support reflects the true spirit of friendship between our two nations," it added. The Iranian Embassy in New Delhi confirmed the recovery of Indian nationals on Tuesday. "Three missing Indian citizens freed by Tehran police," the Iranian embassy said in a post on X. Last week, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said it was in touch with the Iranian authorities over the missing Indians.

Punjab Regimental Centre inducts 622 Agniveers

PNS ■ RAMGARH (JHARKHAND)

The Punjab Regimental Centre (PRC) in Jharkhand's Ramgarh town on Wednesday inducted 622 Agniveers in a colourful passing-out parade, an official statement said.

Punjab Regiment, one of the oldest regiments of the Indian Army, inducted the Agniveers after they successfully completed the 31-week physical training and mental conditioning, it said. Brigadier Sajesh Babu PG, commandant, Punjab Regimental Centre, congratulated the Agniveers and lauded the trainers who imparted stringent training to recruits.

9 killed as trailer overturns on van in MP

PM Modi, CM express grief

PNS ■ JHABUA (MP)

Nine persons, including five minors, were killed and two others injured after a cement-laden trailer truck overturned and crushed a van in Madhya Pradesh's Jhabua district in the wee hours of Wednesday, police said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Mohan Yadav expressed grief over the incident and announced financial assistance for the victims' kin.

The accident took place around 2.30 am under Meghnagar tehsil area when the victims were returning in the van from a wedding function, officials said.

The trailer was crossing an under-construction rail overbridge through a temporary road near Sanjeli railway crossing when it overturned on the van, Jhabua Superintendent of Police (SP) Padmavilochan Shukla said. Nine persons were killed and two others injured in the accident, he said.

"Deeply anguished by the loss of lives due to an accident in Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh. Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. May the injured recover soon," said the Prime Minister's Office on X, quoting the PM. "An ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh from PMNRF (Prime Minister's National Relief Fund) would be given to the next of kin of each deceased. The injured would be given Rs. 50,000," it said.

The victims, belonging to two families, were returning from a wedding in Bhavpura to their native Shivgarh Mahuda village when they met with the accident, said SP Shukla. The deceased have been identified as Mukesh Khaped (40), Savli Khaped (35), Vinod Khaped (16), Payal Khaped (12), Madhi Bamania (38), Vijay Bamania (14), Kanta Bamania (14), Ragini (9) and Akli Parmar (35), he said.

The bodies were sent for post-mortem, and the injured persons were referred to Thandla hospital for treatment.

The truck driver absconded from the spot after the accident, the official said, adding a case was registered and further investigation was underway.

Meanwhile, expressing grief over the accident, CM Yadav announced an assistance of Rs 2 lakh each to the family of the deceased persons and Rs 50,000 to the injured ones, an official said.



India, Norway hold bilateral talks on maritime technologies

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Wednesday held bilateral meetings with top Norway ministers to explore possibilities of cooperation between India and Norway in multiple areas, including further deepening of their maritime relationship.

According to an official statement, Sonowal held meetings with Norway's Transport Minister Jon-Ivar Nygård as well as with Minister of Fisheries and Ocean Policy, Marianne Sivertsen, on the sidelines of the Nor-Shipping event in Oslo. Highlighting India's renewed push to modernise its maritime sector with a green and sustainable focus, the Ports, Shipping and Waterways minister underscored the country's initiatives in green shipping and digital transformation.

"Both parties also agreed to deepen cooperation and exchange experiences on ferry system electrification, drawing inspiration from Norway's successful implementation of the initiative," the statement said.



"Both parties also agreed to deepen cooperation and exchange experiences on ferry system electrification, drawing inspiration from Norway's successful implementation of the initiative."

Building on the Green Coastal Shipping Programme and Green Voyage 2050, India and Norway discussed deeper collaboration in green maritime technologies, it added.

"Both sides explored joint efforts in smart logistics, digital port ecosystems, and clean coastal shipping," it said.

During the bilateral meeting with Norway's Minister of Fisheries and Ocean Policy, Marianne Sivertsen Næss, Sonowal emphasised on possibilities and opportunities in Ship Recycling, Seafarer's Training, Sustainable Fisheries and Ocean Management, Ocean Renewable Energy, and Offshore Hydrocarbons.

Meanwhile, the Indian side proposed to conduct a joint feasibility study for operationalising the Northern Sea Route (NSR) with Norwegian and Indian agencies, the statement said. This study will focus on ensuring safe and sustainable shipping practices in Arctic waters, addressing the unique operational challenges posed by extreme weather conditions, and minimising environmental impacts.

"India expressed its keenness to work with Norway in Arctic navigation by collaborating on R&D in Arctic shipping, design and construction of ice-class vessels, advancement of navigational technologies," it said.



'No pensioner should face problems to get dues'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Stressing on administrative sensitivity and efficiency in redressing pensioners' grievances, Union minister Jitendra Singh on Wednesday said no retiree should have to run from pillar to post to get dues.

He called for a time-bound redressal mechanism of pension-related grievances, aligning it with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's broader governance model that places the citizen at the centre.

Speaking at the 13th All India Pension Adalat here, Singh underscored the need for administrative sensitivity and efficiency in ensuring the dignity of India's pensioners.

At the day-long event that brought together pensioners, government officials, and department heads from across the country, the minister said that the Pension Adalat model is one of the most citizen-friendly reforms undertaken in recent years. "A pensioner, who has dedicated a lifetime of service to the nation, should not have to run from pillar to post for what is rightfully theirs," said Singh, the Minister of State for Personnel.

He asked departments to adopt a "whole-of-government" approach in resolving such matters.

Singh emphasised that redressal should not merely be reactive, but also anticipatory, supported by technology and driven by compassion.

'One of the best things I've ever done'

Musk's father on visit to Ayodhya's Ram temple

PNS ■ AYODHYA (UP)



Errol Musk, father of tech billionaire Elon Musk, visited the Ram temple in Ayodhya on Wednesday afternoon and described the experience as "wonderful" and one of the "best things" he has ever done.

Errol also paid obeisance at the Hanumangarhi temple nearby. He was initially scheduled to visit the Taj Mahal in Agra as well but the plan may be dropped due to extreme heat in the region.

"It's wonderful, absolutely wonderful (Ayodhya visit). It's one of the best things I've ever done. "I'm so glad I came to see it and can't wait till the temple gets completed, the big temple, it's going to be something like a wonder of the world," Errol said.

Separately, talking to reporters after visiting both temples, he said, "My experience here in India has been wonderful. I'm here (in India) to begin working with Servotech and am looking forward to spending a lot of time in the country. The temples are marvellous and so are the people."

'Bullet train to Gujarat won't take away biz'

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Wednesday said the improved connectivity with Gujarat through the bullet train will not lead to a migration of business out of the financial capital.

Fadnavis cited the case of the diamond trade and financial services to underline the preferences of businesses to stay put in Mumbai even when they see alternatives.

"No way that such connectivity will take away any business," Fadnavis said here.

Acknowledging that the development of a diamond bourse in Surat had led to concerns over the future of the diamond trade in Mumbai, Fadnavis said the local trade concentrated in BKC and also parts of south central Mumbai is unaffected.

SC junks Delhi Waqf Board's plea claiming rights on property

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday dismissed a plea by the Delhi Waqf Board which claimed that a property in Shahdara area in the capital was a "waqf property" and said a Gurudwara was functioning there since long.

"There is a Gurudwara, let it be. Even if there is any claim, you should relinquish that claim saying a Gurudwara is already there," a bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and Satish Chandra Sharma told the counsel appearing for the Delhi Waqf Board.

The apex court was hearing



the board's plea challenging a September 2010 order of the Delhi High Court, which dismissed its suit for possession of the property. The suit alleged that the property in question was a waqf property, being used as a waqf since time immemorial. The apex court, however, said, "There is a Gurudwara functioning out there."

The waqf board counsel referred to the findings of the trial judge in the matter and said a mosque existed there.

He said one of the witness of the defendant himself admitted that there was a mosque and "some kind of a Gurudwara" was made there but it was not registered.

"Not some kind of a Gurudwara, it is a fully functional Gurudwara," the bench said. Dismissing the plea, the top court referred to the high court's order observing one of the witnesses admitted that the Gurudwara was functioning in the property since 1947.

Mann takes jibe at BJP over Operation Sindoor

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann took a jibe at the BJP over Operation Sindoor on Wednesday, saying this is the first time that Indian representatives have been sent abroad to convey about the country's victory in an armed conflict.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader's remarks came a day after he took a swipe at the BJP over Operation Sindoor, accusing it of seeking votes in the name of "sindoor" (vermillion) and asking the saffron party if it has launched a "one nation, one husband" scheme.

The chief minister was talking to reporters after chairing a cabinet meeting here on Wednesday.

Replying to Union minister Ravneet Singh Bittu's charge that he is speaking Pakistan's language, Mann asked why did the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) withdraw its decision to send "sindoor" door to door.

"This is happening for the first time that our representatives have been sent abroad to convey that we have won a conflict. When one wins (a war), it becomes evident," he said.

'Wrong to think Modi is India and India is Modi'

Congress slams BJP's criticism of Rahul

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Wednesday said it is wrong to think that "Narendra Modi is India and India is Narendra Modi", as it slammed the ruling BJP for its criticism of Rahul Gandhi over his dig at the prime minister and doubled down on the "Narendra-surrender" jibe.

Amid the BJP's criticism of his remarks, Gandhi reposted a post he had made on X on June 21, 2020, in which he had said, "Narendra Modi is actually Surender Modi."

Congress's media and publicity department head Pawan Khera claimed that Gandhi's "Narender...surrender" remarks encapsulate how the prime minister has time and again "surrendered India's national interests in situations where the requisite deft and the "vishwaguru" status should have been shown.

"The BJP people were making a film for their hero for the last 11 years -- 'Muqaddar Ka Sikandar'.

But when the film was ready, it turned out to be 'Narender Ka Surrender'. Actually, there is no injection of bravery, but it is in-built in the character of a person.

The history of BJP-RSS people has been of cowardice," Khera told a press conference at the Congress's Indira Bhawan headquarters here.

When such a person takes over the reins of the country, its future comes in danger, which is being witnessed at present, he claimed.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
REVENUE (LA) DEPARTMENT
DISTRICT COLLECTOR, JANGAON
FORM -VII :: DECLARATION
(Under Rule 25(1) Section-19(1) of the Act-30/2013)

Dist.Gazette No. LA/JN/22/2025 Dated: 24-05-2025
Collector, Jgn, File No. G1/419/2024 Dated: 18-05-2025
Spl.Dpty.Collector,Jn,File.No.B/338-2/2024Dated: 11-04-2025

Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana Collector, Jangaon that a total land to an extent of **Ac.1-33 gts** is required in the **Goverdhanagiri Village of Raghunathapaily Mandal** in Jangaon District for public purpose for excavation of Distributory 1L-D-8L of High Level Right Main Canal of Gandiramaram Tank from Km.0.000 to 0.360 TE under J.Chokka Rao Godavari Lift Irrigation Scheme for providing water to Agriculture lands under the Government of Telangana, Collector, Jangaon District, as per L.A.Act.30/2013.

Therefore the "DECLARATION" is hereby made that a piece of land measuring, more or less **Ac.1-33 gts** viz. under acquisition for the above said project in the limits of **Goverdhanagiri Village of Raghunathapally Mandal in Jangaon District** whose detailed description is as follows:

SCHEDULE

GOVERDHANAGIRI VILLAGE OF RAGHUNATHPALLY MANDAL
Canal Name: 1L-D-8L/HRMC, From Km.0.000 to 0.360 TE

Sl. No.	Sy. No.	Type of title	Classification	Area under acquisition	Name of the Enjoyer	Structures/ Trees if any
1	242	Patta	Dry	0-06	Vallepu Agaiah S/o Laxmaiah	
2	243	Patta	Dry	0-14	Vallepu Manamma W/o Maisaiah	1-Tamarind tree
		Patta	Dry	0-06	Singanipunakaiah S/o Yadagiri	1-Coconut tree
		Patta	Dry	0-37	Pasara Sujatha W/o Upender	
			Total	1-17		
		Road	-	0-04	Road	
3	274	Patta	Dry	0-06	Surapaneni Naveen Rao S/o Satharasana	
Grand Total				1-33		

This declaration is made after hearing of objections of persons interested u/s 15 of the L.A.Act.No.30/2013 after verification of objections this declaration is issued. The number of families likely to be resettled due to Land Acquisition is NIL.

Mines of Coal, Iron-stone, slate or other minerals lying under the said land or any particular portion of the said land, except such parts of the mines and minerals which may be required to be dug or removed or used during the construction phase of the project for the purpose of which the land is being acquired, or not needed.

A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the Land Acquisition Officer & Special Deputy Collector, LA-R&R, Unit-I, Irrigation Projects, Jangaon on any working day.

Sd/- Special Deputy Collector, LA, R&R, Unit-II, Irrigation Project, Jangaon
Sd/- Addl. Collector Jangaon
Sd/- District Collector Jangaon

DIPR No.188/LA/PP-Pub/2025-26

'Brain scan may tell emotional development in babies'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Brain scans of three-month-old babies could reveal how emotions and self-soothing abilities might evolve over the following six months, potentially helping identify children at risk of developing behavioural and emotional challenges, researchers said.

The team, led by researchers at the University of Pittsburgh, US, examined 95 pairs of infants and caregivers and found distinct patterns linking white matter structure to emotional outcomes.

Referred to as the brain's 'information highway', white matter helps different brain regions rapidly communicate with each other.

Infants having more diffused neuron endings in the forceps minor -- a tract for white matter which connects the brain's hemispheres -- showed an increased negative emotionality between three and nine months of age.

Conversely, infants with a more complex structure in the left cingulum bundle -- another white matter pathway which connects brain regions involved in executive control -- displayed more positive emotions and improved self-soothing ability.

The results, published in



the journal Genomic Psychiatry, suggested that the brain's structure in early infancy sets the stage for emotional development, with certain patterns in connections potentially predisposing infants to heightened reactivity, the researchers said.

"Understanding these early neural markers could transform how we approach infant mental health, allowing for targeted interventions during critical developmental windows," lead researcher Mary L. Phillips, professor of psychiatry at the University of Pittsburgh, said.

Previous studies have shown that a higher tendency for negative emotions as an infant is related to an increased risk for anxiety and behaviour disorders in future, and a lower tendency for positive emotions with depression and social difficulties.

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Editor's TAKE

Way forward in Ladakh but still long road ahead

The measures announced by the Govt aim to address some of the issues but they fall short of the Ladakh's aspirations

Since the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019 and the bifurcation of the former state of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories — Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh — the people of Ladakh have been voicing growing concern over the erosion of their cultural identity, land rights, and political agency. Recent protests, sustained campaigns, and appeals from civil society groups across Leh have led the central Government to respond, culminating in the announcement of new measures on June 3, 2025. The policies notified by the Centre aim to address some of the grievances raised by the people of Ladakh, particularly regarding their language, culture, and access to land and jobs.

Among the key measures announced is a provision for up to 85 per cent reservation for indigenous people in government jobs. In a bid to regulate residency, the Government has defined domicile criteria requiring a person to have lived continuously in Ladakh for 15 years from 2019 onwards. This effectively means that migrants arriving after the withdrawal of Article 370 would only qualify as domiciles after 2034, providing a degree of protection to the local population from sudden demographic shifts. The policy also acknowledges the linguistic diversity of Ladakh by recognising English, Hindi, Urdu, Bhoti, and Purgi as official languages. Moreover, a third of the seats in the region's hill councils are to be reserved for women, a measure aimed at enhancing gender representation in governance.

While these steps signal an intent to preserve Ladakh's unique identity and ensure indigenous access to employment and representation, they stop well short of the demands that have been persistently raised by local civil society organisations and political groups.

The people of Ladakh have long sought full statehood, which would grant the region its own legislature and greater autonomy in policymaking. Equally important is their demand for inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, which offers special protections for tribal regions. There is also a growing call for the allocation of a second seat in the Lok Sabha to ensure that both Leh and Kargil have distinct and equitable political representation. Another critical demand is the establishment of a dedicated Public Service Commission.

Despite the creation of over 1,200 gazetted posts since 2019, not a single one has been filled. While the Centre's recent announcements are a step in the right direction, they remain administrative in nature and fail to address the core structural and constitutional concerns of the region. Moreover, the continued lack of employment avenues and meaningful political representation only deepens the alienation felt by many, especially the youth.

Neglecting the aspirations of the people living in such a sensitive region is not just a matter of domestic politics; it is a national security concern. The emotional integration of Ladakh with the rest of the country requires more than administrative announcements. It demands constitutional empathy, political inclusion, and economic empowerment. The June 3 measures may be a beginning, but the journey toward justice and dignity for Ladakh must go much further.

India at the crossroads of global conflict

Amid this global unrest, where diplomatic declarations are often drowned out by the din of war, India emerges as a steadfast advocate for peace — not through passive neutrality, but through principled strength



In a world bristling with tension — from the razed streets of Gaza to the blood-soaked fields of Ukraine, from the persistent unrest in Kashmir to the volatile Taiwan Strait — peace is increasingly becoming an endangered ideal. Every diplomatic forum today rings with commitments to non-violence, yet the deafening sounds of war and terror often drown them out.

At this crossroads, India finds herself emerging not just as a stakeholder but as a conscience-keeper, calling for peace with accountability, dialogue with dignity and action with principle. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi said during the G20 Summit, "This is not an era of war." These words, resonating beyond India's borders, have become emblematic of India's foreign policy posture, peace-oriented, yet unwilling to sacrifice justice and sovereignty at the altar of terrorism wherever it breeds.

In the contemporary international order, the line between terror and political resistance is often blurred, frequently shaped by geopolitical interests rather than universal principles. Professor Harsh V Pant, Vice President — Studies and Foreign Policy, at Observer Research Foundation (ORF), argues, "There can be no moral equivalence between a state that fights terror and those who use it as an instrument of policy." India's call to the world is both simple and urgent — 'peace cannot be built on platforms that provide impunity to terrorism'. The 2008 Mumbai attacks, the 2016 Uri assault, the 2019 Pulwama bombing, and the very recent mayhem at Pahalgam on April 22, 2025, are seared into India's national consciousness and raised by India across several national and international platforms, going beyond the realm of strategic silence.

Dr K Subrahmanyam, widely regarded as the father of India's strategic culture, once warned, "If you do not define terrorism objectively, you become complicit in its perpetuation." India's insistence on a 'Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism' at the United Nations has long been blocked by nations unwilling to alienate their proxies or strategic partners.

Many discussions on terrorism per se and the inability of the global community to arrive at a unified definition of terrorism have concluded, not because of the failure of language, but as scholars and analysts of foreign policy, such as Professor C Raja Mohan, have validated it as a 'failure of will'. Further, India's former envoy and permanent representative at the UN, Syed Akbaruddin, once remarked that "States have a duty to protect their citizens, and that cannot be held hostage to the veto power of transnational terror." He was alluding to the UN's patchy record in addressing terrorism (here, Pakistan-supported) that directly affects India, especially when state sponsors of terror receive cover under larger strategic alliances.



RAJDEEP PATHAK

A September 24, 2024, statement released by the United Nations regarding its 79th session, clearly declares the hardest truth, yet it looks like merely a paper document. United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres on impunity warned, "We are in a purgatory of polarity," and said that more and more countries feel they can trample international law, violate the UN Charter, invade another country, lay waste to whole societies, or utterly disregard the welfare of their people. "We see this age of impunity everywhere — in the Middle East, in the heart of Europe, in the Horn of Africa", he said. The statement further read that Gaza is a non-stop nightmare that threatens to take the entire region with it. The war in Ukraine is spreading with no signs of letting up, and civilians are paying the price. In Sudan, a brutal power struggle has unleashed horrific violence. The situation is growing increasingly dire even for those who do not live in war zones, he emphasised. Of the world's poorest 75 countries, one-third are worse off today than they were five years ago.

(https://press.un.org/en/2024/ga12633.doc.htm). It is also pertinent to note what Luiz Inácio Lula Da Silva, President of Brazil, had to say in his statement. He said "The right to defence has become the right to vengeance." India's approach to international relations is increasingly being shaped by a nuanced doctrine — balancing hard power with Gandhian values of peace and dialogue. But this is not the pacifism of naivety; it is a peace rooted in strength.

The response of India to Pakistani terrorist outfits after the Pahalgam attack or the Balakot airstrike in 2019 was not just a military operation. It was a message to the world that India would not remain passive in the face of terror. This balance of assertiveness and moral grounding distinguishes India's diplomacy in an increasingly fractured world. India has supported the territorial integrity of Ukraine while maintaining communication with Russia. It has called for humanitarian aid to Gaza while opposing terrorism emanating from its soil.International peace mechanisms, from the UN Security Council to the Human Rights Council, often suffer from inertia or politicisation.

As history shows, from Rwanda to Syria to Afghanistan, delayed justice breeds deeper conflict. Justice must accompany peace, or peace becomes fragile and fleeting. India's warning to the world is not apocalyptic — it is pragmatic. As External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar has reiterated, "Terrorism cannot be one state's strategic tool while another state's humanitarian concern. The world must develop a unified response." This is not just about India's security but about the precedent the global order sets. "Terror and talks cannot go together" is the new forceful strategy.

India does not claim to be perfect. But its stance on terrorism and peace is rooted in its lived experience and its democratic ethos. In a world where great powers often prioritise expediency over ethics, India offers an alternative — principled realism. Ronald Reagan, the 40th president of the United States, once said, "Peace is not absence of conflict, it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means."

That ability must come from courage, not cowardice; from justice, not just dialogue; from unity, not uniformity. The global search for peace is urgent. Terrorism must be called out, not explained away. Dialogue must be sincere, not strategic. And nations must stop treating terror as an instrument of foreign policy.

Nelson Mandela rightly summarised, "If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner." But if your enemy refuses peace and chooses terror, principle must speak louder than platitude. Unmistakably, if peace is the goal, justice must be the path.

(The writer is a programme executive of Gandhi Smriti Sansthan. Views are personal)

PIC TALK



Members of the newly created women's police team demonstrate their skills in tackling criminals in Hyderabad. PTI

Holding the Pen in the Age of Prompts

SECOND Opinion

There was a time, not very long ago, when people would ask me, "What do you do?" and I would say, a tad shyly, because in my opinion, what I did wasn't yet the biggest thing after sliced bread or before Google — "I write." But apparently, it was a big thing then. Not everyone could coherently string thoughts and communicate them with clarity and panache. Not everyone could weave narratives that touched hearts. So when I said I wrote, people's eyes would widen with amazement, some dropped their jaws, and others looked at me as if I could stand apart even in a carnival.

Writing, at that time, was as wondrous an occupation as chasing fireflies in the dark — elusive, luminous, and ignited from within. It breathed on its own and needed no ventilators or oxygen masks. It reflected the inner world in a cadenced manner. It described external wonders in a kaleidoscopic combination of phrases and words that only a wordsmith could summon in moments of deep contemplation.



ASHA IYER KUMAR

Those days, alas, are gone. Now, hundreds of writers are born every moment. Stories appear like graffiti on a goods wagon and the reverence a genuine literary voice once evoked has dimmed. For every writer who labours for hours to craft a story, a new one now emerges in a jiffy, built from a few prompts. Today, the writer of yore stands like a lone artisan at a digital assembly line, watching machine-made marvels flood the shelves, while they still shape sentences by hand, chiselling meaning out of silence and memory. This is not a declaration drawn from hubris or conceit. It comes from a place of doubt, and a fear of becoming inconspicuous. It arises from a vulnerable spot that throws up a question aloud: In a world where beautiful language is freely available, where anyone can sound 'writerly' and poetic, how do I remain distinct? How do I continue to speak in a voice that carries the textures of a human soul? The angst is genuine, and it has already started to show on my nerves whenever I sit down to write.

What if my writing doesn't surprise or matter to my readers any longer? Should I follow the trend and adopt the technologies to stay relevant, or continue in a voice so innately mine that anything else would feel synthetic and devoid of life? I do not have clear-cut answers to the predicament I find myself in. But this much I know: In a world where machines can become anything but human, I need to be more human than ever. I must feel deeper, process my emotions in a legitimate way no prompt can replicate and write with an openness no automation can emulate. I need to push myself to a point where, like Hemingway, I sit at the computer and just bleed. Word by word. Line by line. Squeezing my veins to get the essence of my thoughts out because it is the only way I know to be true. Some argue that the soul of the story is still theirs, that the thoughts are their own, and that all they ask of AI is a little literary finesse. A polish. A ribbon tied around their raw words. And perhaps that is harmless. Perhaps it even helps those who never had the means to say things beautifully, finally find a way to be heard. But for someone like me, whose entire being has been devoted to how something is said — to cadence, rhythm, nuance, and texture — I worry.

Not because others now write well, but because what once set me apart is becoming commonplace. I worry about the slow dilution of literary effort. The waning of the meditative solitude that writing demanded. These may soon be seen as obsolete habits. That my labour will be deemed superfluous. And yet, I cannot do it any other way. I still believe in the contemplative pause between paragraphs; in the tear that wells up uninvited when a sentence lands right; and in the thrill I feel when I end a piece with a final flourish.

Maybe this aching need to feel every word before I write it is what will remain mine. Perhaps, the only way to stay authentic now is not to write differently, but to feel more deeply. To be imperfect, sometimes messy and rough-edged. Because if there's one thing I still trust, it's this: Readers may forget ornate phrases, but they will never forget how I made them feel — with a voice that has been echoing long enough to still be heard.

(The author is a Dubai-based columnist, independent journalist, and writing coach. Views are personal)

Letters to the Editor

Elon Musk's stint at the US Govt ends

After winning the presidential election, Donald Trump, who is himself an industrialist, appointed Elon Musk, the richest person in the world, as his chief adviser. Despite not being used to the Government environment, Musk took various decisions to achieve his goals.

However, these decisions were not very successful, nor did the expected results come. To reduce the expenses of the Trump Government, Musk decided to reduce Government staff and sent employees from many departments home. Elon Musk cut the funds given to domestic and international organisations. Many unpleasant steps were taken to save the Government's expenses. The reduction of staff created widespread resentment. There were protests against the Tesla company. Due to this, Elon Musk and his company suffered a huge loss on a personal level. Musk had a dispute with Trump's close Government officials. Musk had spent $250 million on Trump's campaign.

Musk had entered the Trump administration to bring about changes in American politics and the Government system. But due to the lack of expected success and the impact on the sales of American citizens and, most importantly, Tesla cars, Musk's "Space X" came to the ground. As a result, Elon Musk has stepped down from the position of special adviser in the Trump administration, because the sales figures of his Tesla company have fallen.

DATTAPRASAD SHIRODKAR | MUMBAI

Northeast reeling under monsoon fury

Landslides triggered by heavy rains damaged roads across Nagaland, with crop destruction reported from some districts. In Kohima district, a major land sinking occurred near Kisama Heritage Village, while a major landslide was reported along the Kigwema-Mima-Chakhabama road. The road sinking at Phesama village near Kisama Heritage Village, where a 50m stretch of NH-2 has collapsed, cut off the key route between Nagaland and Manipur.

This is the third major road collapse at this location since 2013. A permanent solution is long overdue. Continuous rainfall led to landslides and road blockages in several districts across the state.

Storms and heavy rain damaged paddy and maize fields in many villages. The people are being urged to remain alert as the monsoon intensifies, stressing the need to prioritise the protection of lives and property.

The Mizoram Government has issued a travel advisory urging all dignitaries and officials from both the Centre and state Governments to avoid visiting the state. The advisory came after incessant heavy rainfall triggered widespread landslides, mudslides and flash floods across Mizoram, leading to loss of lives and affecting normal life across several districts. The current wave of landslides, floods, incidents of house collapse and other calamities triggered by heavy downpours has so far claimed many lives.

BHAGWAN THADANI | MUMBAI

Cycling comes of age

Cycling in India can be a challenge, with unruly traffic, potholed roads, and no lanes for bicyclists. Yet, the community is growing, with some using it as a fitness tool, a few to commute, and some as an adventure sport. Specialist biking stores have opened up, there are niche races, and better cycling gear.

All they ask is that you join the club, helmet firmly in place and if you wear arm and leg gears its well and good as an additional protection from an impending danger. Cycling is mainly an aerobic activity, which means that your heart, blood vessels and lungs all get a workout. You will breathe deeper, perspire and experience increased body temperature, which will improve your overall fitness level. Cycling as a family is a fun way to spend your free time, and a great bonding experience.

You will enjoy the excitement of discovering new routes together and the shared sense of achievement as your fitness improves and you become more confident, experienced cyclists. And there lies the cycling success. Cardiovascular diseases include stroke, high blood pressure and heart attack. Regular cycling stimulates and improves your heart, lungs and circulation, reducing your risk of cardiovascular diseases. Whether it's to boost your fitness, health or bank balance, or as an environmental choice, taking up bicycle riding could be one of the best decisions you ever make.

NIKHIL CK MANIAM | MUMBAI

PRECAUTION IS A MUST TO KEEP COVID AT BAY

This sounding caution against the surging numbers of Covid-19 cases (4-6-25) is timely. The World Health Organisation has already cautioned, saying the Covid wave is not over and it can reappear anytime, anywhere, in any form. The variant coming round this time is said to be mild, which simply means it doesn't claim lives.

But the incapacitating symptoms and the psychological fear it poses can do enough damage.

Moreover, though the variant is claimed to be non-fatal, its potential to cause long-term health issues cannot be commented upon now as it needs to be studied in detail.

By the time the details come out, it can only be a matter of mere academic interest as another variant may be playing havoc. Above all, the most important point is that the country has neither learnt lessons from the Covid-19 that shook the nation with heavy loss of lives and heavy damage to the economy, nor made any worthy preparations to meet a health emergency situation. The condition that prevailed in 2019 remains the same except for a few oxygen plants erected. Infrastructure, manpower, and medicine continue to be insufficient to meet an emergency.

Even test results are to be flashed only after two days. The situation was worse even in countries where around 10 per cent of GDP was allocated to health. With around 1 per cent allocation, the condition in India can be easily understood.

Another important lesson India has failed to learn is that private healthcare institutions do not rise to the occasion in an emergency like a pandemic. A complete revamping of our healthcare system with the public sector playing a major role is required to be prioritised.

AS RAJMOHAN | ANANTPUR

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

The Pioneer
HYDERABAD | THURSDAY | JUNE 5, 2025

India's dilemma: Farm yield rises, industrial growth sluggish

As the Government boosts minimum support prices and extends credit schemes to sustain rural momentum, policymakers face a complex balancing act — how to nurture farm-driven optimism amid factory-floor fatigue and an uncertain global trade climate

FIRST Column

India's agricultural sector is charting new territory as record-breaking food production sets the stage for a stronger presence in global export markets. While farms flourish, a contrasting picture emerges in the industrial landscape, where stagnating production signals underlying economic strain. This divergence underscores a shifting balance in India's growth narrative — buoyant fields amid faltering factories.

To pace it up further, the Centre also increased the kharif crop minimum support price (MSP) focusing on pulses, oilseeds and coarse grains. The MSP for paddy was raised by ₹69, three per cent, to ₹2369 per quintal. The MSP of 14 other items including groundnut, sunflower seed, cotton, tur/arhar, and niger seed benefitted.

The Centre claims that its procurement of wheat has surpassed previous three-year records yet is below the target. The 5 per cent interest subvention scheme on Kisan Credit Card up to ₹3 lakh will continue. Amid such a farm yield bonanza, the stymied industrial production remains a concern. The country's industrial output growth slowed to an 8-month low in April, dragged down by contraction in mining, sluggish electricity and manufacturing sectors. It is dipping since reaching a peak of 6.2 percent in April 2024 which had fallen to minus 0.1 percent during mid-year.

India has achieved a record food grain production of 353.95 million tonnes (MT) in the 2024-25 crop season. This is largely due to record harvests of paddy (rice) — 149.07 MT, wheat — 117.50 MT, and maize — 42 MT.

India surpassed China to become the world's largest rice producer. Maize production jumped by 12.3 per cent. Oilseeds yield also rose by 7.4 per cent.

Data show a record production of rice, wheat, maize, soybean, rapeseed, mustard, and sugarcane. "The third estimated production of major crops such as paddy, wheat, soybean, groundnuts, oilseeds, and pulses are going to be a record," says Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan. This is against agricultural ministry figures of about a 1.2 per cent fall in production a year back.


SHIVAJI SARKAR

8-year-record

The food-grain estimate claims a 6.6 per cent record increase in major crops in eight years. Chouhan announced that the country's food grain production reached 3539.59 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) in 2024-25, which is 216.61 LMT higher than last year's (2023-24) 3322.98 LMT.

Another heartening news is India's agriculture exports rising 6.4 per cent to $51.9 billion in 2024-25, from $48.8 billion during the preceding fiscal year that ended March 2024. This was as against the almost flat 0.1 per cent growth in the value of its overall goods exports in 2024-25.

In 2024-25, India's total merchandise exports reached $374.1 billion, a 6 per cent increase from the $352.9 billion in 2023-24, excluding petroleum products. This marked a record high for non-petroleum merchandise exports. Overall, India's total exports (merchandise and services) reached $824.9 billion, the highest ever. Services exports reached a high of $387.5 billion. However, the country's exports in February 2025 experienced a decline, marking the fourth consecutive month of contraction. The export value fell to $ 36.91 billion, a 10.85 per cent decrease compared to the same period last year. Both exports and imports saw a sharp contraction. This decline was primarily attributed to factors like volatility in petroleum prices, global uncertainties, and the impact of sanctions on the gems and jewellery sector.

The country is hit also by lower capital expenditure hitting the ₹86000 crore construction equipment industry. It grew 21 per cent in 2022-21 per cent and 24 per cent in 2023-24. Companies like Caterpillar, JCB, Tata Hitachi, Cummins and Volvo CE are piqued at the overall growth of 3 per cent in 2024-25.



> THE CENTRE ALSO INCREASED THE KHARIF CROP MINIMUM SUPPORT PRICE (MSP) FOCUSING ON PULSES, OILSEEDS AND COARSE GRAINS. THE MSP FOR PADDY WAS RAISED BY ₹69, THREE PER CENT, TO ₹2369 PER QUINTAL. THE MSP OF 14 OTHER ITEMS INCLUDING GROUNDNUT, SUNFLOWER SEED, COTTON, TUR/ARHAR, AND NIGER SEED BENEFITTED

Private sector laggard

Overall construction infrastructure activities are stated to be slowing down. The infra and construction goods sector slowed by 4 per cent in April against 8.5 per cent in April 2024, according to the National Statistics Office (NSO).

The construction industry has been thriving on liberal Government expenditure. Its thaw speaks a lot that the private sector's contribution to the country's growth is below the expectations.

The manufacturing sector remained subdued, growing by 3.4 per cent in April, lower than the 4.2 per cent a year earlier. The IIP dip is stated to be lower than estimated at a 2.7 per cent fall. The slowdown is broad — based across sectors, according to rating agency ICRA. The infra and construction goods sector slowed to 4 per cent in April against 8.5 per cent in April 2024.

In 2024-25, India's private sector capex also saw a decline, falling by nearly 9 per cent to ₹26.8 lakh crore. This represents a three-year low and the second consecutive year-on-year decline.

Both the developments, in agriculture and industry, are significant in the light of the US policy manipulations by President Donald Trump. India is in protracted negotiations with the US to moderate and modify the tariff regime, particularly in the thawed world market, where multilateral UN institutions, including the World Trade Organisation, are being bypassed. Surfeit of bilateral transactions like the Indo-UK trade deals are changing the global trade scenario. The developing countries are particularly at the receiving end as they have to spend more effort, time and resources on talks. The settled multilateral norms are being gradually bypassed. It reflects on their exports and global growth. There are issues of farm exports particularly in the light of Russia-Ukraine war, conflict situations near the Mediterranean zone and Israel-Gaza — the Middle East. India must resolve these to boost global trade.

Despite a ceasefire in the wake of Operation Sindoor, Pakistan has not lifted the ban on its airspace for Indian airlines. It is bleeding the airline industry by a cost overrun of 30 per cent a flight. Air India estimated it lost over ₹100 million in a month for detouring Pakistan.

The stock markets too are tizzy having lost severely since January as it crashed with the US President Donald Trump's tariff hikes and retaliation from China fueled investors' jitters amid fears that a full-blown trade war could impact economic growth across the world.

The pace of policy pronouncements, along with postponements and modifications, has created heightened uncertainty for companies and US trading partners. A fluid trade policy environment is likely to continue as the administration continues to negotiate, takes steps to impose additional sectoral tariffs and reviews requests for product-specific exemptions from tariffs amid the latest US Federal Court striking down Trump tariffs.The coming year months may see many global changes and the fortunes of India.

Despite an impressive agricultural surge—marked by record food grain output and rising agri-exports—India's broader economic landscape remains uneven. Sluggish industrial growth, faltering manufacturing, and declining private capex cast a shadow over rural gains. Global uncertainties, fluid trade policies, and weak infrastructure demand further complicate recovery. While Indian farms bloom, factories struggle to regain momentum. The Government's challenge now is to bridge this rural-urban growth divide and sustain momentum in both agriculture and industry amid global flux.

(The writer is a policy analyst. Views expressed are personal)

A national cooperative framework for ethical biodiversity economy

As India enters its Amrit Kaal, a deeper transformation is unfolding — one not just of infrastructure or economy, but of thought and soul. The Five Prans laid out by Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi are not abstract ideals; they are a declaration that Bharat will no longer walk the path laid out by colonial rule. Among them, the resolve to end the colonial mindset and break the culture of servitude stands out like a blazing torch. For centuries, India's vast biodiversity was viewed through an extractive lens — its forests seen as timber depots, its tribal knowledge dismissed as folklore, and its people treated as passive suppliers to global industries. That mindset must end. A new India is rising — one that respects its people, reclaims its knowledge, and builds prosperity from the grassroots.

In a landmark move, the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) has reinforced this shift by issuing a decisive order on the enforcement of the Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) mechanism under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002. This mechanism ensures that communities who have traditionally conserved biological resources and associated knowledge are no longer invisible in the value chain. Whether it is a medicinal herb in the Himalayas or microbial wealth in the Eastern Ghats, any commercial exploitation of biodiversity must now be accompanied by fair and equitable benefit-sharing with the very people who nurtured it for generations.




BINOD ANAND

But the question remains: How do we operationalise this mechanism in a way that is people-centric, employment-generating, and equitable? The answer lies in India's oldest and most democratic economic system — the cooperative economic framework. With over 95,000 PACS (Primary Agricultural Credit Societies), hundreds of tribal and forest cooperatives, women SHGs, and digitally connected FPOs, India already possesses a grassroots engine capable of delivering ABS at scale. These cooperatives are not mere financial units; they are people's institutions, rooted in local soil, culture, and trust.

Through the cooperative system, Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) at the village level can negotiate access contracts, monitor resource use, and direct benefit-sharing into community-led green enterprises. PACS can serve as aggregation points — documenting biodiversity use, collecting royalties, and channelling funds into bio-enterprise clusters. A tribal cooperative in Bastar could sell sal seed products with Geographical Indication (GI) tags. A forest-based SHG in Odisha could process and export mahua oil.

An FPO in the Western Ghats could develop ayurvedic supplements from endemic herbs. These are not pipe dreams — they are now viable, legal, and scalable under the new ABS framework.

What is now required is a national institutional backbone to scale this up. There is a compelling need to establish a dedicated Multistate Cooperative for Biodiversity-Based Enterprises, with the National Biodiversity Authority as the Chief Promoter.

This cooperative would function as the nodal body to support, coordinate, and fund biodiversity — linked enterprises through cooperatives across the country. It would assist BMCs and PACS in contract formulation, ensure compliance with ABS protocols, facilitate branding and export of local biodiversity products, and link with existing cooperative structures like the National Cooperative Export Society, National Commodity Exchange Cooperative, and tribal cooperatives.

The proposed cooperative would also ensure a transparent Access to Benefit Transfer mechanism through digital platforms, enabling real-time monitoring of resource use, revenue inflow, and distribution of benefits.

This is especially important as India digitises its entire cooperative ecosystem, linking PACS to state federations and national apex bodies. A tech-enabled ABS cooperative could leverage data to inform policy, ensure compliance, and prevent biopiracy — while ensuring that "jan-bhagidari" (people's participation) remains at the heart of biodiversity conservation.

Importantly, this move aligns with the broader "PACS to Apex" vision of the Ministry of Cooperation, led by Hon'ble Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah, which seeks to empower cooperatives as value — chain creators, not just input suppliers. By embedding the ABS mechanism within the cooperative economic framework, India will not only ensure biodiversity conservation but also create millions of green, decentralised jobs across rural and tribal belts.

At its core, this is about restoring dignity. For too long, the tribal woman who held the secrets of the forest was ignored while pharmaceutical giants profited from her knowledge. The ABS mechanism, implemented through cooperatives, reverses that injustice — transforming her into a rights holder, an entrepreneur, and a contributor to the bioeconomy. It brings us closer to the vision of Sahkarita se Samriddhi — cooperation-led prosperity — and Sahkarita se Sanrakshan — cooperation-led conservation.

In the era of climate action, sustainable growth, and global green transitions, India's bioeconomy stands at the cusp of global relevance. But that future must not be built on exploitation. It must be built on cooperation, local leadership, and justice. With NBA at the helm of a Multistate Cooperative, India can become the world's most ethical and equitable bioeconomy — one where the biodiversity wealth of the land is matched by the economic dignity of its people.

As we prepare for a Viksit Bharat by 2047, let this be our message: India will not just be a powerhouse of innovation but also a custodian of nature and tradition. Let us rise — not just as a bioeconomy, but as a bio-civilisation.

"Prosperity comes from cooperation, protection comes from dedication. Where there is the village, there lies the world — India shows the path through cooperation." Let this be our Sankalp: From Sahkarita to Samriddhi, from Sahkarita to Sanrakshan. Let the world learn — from the heart of rural India — how cooperation can be the greatest form of conservation.

(The writer is Secretary General, Confederation of NGOs of Rural India; Views are personal)

Fire, Frequency, and Faith: Inside Modern Mysticism

Recently, Dhyan Foundation hosted a distinctive 6-night residential retreat in Jaipur centered around the Science of Yagyas and Divya Chikitsa Mantras. Under the leadership of Ashwini Guruji, the retreat promised not just theoretical knowledge but an immersive, transformative experience based on ancient Vedic practices — particularly the purifying power of fire rituals and the vibrational science of mantras.

Ashwini Guruji, a self-styled spiritual teacher and founder of Sanatan Kriya, has long positioned himself as a bridge between classical Indian wisdom and the modern world.

At the heart of this retreat were yagyas — fire-based rituals which, according to Guruji, are not merely religious rites but "a science to interact with the Divine."

As per his explanation, when yagyas are performed in the correct manner, the environment changes perceptibly — no smoke in the fire, fragrant air, and often, so-called divine manifestations appearing in the flames.

Such phenomena, reportedly captured in unedited photographs, were used to lend credence to his claims. Notably, Minister of State for New & Renewable Energy, Shri Shripad Naik, who attended a yagya at Dhyan Ashram, was quoted saying he had "never heard such a mantra uchharan before."


PRABHA GUPTA

Another focal point of the retreat was the introduction to Divya Chikitsa Mantras, a set of seven mantras taught by Ashwini Guruji himself.

These are said to target the body's nadis (energy channels) and chakras, creating a healing and transformational impact on the practitioner's mind and body. According to the Foundation, the mantras operate on the principle that "everything in creation vibrates at a specific frequency," and Vedic rishis had mapped these frequencies to various deities through sound.

Dhyan Foundation had even conducted an experiment using a "Mantra Scanner", which reportedly captured divine forms emerging from Guruji's chanting — a bold and controversial claim that remains unverified by independent scientific bodies.

Dhyan Foundation promotes such retreats through its official platforms and affiliated events, branding them as both experiential and spiritually potent.

They promote these opportunities as direct interactions with Ashwini Guruji, offering participants not only teachings but also energy transmissions through guided practices like mantra chanting, chakra balancing, and advanced pranayama.

The Foundation has carved a niche by presenting ancient practices through a modern lens, often conducting sessions in luxurious settings and combining esoteric Vedic wisdom with a touch of spectacle.

Their humanitarian efforts — especially in animal welfare — and advocacy of non-commercial yogic teachings have won them a dedicated base of volunteers and followers.

However, this modern packaging of spirituality hasn't come without criticism. Despite their spiritual claims and humanitarian image, questions about transparency, authenticity, and legality surround these operations:

Assertions such as diagnosing diseases via photographs at an Indian Medical Association event and scanning mantra frequencies for divine manifestations lack independent validation, inviting skepticism.

While Dhyan Foundation promotes a sattvic (pure) lifestyle, inconsistencies are observed — such as serving eggs and onions during high-end retreats, which contradict traditional yogic dietary norms.

The Foundation's animal welfare activities, particularly cow rescues, have led to over 2,000 legal cases. While they frame these as resistance from vested interests in the meat industry, critics argue that their tactics often resemble vigilante activism, sometimes clashing with law enforcement and raising questions about legal and ethical boundaries.

Dhyan Foundation undeniably contributes to the revival and reinterpretation of ancient Indian knowledge systems. Their Science of Yagyas and Divya Chikitsa Mantras retreat offers a glimpse into powerful, lesser-known aspects of the Vedic tradition. Yet, the blend of spectacle, and unverifiable claims creates a complex picture — both alluring and troubling.

As alternative spirituality continues to gain traction, the importance of discernment becomes ever more crucial.

Navigating the rapidly evolving landscape of modern mysticism requires both critical thinking and a clear awareness of its potential benefits as well as its hidden pitfalls.

In conclusion, Dhyan Foundation's Yajna retreat and Divya Chikitsa Mantras offer a compelling blend of ancient Vedic practices and modern presentation.

As the line between mysticism and marketing blurs, seekers must approach such experiences with open eyes and a discerning mind, honoring tradition while remaining vigilant about authenticity and ethical integrity in the spiritual space.

(The writer is a columnist writing on developent, social issues and spiritual practices. Views expressed are personal)

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IN BRIEF



Gold climbs Rs 260 to Rs 99,260/10g

Gold prices climbed Rs 260 to Rs 99,260 per 10 grams in the national capital on Wednesday amid strong cues in the global markets, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The yellow metal of 99.5 per cent purity rose Rs 100 to Rs 98,700 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes).
"Gold showed a slight positive trend on Wednesday due to persistent uncertainties related to trade, along with economic concerns and geopolitical risks, continue to support the safe-haven appeal of the precious metal," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.
Also, silver rallied by Rs 1,900 to Rs 1,02,100 per kg (inclusive of all taxes) on Wednesday. The metal had closed at Rs 1,00,200 per kg in the previous market session.
On the global front, spot gold went up by USD 9.43 per ounce or 0.28 per cent to USD 3,362.6 per ounce.
In April, central banks added a net total of 12 tonnes of gold to global reserves.



Rupee falls 29 paise to close at 85.90 against US dollar

The rupee depreciated for the second consecutive session and settled for the day lower by 29 paise at 85.90 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, dragged down by risk-averse sentiments and foreign fund outflows.
Forex traders said the local unit remained under pressure on geopolitical tensions between Russia-Ukraine and elevated crude oil prices. Moreover, investors are also awaiting cues from the Reserve Bank's monetary policy announcements, they said. The Reserve Bank's rate-setting panel started its three-day brainstorming on monetary policy on Wednesday and the outcome is scheduled to be announced on June 6. Experts are of the view that the RBI may reduce the repo rate by 25 bps on Friday and another similar cut in the next policy. SBI research expects the central bank to go in for a "jumbo" rate cut of 50 bps in June itself. At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 85.69 and moved between the high of 85.69 and a low of 86.05 against the greenback during the day.



Vedanta ramps up RE power capacity to 1.03 GW

Vedanta Ltd on Wednesday said it has increased its renewable energy power capacity to 1.03 GW and is on track to achieve 2.5 GW of green energy by 2030.
The company has ramped up its renewable energy round-the-clock equivalent power capacity to 1.03 GW through power delivery agreements, according to a statement. The goal of achieving 2.5 GW of green energy by 2030 is aimed towards the ambitious target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 or sooner, the statement said. "The 1 GW renewable energy will potentially enable Vedanta to mitigate more than 6 million tonnes of carbon emissions annually. This is roughly equivalent to carbon sequestration by nearly 350 million trees annually," it added. The renewable energy projects include a mix of wind, solar and pump storage technologies. "Our integrated approach to resource management and sustainability is central to Vedanta's vision of transforming for a sustainable future. As the Indian economy expands, Vedanta is undergoing a transformation that will support the rapidly growing needs of the economy.

RBI may reduce repo rate

Monetary policy panel starts deliberations; decision tomorrow

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank's rate-setting panel started its three-day brainstorming on monetary policy as expectations are high of a 25 bps or even a jumbo 50 bps rate cut to fuel economic growth amid uncertainties created by Trump's tariff moves.

The decision of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), headed by Reserve Bank Governor Sanjay Malhotra, will be announced on Friday.

The RBI reduced the key interest rate (repo) by 25 bps each in February and April, bringing it to 6 per cent.

This could be the third back-to-back reduction in the short-term benchmark lending rate. In response to the 50-bps cut in the policy repo rate since February 2025, most of the banks have reduced their repo-linked external benchmark-based lending rates (EBLRs) and marginal cost of funds-based lending rate (MCLR).

Experts are of the view that the RBI may reduce the repo rate by 25 bps on Friday and another similar cut in the next policy. However, an SBI research expects the central bank to go in for a "jumbo" rate cut of 50 bps in June itself.

CareEdge Ratings said falling inflation will give the RBI the flexibility to prioritise growth amidst external headwinds.



While growth momentum has improved, challenges like uneven consumption recovery, muted private capex growth, and subdued manufacturing growth remain. CPI inflation is expected to stay comfortable in 2025-26, it said

While growth momentum has improved, challenges like uneven consumption recovery, muted private capex growth, and subdued manufacturing growth remain. CPI inflation is expected to stay comfortable in 2025-26, it said.

"This opens room for further monetary policy easing. We expect the RBI MPC to cut the policy rate by another 50 bps in FY26 (including 25 bps in June), with chances of a deeper rate cut cycle if growth falters," it said.

Deepak Aggarwal, Co-founder and Co-CEO of Moneyboxx Finance said that with inflation expected to remain below the RBI's 4 per cent target and growth holding steady, the upcoming MPC meeting presents an encouraging window for a calibrated rate cut.

"A lower interest rate regime, supported by targeted liquidity measures, can meaningfully strengthen credit flow to MSMEs and NBFCs, especially those serving rural and semi-urban regions," Aggarwal said. Raoul Kapoor, Co-CEO of Andromeda Sales and Distribution, said there are strong indications and widespread expectations that the RBI will implement a third round of rate cut later this week.

Should another 25 bps rate cut occur, it would bring the cumulative rate reduction in the calendar year 2025 to a notable 75 basis points.

"The easing of rates not only provides immediate financial relief but also stimulates consumer spending and investment, potentially bolstering overall economic growth. As a result, both existing and potential borrowers can look forward to a more favourable borrowing landscape in the coming months," Kapoor said.

Mandar Pitale, Head, Financial Markets, SBM Bank (India) opined that the upcoming RBI MPC meeting is coming at the backdrop of a strong GDP growth print of 7.4 per cent, which was significantly higher than the market expectation of 6.8 per cent.

"We expect a 25 bp cut in policy rate at the June MPC meeting.

This, coupled with the ongoing accommodative stance, will position MPC to react to any data surprises on either side,' Pitale said, and added there may be another 25 bps reduction in August by the RBI. On his expectations from the 55th meeting of MPC, Rohit Arora, CEO and Co-Founder of Biz2X & Biz2Credit said a rate cut in the range of 25- 50 basis points appears likely, supported by inflation staying below the 4 per cent target and continued moderation in core inflation.

'No question of review of satcom spectrum recommendation'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on Wednesday categorically ruled out any review of recommendations on satcom spectrum at this stage, based on industry body COAI's claims.

Sources in TRAI told PTI that the regulator has already given its recommendations to the government "after following the due consultation process exhaustively and transparently".



All stakeholders were given adequate opportunity to represent their viewpoint during the consultation process, they said.

There is no question of review of the recommendations at this stage based on reactions of the Cellular Operators' Association of India (COAI), TRAI sources said.

The comments assume significance as COAI - whose members include Reliance Jio and Airtel - has approached the telecom department to raise concerns over TRAI recommendations on the satcom spectrum, claiming that "incorrect assumptions" have led to unjustifiably low spectrum charges for satellite services relative to terrestrial networks.

In a letter dated May 29, COAI claimed that TRAI's recommendations are based on incorrect assumptions and that their implementation will hit the sustainability of terrestrial services, which form the foundation of India's digital infrastructure.

COAI has urged the Department of Telecom (DoT) to form a committee to "undertake a comprehensive review of the recommendations in their entirety, ensuring the process is guided by principles of fairness, transparency, and equity and also give an opportunity to TSPs (telcos) to share their views regarding the same".

The industry body argued that the recommendations provide a regulatory advantage to commercial Non-Geostationary Orbit (NGSO) satellites against terrestrial broadband service providers and, if accepted by the DoT in their present form, will undermine competition and create a non-level playing field.

COAI said that TRAI's recommendations do not appear to address the most fundamental and contentious issue -- the lack of a level-playing field between terrestrial service providers and satellite operators serving the same market.

Gland Pharma gets USFDA nod for generic drug

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gland Pharma on Wednesday said it has received approval from the US health regulator for a generic medication used to increase blood pressure.

The Hyderabad-based firm has received approval from the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) for its Abbreviated New Drug Application for Angiotensin II Acetate Injection 2.5 mg/mL, Gland Pharma said in a statement.

Gland Pharma is the exclusive "First-to-File" and is eligible for 180 days of generic drug exclusivity, it stated.

The company's product is therapeutically equivalent to La Jolla Pharma LLC's reference listed drug Giapreza.

The drug is indicated for increasing the blood pressure in adults with septic or other distributive shock. According to IQVIA, the product had US sales of around USD 58 million for the 12 months ending March 2025.

Stock markets rebound after 3-day fall

Sensex recovers 260 points

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Indian benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty snapped the three-day losing streak and settled in the positive territory on Wednesday, mirroring a rally in global markets and supported by buying in blue-chips Reliance Industries and HDFC Bank.

Market analysts said Indian equities closed with gains on better-than-expected US job market data and optimism over trade talks between the US and Chinese President this week also added optimism to markets recovery.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 260.74 points, or 0.32 per cent, to settle at 80,998.25. During the day, it jumped 349.78 points, or 0.43 per cent, to 81,087.29.



The NSE Nifty went up 77.70 points, or 0.32 per cent, to 24,620.20.

From the Sensex firms, Eternal climbed 3.32 per cent. Bharti Airtel, IndusInd Bank, Tech Mahindra, Reliance Industries, Tata Motors, HDFC Bank, Tata Steel and Hindustan Unilever were the other major gainers.

However, Bajaj Finserv, Axis Bank, Tata Consultancy Services, Titan and Larsen & Toubro were among the laggards.

"Indian equities closed with gains following positive global cues with Nifty-50 up 0.32 per cent at 24,620. US markets ended higher on Tuesday after better-than-expected April job openings data, indicating resilience in the US labour market despite concerns over tariff policies.

"Further, Asian indices ended in the positive on optimism over trade talks between the US and Chinese President this week," Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

Oyster Renewable, Jindal Stainless forge green energy alliance

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Power producer Oyster Renewable Energy on Wednesday announced a partnership with Jindal Stainless to supply clean power to the stainless steel manufacturer. The tie-up is a step towards decarbonising the industrial sector in India. It raises the bar for transition to low-carbon manufacturing and accelerates India's path toward achieving its net-zero ambitions, according to a statement. "At the heart of this partnership lies a cutting-edge 282 MW interstate wind-solar hybrid project, strategically located across Bhuj (Gujarat) and Agar (Madhya Pradesh)," the statement said.. The project will combine 82 MW of wind plus 135 MWp of solar in Madhya Pradesh, as well as 99 MW of wind in Gujarat. With this collaboration, Jindal Stainless has acquired a 33.64 per cent equity stake in Oyster Green Hybrid One Pvt Ltd, a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) promoted by Oyster Renewable. The initiative is backed by a Rs 1,517-crore loan sanctioned by Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) and will operate under a 25-year group captive power purchase agreement (PPA).

UFI Filters plans doubling investments in India

PNS ■ MILAN

Italian filtration technology and thermal management major UFI Filters on Wednesday said it is planning to double investments in India in the coming years to expand the business, its chairman Giorgio Girondi said.

He said that the company is doing well in India.

"Our plan is to double our investments in India," he told reporters here after meeting Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal.

Goyal is here on a two-day official visit to meet Italian leaders and businesses to discuss ways to boost trade and investments between the two countries.

UFI Filters CEO Stefano Gava said that the company's revenues in India are in the range of 50 million euros, and investments are at around 25-30 million euros.

"We are going to double up very soon," he said.

Solar panels can provide power to farmers: Chouhan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Wednesday suggested that a model could be considered wherein elevated solar panels could be installed above the crops to make farmers both food and energy providers.

The minister attended the National Agriculture-Renewable Energy Conference 2025 organised by the National Solar Energy Federation of India (NSEFI) here. On this occasion, Chouhan released the Federation's report and annual reference book on agriculture and renewable energy.

The conference was organised to push for dialogue and collaboration among policymakers, experts, and farmers regarding the integration of renewable energy in the agriculture sector, an official statement said.

Addressing the event, the minister said that solar panels can be a major source of providing electricity to farmers, and that the PM-KUSUM scheme is working in this direction to ensure energy security for them.



He also "proposed the model of installing elevated solar panels in fields with crops growing beneath them, stating that such models could transform small and medium-scale farmers into both food and energy providers."

The minister urged for more serious consideration and development of this model.

If effective and modern versions of this model are brought forward, the government will certainly support its implementation, Chouhan said.

He noted that six effective measures are being focused on to ensure prosperity of farmers: Increasing production; Reducing cost of production; Ensuring fair prices for produce; Providing compensation in case of losses; Diversification; and Balanced use of fertilizers to preserve the land for future generations.

Sebi warns investors against fake communications

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi on Wednesday cautioned investors about fake communications falsely issued in its name, misusing its logo, letterhead, and claiming to be from its officials.

The regulator asked the public to stay alert while sharing personal information or money in response to such fraudulent messages.

The cautionary statement comes after Sebi noted that certain individuals received communication wherein the sender falsely claimed to be an official of Sebi using letterhead, logo and seal of the regulator.

In certain instances, the sender issued notices through Social Media Platforms asking for payment of a fine to prevent the regulator from taking action against the recipient, sender forged sale Certificate to show that he was a buyer of PACL property, sender issued a fake certificate of use of third-party vendor account, Sebi noted.

Accordingly, the regulator has cautioned the public or investors "to verify communication purported to have been issued by Sebi...from the Sebi website".

Also, they have been asked to be vigilant while dealing with communication/senders demanding information or payment on behalf of Sebi.

The regulator has asked investors to verify the authenticity of any communication that they might deem to have received from it. Further, all the communication from Sebi can be verified from its website (www.sebi.gov.in).

CGD to drive India's gas demand

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The city gas distribution (CGD) sector is expected to surpass fertiliser plants this year to become the largest consumer of natural gas in India, thanks to the fast growth of CNG and piped gas networks, industry leaders said on Wednesday.

CGD, which encompasses supply of CNG as fuel to automobiles, and piping gas to household kitchens for cooking as well as to industries, accounts for 21.22 per cent of the near 200 million standard cubic meters per day of gas consumption in the country.

Natural gas consumption is likely to rise to 300-250 mmscmd in the next 7-10 years, GAIL Director (Marketing) Sanjay Kumar said while speaking at the 11th CGD Conference here.

"Fertiliser sector consumes 60 mmscmd and this is likely to remain the same as no new fertiliser plants are on the anvil," he said.

"CGD sector consumption could go up to 100 mmscmd from 41.1 mmscmd usage in February/March 2025."

Set to become the biggest consumer



Anjani Kumar, Head (Gas Origination & BD), Shell Energy LNG, said, "CGD could very well become the largest consumption sector this year itself."

The CGD sector will drive India's ambition to raise the share of natural gas in energy basket to 15 per cent from the current 7 per cent.

But domestic production is insufficient to meet the demand and the country has to necessarily rely on imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG).

Gas demand, he said, has grown 35 mmscmd in the last three years and 80 per cent of this has been met through LNG. Currently, roughly half of the gas requirement is met through imports.

India's CGD sector is experiencing rapid growth, driven by government initiatives, increased infrastructure investments, and a shift towards cleaner energy sources. City gas licences have been given out for almost the entire country in the recent auctions. The country now has over 8,000 CNG stations and 1.5 crore households using piped natural gas for cooking purposes.

GAIL's Kumar said domestic gas production can rise to 130-135 mmscmd in next 4-6 years as per the projections made by the national oil companies.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
ROADS AND BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT
'e' PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
NIT No: DRBO/R&B/MDK/02/2025-26 Dated: 04-06-2025
Name of the work: 1) Emergency Repairs to R&B Division Office Medak in Medak District (2nd call), Amount of Estimate: Rs. 2.00 Lakhs; 2) Emergency Repairs to R&B Sub-Division Office Narsapur in Medak District (2nd call), Amount of Estimate: Rs. 2.00 Lakhs. Bid submission closing Date: 16.06.2025 @ 3.30 PM., 1) Name & Address of the Executive Engineer Concerned: (R&B) Division, Medak, 2) The works under Sl. No. 1 is reserved for ST's., 3) The District R&B Office, Division: Medak, District Medak: Ph 08452-220455, 9553071503/9949162533, 4) Further details can be seen @ 'e'procurement market place @ www.eprocurement.gov.in
Sd/- District R&B Officer, (R&B) Division: Medak
DIPR R.O. No.: 3107-PP/CL/ADVTH/2025-26, Dt. 04-06-2025

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THURSDAY JUNE 5, 2025

PARUL GULATI ON *DONALI*

‘We lived like locals — peeing behind bushes in the jungle, roughing it out’

TEJAL SINHA
tejal.sinha30@gmail.com

Making waves at Cannes in a gown crafted entirely from hair, Parul Gulati opens up about her evolution as an artist, her instinct-driven choices, and how storytelling fuels every facet of her life—whether on screen or in business. In an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, the actor and entrepreneur delves into her dynamic world, balancing the grit of portraying a gun-wielding bandit in her upcoming web series Donali with the creativity and drive behind her successful hair extension brand, Nish Hair

Parul Gulati is a powerhouse of talent and ambition — an actor who effortlessly inhabits layered characters on screen and a sharp entrepreneur redefining beauty norms with her hair extension brand, Nish Hair. Present here in Hyderabad for a whirlwind event filled with fan interactions, exciting games and ofcourse, the ‘Parul Smoothie’, Parul brought her signature charm and candor to the city. In this exclusive chat with ***The Pioneer***, she opens up about her upcoming web series *Donali*, her much-talked-about Cannes appearance in a gown made entirely of hair and how she’s balancing the glitz of showbiz with the grit of building a business from scratch.

From a fun trivia to treasure hunt at Broadway, the weekend had it all! Post an exciting weekend, just as always, her entrepreneurial energy already setting the tone, the *Haq Se* fame reflects on the love she’s received as an actor over the years, especially from her work on *POW: Bandhi Yuddh Ke*. “It feels rewarding,” she admits. “As people in creative fields, we just crave recognition and love. And when it comes, it humbles you. I feel really, really grateful.”

She’s now gearing up for her upcoming web series *Donali*, set in the early 1900s when dacoits ruled the Chambal terrain. “People haven’t seen characters or settings like this in a long time. It’s like a treasure hunt—these bandits are looking for treasure. It’s funny and serious at the same time, and I think people will love it.”



Gulati plays a young, gun-wielding bandit—a character that pushed her to learn new skills. “I had to learn action, shoot a double-barrel gun—which is what a ‘donali’ is—and I didn’t even have the strength to pull the trigger on a revolver at first,” she confesses, laughing. “Speaking in Bundeli, the dialect, was another challenge. I had to stay consistent with it over a year and a half of shooting. We lived like locals—peeing behind bushes in the jungle, roughing it out.”

Working alongside actors like Barun Sobti and Divyenndu added layers to the experience, though, surprisingly, she shot the most with Divyenndu. “There’s a huge cast—Chunky Panday, Shivani Raghuvanshi, Sandhya Mridul and so many more. We had often just sit around chatting between setups. The jungle shoots were intense. We’d carry snacks and literally live the life of the characters.”

She describes the tone of *Donali* as a satire with a touch of drama. Preparing for such a layered world wasn’t easy. “We started working on it during the 2020 lockdowns and finished in 2023. That entire period, I was fully consumed by this character—Phool. It really demanded everything from me.”

While Phool’s impulsiveness mirrors her own instincts, the rest of the character is a departure. “She deals with things I can’t even imagine. She’s not the leader of her gang but wants to be. She doesn’t have a phone, she has personal demons—so much I couldn’t relate to directly, but it was fascinating to become her.”

Parul also has a comedy film lined up, though she can’t talk much about it just yet. What draws her to comedy, though, is simple: “It has to make me laugh. That’s it! If I enjoy it, then I feel the audience will too.” She sees comedy as an instinctual rhythm. “I try not to rehearse comedic lines too much. I want it to land fresh. Comedy timing still confuses me a bit—I don’t always know what others will find funny, so I focus on keeping it real for myself.”

That instinct for originality showed in full force at Cannes, where she made a bold fashion statement in a gown made entirely of hair braids, weaving her own story. “When the Cannes conversation started, my team said, ‘Let’s create something unique. You’re not going with a film but as an Indian entrepreneur. Let’s show what Indian women entrepreneurs can do.’” The idea of a “Malkin” gown evolved—“I was like, let’s make a gown made out of hair!” After weeks of ideation, designer Mohit Rai came on board. “We didn’t want it to be gimmicky—no Chewbacca vibes. We wanted structure and elegance. We tried French braids, but they didn’t look right. We finally found a pattern with straight braids wrapping the bodice and stitched them onto a fitted structure.”

Walking the Cannes red carpet in that gown was surreal. “People like Niharika and Anushka Sen were there and they were like—Parul, is that a hair dress? And one of the volunteers at the theatre said it was the most unique dress she’d ever seen. That was a precious moment.”

She firmly believes that fashion can be storytelling—or even activism. “I literally weaved my story into braids and wore it. Everyone at Cannes was expressing something deeply personal—whether it was Alia in Gucci or Aishwarya with her sindoor. It was a proud moment for South Asians, especially South Asian women.”

Managing multiple roles—actor, entrepreneur, content creator—is no cakewalk, but Parul credits her team. “Leadership is about delegation. I’ve built strong teams over the years. My company director Reva travels with me everywhere. I don’t micromanage anymore because that limits growth. My acting is managed by one team, my brand by another, and they all work in sync.”

Despite her success, the *Girls Hostel* star remains grounded. “When I was just acting, I didn’t have this clarity. But running a business changes you. Some customers don’t even know I’m an actor. That humility—that reality check—keeps me anchored. Managing 60 women, selling directly to customers, it makes you understand human behavior better.”

She admits she’s constantly evolving. “Every project, every year, adds something new. I’ve been acting since I was 17. Now I make more conscious choices and the roles I’ve played—like journalists—let me research and empathise. That’s the beauty of being an actor. You walk in someone else’s shoes and come out changed.”

Asked about what kind of projects excite her, she says it boils down to character. “Sometimes the script placement matters, sometimes it’s just the role. Like in *Made in Heaven*, I really wanted to work with Zoya—” and here she trails off, a smile in her voice, clearly hinting at many exciting things still under wraps.

When I was just acting, I didn’t have this clarity. But running a business changes you. Some customers don’t even know I’m an actor. That humility—that reality check—keeps me anchored.

GAMIFYING FINANCIAL SERVICES

As attention has become a currency, the financial services industry is changing—using gamification to engage a more digital-first audience. And beyond the buzzword we are referring to, gamifying finance involves far more than points and badges—what we're looking at is looking at business models of financial literacy, customer retention, and transactional behaviours through the lens of behavioural design. While fintech companies have pioneered this space, traditional banks are also now realizing that engagement can and must feel less like homework and more like a game.



OVERCOMING THE ENGAGEMENT CHALLENGE IN FINANCE

Despite understanding the indispensable nature of financial wellness, most users do not use banking apps frequently. A 2023 survey in India conducted by Razorpay and FIS (Fidelity National Information Services) found that while over 70% of users have digital banking apps, only 24% actively use financial planning features. Financial literacy is another area of concern; according to the S&P Global FinLit Survey on financial literacy, only 27% of Indian adults are financially literate, and large gaps exist in emerging markets too - for Indonesia this means 32% and for Brazil this means 35%.

The disengagement does not come from need, but rather experience and emotional context. Banking interfaces are transactional - compartmentalised, sterile and intentionally non-stimulating with no opportunity for sustainable dopamine triggers. This is where gamification comes in, not as a gimmick, but a psychological unlock.

REWIRING BEHAVIORS THROUGH GAMIFICATION

Gamification leverages the motivators that are internal to individuals, which include curiosity, achievement, progression and competition. Several companies are changing behavior through gamification in financial services without trading off any of the substance of their service. For instance:

Progression: Acorn and Digit use visual representation of progress so users can understand how much closer they are to their savings goals.

Micro-rewards: In India, the app Fi provides scratch cards, with small cash backs for every transaction and turns what could have been a regular transaction into a reward based process.

Simulations & Quests: Monobank in Ukraine gave users a virtual cat to “feed” through saving and a fun metaphor led users to actually save money.

Leaderboards: Zogo and Step have users answer trivia and take money quiz tests to display their knowledge, rewarding top performers with actual perks.

Such mechanisms serve as an entry point of low thresholds for users who would have lacked engagement, but who may engage over the long term.

BUSINESS IMPACT- NOT JUST A VANITY METRIC

While engagement is a great pageview and talking point, it’s only worth anything if it drives business outcomes. And gamification is driving business outcomes and here’s how.

- **Increased usage of the app:** Nubank reported a 30% increase in daily active users after implementing reward-based task experience.
- **Reduced churn:** Gamified savings challenges in Revolut (a British multinational neobank and fintech company) resulted in a 19% improvement in 90-day retention.
- **Improved conversion rates:** Robinhood, an American financial services company, has publicly reported that their referral bonuses and milestone-based gamification has led to a 28% increase in first-time deposits.

Gamification is not about making finance a game; it’s about putting psychological design behind the journey to generate outcomes.

ETHICS IN FINANCIAL GAMIFICATION

While there is certainly a downside, manipulation and motivation are a fine line. If you constantly use variable rewards or social comparison, you could engage in impulsive behaviors—especially on the trading or credit-linked side. Responsible gamification means:

1. Clear rules
2. No addition loops
3. Rewards based on long-term behavior
4. Frictions in the flow that help people pause before making any high-stakes decision

Real gamification in finance is not about hijacking our attention but restoring it in meaningful ways.

THE ROAD AHEAD

As financial services become more and more a part of lifestyle platforms, from ride-hailing apps to health apps, the next frontier is what we call “invisible finance with visible rewards.” For example, what if fitness goals could earn a savings boost for a gym-goer or changes in a user’s behavioural choices in challenging, interactive budgeting games could reduce dynamic insurance premiums?

Gamification will not replace thoughtful, legitimate financial products but will be the UI layer for all services to pass on real value.

In a world where the average attention span is now below 8 seconds, it will be the financial institutions that play smartly, engaging users to make finance fun, relevant and behaviourally designed that will be the winners of this game.

(The author, Abbhinav R Jain, is the Co-founder & Chief Financial Officer, of AdCounty Media.)

Why smoking is a major risk factor in fertility and pregnancy treatment

In general, smoking has a significant impact on fertility and reproductive health of both men and women. Adding to this, in today’s fast paced with increased stress levels many couples find themselves lured into consuming tobacco products without realising the deleterious consequences. These consequences get exacerbated especially in IVF (In Vitro Fertilization) treatments. While cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product in pregnancy, alternative forms of tobacco use are e-cigarettes or vaping products, hookahs, and cigars, snus, lozenges, patches and gums.

TYPES OF IMPACT

In men, tobacco consumption causes erectile dysfunction and lowers the sperm DNA and quality. In women it impairs ovarian reserve, steroid hormone production, ovulation, menstrual regularity, fallopian tube function, uterine receptivity and embryo implantation.
It also leads to a range of complications in pregnancy for both the baby and mother.

MATERNAL COMPLICATIONS

- placenta previa
- abruptio placentae
- preterm prelabour rupture of membranes
- ectopic pregnancy and
- decreased maternal thyroid function

FOETAL COMPLICATIONS

- preterm birth
- low birth weight
- intrauterine growth restriction
- neonatal respiratory and gastrointestinal diseases
- transfer to the neonatal intensive care unit with admission for more than seven days
- Intrauterine death and neonatal infection



PASSIVE SMOKING

Harmful effects of smoking isn’t just limited to active smokers. Second-hand smoke, a mix of smoke from burning tobacco and exhaled smoke can be just as dangerous. In fact, side stream smoke (from the burning end of a cigarette) contains more harmful substances like tar, carbon monoxide and nicotine than the smoke inhaled by the smoker. There is no safe level of exposure whether active or passive.

EFFECTS OF SMOKING ON IVF

Smoking is hazardous in any pregnancy may it be spontaneous conception or IVF pregnancy. It can

- decrease endometrial thickness,
- make embryo implantation more difficult and
- have only 50% success rate.

A Dutch study on IVF and smoking found that just one cigarette a day for 12 months reduces the chance of a live birth by 28 per cent

History of smoking or active smoking during first trimester is shown to have

- Defective embryogenesis
- Genetic development issues,
- Congenital defects like Orofacial clefts
- Increased risk of miscarriage

The American College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (ACOG) recommends screening and intervention of Nicotine and coexisting alcohol or drug Abuse as important part of prenatal care. The NHS in the UK now offers a breathalyser service to all pregnant women.

BENEFITS OF SMOKING CESSATION

Pregnancy influences many women to stop smoking, and approximately 54% of women who smoke before pregnancy quit smoking directly before or during pregnancy.

Smoking cessation at any point in gestation benefits the pregnant woman and her fetus. The greatest benefit is observed with cessation before 15 weeks of gestation



SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS

Healthcare professionals should individualise care by offering psychosocial, behavioural and pharmacotherapy interventions. Available cessation-aid services and resources, including digital resources, should be discussed and documented regularly at prenatal and postpartum follow-up visits.

(The author, Dr Subhashini Y, is a Consultant Obstetrician, at Fernandez Hospital.)


Lakshmi


Anita Agarwal,Pavan and Punith

Desire Designer Exhibition is back in the city with its luxurious showcase of fashion, jewellery, lifestyle and festive collections. Held till June 6 at Hotel Taj Krishna, Banjara Hills, the exhibition brings together top designers from across the country. Visitors can explore an artistic curation of wedding and festive wear, contemporary jewellery, haute couture, chic accessories, stylish home décor and more—all under one roof.


Prantika Das


Preeti


Sree


Rithika


Yohitha

Aashi

Sanaya

PARTY

Photos by- SV Chary



Ahead of the much-anticipated theatrical release of Disney's Lilo & Stitch, Max Fashion has launched a vibrant new collection for kids, teens, and youth that perfectly captures the island spirit and tropical charm of the beloved story. Actress Bipasha Basu stole the spotlight as the showstopper, highlighting the stylish and fun appeal of the collection.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds has launched its newly relocated showroom at Radhika X Road, A.S. Rao Nagar in Hyderabad. The showroom has been moved to a more expansive and elegant space, offering customers a significantly enhanced shopping experience. The inauguration was attended by Bandari Lakshma Reddy, MLA of Uppal Constituency and Sirisha Reddy Garu, Corporator of A.S. Rao Nagar, in the presence of customers and members of the Malabar management team.





The results of JEE Advanced 2025, are out — and Unacademy has once again proven its impact with a remarkable success story. Over 4,129 Unacademy students have cleared the exam, showcasing how the right blend of guidance, hard work, and technology can help turn dreams into reality. On this proud occasion, Sumit Jain, Co-founder of Unacademy, congratulated all the successful students. Among the achievers, 18 learners secured ranks in the Top 100, 787 made it to the Top 5000, and 2,205 students ranked within the Top 15,000.



In a defining leap for Indian medical technology on the global stage, SS Innovations International, the creators of the indigenous SSI Mantra surgical robotic system, rang the opening bell at the Nasdaq MarketSite in New York City today. The company's shares are now listed under the ticker symbol 'SSII'. The ceremonial event was led by Dr. Sudhir Srivastava, Founder, Chairman, and CEO of SS Innovations International, alongside members of the management team, Board of Directors, key advisors, and special guests.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBES



GARFIELD



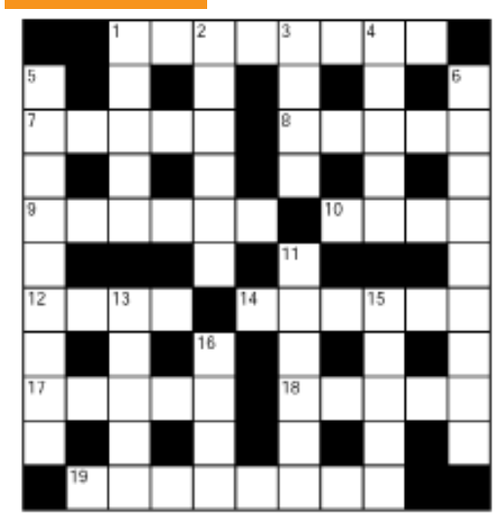
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1 Tiniest
7 A fish in rivers and lakes
8 Stick this on an envelope
9 Having a meal
10 Shout
12 Seeds in an apple
14 Opposite of weak
17 Precise
18 Nips with the teeth
19 Half of twenty-eight

DOWN

1 Fire a gun
2 Pretending
3 Mislaid
4 Frighten
5 Tried
6 Say you are sorry
11 A building where a horse is kept
13 A keyboard instrument
15 Frequently
16 A light in the night sky

SOLUTION

T	A	D	P	O	L	E	S		I	
R		R			E		T		I	
A	W	A	Y		S	T	U	P	I	D
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SUDOKU

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	2	9		1	8			
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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Yesterday's solution

5	6	1	7	3	2	8	9	4
9	3	2	5	4	8	6	7	1
7	8	4	9	1	6	2	5	3
6	7	9	2	5	3	4	1	8
8	1	3	4	6	7	9	2	5
2	4	5	1	8	9	3	6	7
1	2	8	6	7	4	5	3	9
4	5	6	3	9	1	7	8	2
3	9	7	8	2	5	1	4	6

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.

NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



The Pioneer
HYDERABAD | THURSDAY | JUNE 5, 2025

Kamal Haasan faces ₹10–15 crore loss over language remark controversy



Versatile actor Kamal Haasan has decided not to release his film *Thug Life* in Karnataka. At a promotional event in the state, Kamal Haasan's controversial remark—"Kannada was born out of Tamil"—sparked backlash. The Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce (KFCC) and several Kannada organisations found the comment offensive and decided to ban the film.

Interestingly, Kamal Haasan is also the producer of *Thug Life*. He later approached the High Court, which stated that if the actor issued an apology, the issue would be resolved. However, Kamal refused to apologise, writing instead to the KFCC that his words were misinterpreted.

Karnataka is a major revenue-generating region for many Tamil films. Rajinikanth's *Jailer* grossed Rs. 67 crore in Karnataka, followed by Vijay's *Leo* (Rs. 41 crore), Mani Ratnam's *Ponniyin Selvan-1* (Rs. 28 crore) and Kamal Haasan's own *Vikram* (Rs. 22 crore). *Jailer* also featured Kannada superstar Shivrajkumar in a key role, which contributed to its strong performance.

By choosing not to release *Thug Life* in Karnataka, Kamal Haasan risks a substantial loss. If the film turns out to be a hit, the revenue from Karnataka alone could have matched or exceeded that of *Vikram*.

This situation could also impact theatre owners in Karnataka. *Thug Life* features a stellar cast including Kamal Haasan, Simbu, Trisha, Joju George, Nasser, Ahirami and Aishwarya Lekshmi. The film marks a reunion between Kamal Haasan and director Mani Ratnam after more than three decades, raising high expectations.

Kamal maintains that he said nothing wrong and will not apologise. The case is currently in court and has been adjourned to June 10. For now, audiences in Karnataka may have to wait until the issue is resolved.



HHVM FACES YET ANOTHER DELAY

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Pawan Kalyan starrer *Hari Hara Veera Mallu* is in the news again. The makers had officially announced that the film would hit the screens on June 12. But now, according to a source, the film is going to be postponed once again.

It has already been postponed several times, and everyone thought that the film would finally release on June 12. "The technical work is still pending, that's one reason. The other reason is that producer A.M. Rathnam has some financial problems from his earlier films, so he has to clear all those issues," said a source.

The makers officially cancelled the pre-release event that was supposed to be held in Tirupati on June 8. With this, it's clear that the film will not release on June 12 and the makers are now searching for another date. They have also stopped all promotions, as they know the release is going to be postponed.

The film actually started five years ago, but due to Pawan Kalyan's political commitments—and later his taking charge as the Deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh—the film was delayed. A few weeks ago, Pawan Kalyan allotted dates and completed his part, but the makers expected to complete the technical work in time. That hasn't happened, as there is still a lot of work left. So, they have no choice but to postpone the film, added the source.

When they announced the release date, Pawan Kalyan's fans were elated. But now, with another delay, fans are frustrated and are asking producer A.M. Rathnam to announce a fixed release date that won't be postponed again.

Director Krish Jagarlamudi initially helmed the project and shot most of the scenes, but due to delays, he left the film. Later, A.M. Rathnam's son Jyothi Krishna took over as director and completed the film.

Bunny Vas launches BV works with quirky new film

Bunny Vas, who is part of Geetha Arts along with Allu Aravind, is now launching his own production house called Bunny Vas Works. He has joined forces with two other production houses—Sapta Aswa Creatives and Vyra Entertainments—and dropped a whacky and wildly intriguing pre-look poster that's already sparking curiosity on social media.

Bunny Vas is presenting a film for the first time under BV Works, which strengthens confidence in the project. He and producer Bhanu Pratapa have collaborated earlier on Thandel and delivered a blockbuster. Their partnership continued successfully with *Aay* and *Single*, further raising expectations.

With Vyra Entertainments—makers of the feel-good *Hi Nanna*—also joining the project, the production gains even more momentum. The unveiled pre-look poster features a lineup of masked men donning quirky red caps and blue masks, hinting at a rollercoaster of fun, mystery, and madness. The first look is set to release on June 6. The film is directed by debutant Vijayendar S and produced by Kalyan Manthina, Bhanu Pratapa and Dr. Vijender Reddy Teegala.





Sekhar Kammula makes a heartfelt promise at *Kuberaa* audio launch

At the grand audio launch of the much-anticipated pan-Indian film *Kuberaa* held in Chennai, director Sekhar Kammula made a heartfelt promise to the audience, saying, "The film will come out really well. This is my promise to all of you." His words brought a wave of excitement and confidence among fans, who are eagerly awaiting the film's release.

This film marks the first collaboration between Sekhar Kammula and National Award-winning actor Dhanush, two artists known for their deep and meaningful work. It also marks a first-time collaboration with veteran actor Nagarjuna, who is joining forces with both Sekhar Kammula and Dhanush for the very first time.

Kammula's genuine belief in the project was evident throughout the event, adding to the growing buzz surrounding *Kuberaa*. The audio launch also celebrated the film's music, composed by Devi Sri Prasad, whose tunes have already started connecting with audiences. DSP, who has delivered several super-hit collaborations with Nagarjuna in the past, brings his signature touch to the soundtrack.

Produced by Suniel Narang and Puskur Ram Mohan Rao under the banners of Sri Venkateswara Cinemas LLP and Amigos Creations Pvt Ltd, *Kuberaa* is mounted on an epic scale, with Mugafi handling its Hindi and international release.

The film will release in five languages—Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, Kannada and Malayalam—worldwide on June 20, 2025.

Siddu Jonnalagadda returns ₹4 cr after *Jack* bombs at box office

Siddu Jonnalagadda's latest film *Jack* was a huge disaster at the box office. BVSN Prasad is the producer, while Bommarillu Bhaskar directed the film. There were huge expectations because the actor's earlier films *DJ Tillu* and *Tillu Square* were very successful at the box office.

But *Jack* was released, and from the first day onwards, audiences rejected it. The collections were unimpressive and by the second day, the film was removed from some screens—indicating how poorly it was received. The producer had paid a high remuneration to Siddu, banking on the actor's recent track record.

However, the producer didn't even recover 10 percent of the budget and many distributors incurred huge losses. Aware of the situation, Siddu decided to return half of his remuneration to the producer. According to a source, he returned Rs 4 crore to the producer, acknowledging the financial loss.

With this gesture, many in the industry have appreciated Siddu's move. His understanding of the film business and support for the producer have become the talk of the town.



BELLAMKONDA, MANOJ & ROHIT'S COMEBACK FILM *BHAIRAVAM* TURNS DUD

The film *Bhairavam* released last Friday, featuring three actors—Bellamkonda Sai Srinivas, Manchu Manoj and Nara Rohit—coming together for the project. Directed by Vijay Kanakamedala, it is a remake of the Tamil hit *Garudan*. The Telugu makers promoted the film quite well, but unfortunately, it has ended up as a flop at the box office.

Produced by K.K. Radhamohan, the film was made on a budget of nearly Rs 30 crore, but the producer is expected to recover only around 30% of the investment. The movie collected nearly Rs 8.85 crore gross in the first three days worldwide. The pre-release business was around Rs 16.20 crore, and for the film to be considered a hit, it needed to collect Rs 17 crore. However, from Monday onwards, the collections dipped drastically. While the promotions were strong, the director seemed to focus more on showcasing the three lead actors rather than strengthening the story. This lack of narrative depth appears to have affected the film's performance.



One of the major reasons Bhairavam didn't do well is the re-release of Mahesh Babu's *Khaleja*, which drew huge crowds and performed strongly at the box office, despite being an older film.

The second reason is the Indian Premier League (IPL). With audiences focused on the matches, interest in the film dwindled. The IPL final took place on Tuesday, which further affected footfall, especially for a film already struggling to gain momentum.

Overall, the film has been a major disappointment—particularly for Bellamkonda Sai Srinivas. For Manchu Manoj, *Bhairavam* marked a comeback after a nine-year break. Similarly, it was also a comeback film for Nara Rohit. Sadly, the poor performance at the box office has dampened the impact of their return.

The Pioneer
HYDERABAD | THURSDAY | JUNE 5, 2025

Gukesh loses Hikaru in Norway Chess

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■
Stavanger (Norway)



American Grandmaster Hikaru Nakamura broke world champion D Gukesh's run of classical wins by comprehensively beating the Indian to earn three full points even as Arjun Erigaisi roared back to contention with victory over Fabiano Caruana in Norway Chess here.

India's Erigaisi trapped his opponent Caruana in a time scramble in the eighth round of the prestigious tournament on Tuesday. World Number 2 and former Norway Chess champion Nakamura pressed home the early advantage he got with the white pieces to dominate his 19-year-old opponent and score a "very smooth" victory and take revenge for his Round 3 loss to the Indian. Gukesh, who had regained his mojo after a disappointing start to the tournament when he beat world Number 1 Magnus Carlsen and Erigaisi in Round 6 and 7 respectively, was cornered by Nakamura, who didn't give his opponent an inch during the course of the nearly four-hour-long contest.With two more rounds to go, Gukesh was tied for third place with Nakamura on 11.5 points, while American GM Caruana, despite the loss to Erigaisi, was in the lead with 12.5 points.

Carlsen, who lost to China's Wei Yi in the Armageddon tie-break, was second with 12 points, while Erigaisi was fifth with 10.5 points. "It was a very smooth game, I'm very happy with it. It looks very good," said Nakamura after the win.

The 37-year-old Nakamura, winner of the 2023 edition of Norway Chess in which Gukesh finished third, said that the reigning world champion was uncomfortable with the pawn structure, which probably resulted in him coming under time pressure and giving an easy win to the American."I'm not sure what happened, whether Gukesh just didn't know this bishop g6 move, or what exactly it was, but it was very clear to me that, based on the long think, he didn't like the pawn structure at all," said Nakamura, who at 15 years of age had become the youngest American GM.

Nakamura added that his loss to Gukesh in Round 3 was more on account of him "slackening" a bit. "Just when I had equalised, I completely relaxed. I just fell asleep for like one to two moves, and immediately, I was in a lot of trouble, and I couldn't recover," he added.

Gukesh played horribly: Nakamura

Nakamura expressed surprise over Gukesh's play in the tournament so far, saying he was lucky to have survived Carlsen and Erigaisi in Round 6 and 7 respectively.

"It's a very strange term, because his result is very good, but if we're being objective about chess, I think he's played horribly. He should have lost to Magnus, he was completely lost against Arjun (Erigaisi). "Other than the first game against me, and maybe the game against Wei Yi, at some point, he was losing; even Fabiano (Caruana), he (Gukesh) was also losing in that game," said Nakamura.

"So, it's very, very hard to judge what his play is, but when I look at his game, one of the big things that he has, that I would say Arjun and R. Praggnanandhaa don't have, is he's mentally very strong.

"He's a lot less emotional than the other two players, and that has served him very well, especially in this tournament, so it's a mixed bag."

Nakamura added, "I think his defensive skills are very good, like in this game, I thought there were probably three or four moments when I was winning, and then I had to still find more moves to convert, so he's definitely showing very strong defensive skills."

'India is the next Soviet Union of chess'

Nakamura gave a strong indication that this could be his last appearance in Norway Chess, and that he had probably played his final classical game against Carlsen. He also averred that "the future of chess is in India."

"India is basically the new Soviet Union as far as chess goes. You have Gukesh, you have Arjun, you have Praggnanandhaa, I think Aravindh (Chithambaram) just broke into the top-10, if I'm not mistaken. "If I look forward to the next 5-10 years, Indians are going to dominate chess, there's no doubt about it," he said.

Humpy regains sole lead

Two-time world rapid champion, India's Koneru Humpy wrested back the lead with two rounds to go, beating Spanish International Master Sara Khadem in the day's only classical win.

Humpy, on 13.5 points, was one point ahead of reigning world champion China's Ju Wenjun. Ju's six-match winning streak was broken by R Vaishali — who is fifth on 9.5 points — in the Armageddon tie-break.

Results (Round 8):

(Open) Arjun Erigaisi (Ind — 10.5 points) bt Fabiano Caruana (USA — 12.5); Hikaru Nakamura (USA — 11.5) bt D Gukesh (Ind — 11.5); Wei Yi (Chn - 8) bt Magnus Carlsen (Nor — 12) in Armageddon tie-break.

(Women) Sara Khadem (Esp — 6) lost to Koneru Humpy (Ind — 13.5); R Vaishali (Ind — 9.5) bt Ju Wenjun (Chn — 12.5) in Armageddon tie-break; Anna Muzychuk (Ukr - 12.5) bt Lei Tingjie (Chn — 10) in Armageddon tie-break.

New Zealand Cricket seeks new head coach for all formats



Gary Stead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Wellington

New Zealand Cricket has begun a search for a new head coach to lead the Black Caps in all three formats after ruling out the incumbent Gary Stead, who has been national coach since 2018.

Stead stepped down in April from the white ball formats and said he was considering his future as test coach. NZC hurried his decision when it said Wednesday it is now looking for one coach to cover all formats.

South African Rob Walter, former New Zealand fast bowler Shane Bond and current assistants Luke Ronchi and Shane Jurgensen are expected to be interviewed. Stead coached the Black Caps in 52 test matches, winning 27 including the inaugural World Test Championship. Under his coaching, New Zealand won 56 of 97 one-day internationals and 64 of 119 Twenty20 internationals.

New Zealand was runner-up on a countback of boundaries in the 2019 World Cup and runner-up at the Champions Trophy earlier this year.

Stead took over as head coach from Mike Hesson, who had enjoyed success in company with captain Brendon McCullum.

"Brendon McCullum and Mike Hesson had left the team with strong values and a style of play and I've just tried to build and shape that further to grow our ability to be consistent in everything we do," Stead said.

"It's been nice to be competitive across all three formats and I'd like to think that regardless of results, the opposition know the Black Caps are a team that won't fold and will always show the grit and determination to compete.

India Women to open Asia Cup campaign against Thailand



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

The Indian women's hockey team will open its Asia Cup campaign against Thailand on September 5 before taking on defending champions Japan and Singapore, Hockey India announced on Wednesday.

The Indian team, which claimed the bronze medal in the previous edition, is placed in Pool B along Japan, Thailand and Singapore while Pool A consists of hosts China, Korea, Malaysia, and Chinese Taipei.

The tournament is set to take place in Hangzhou, China, from September 5 to 14 and the winner will get a direct qualification to the 2026 World Cup.

India's second match will be against Japan on September 6, followed by final Pool B contest against Singapore on September 8.

"Being placed in Pool B alongside defending champions Japan will test our skills and character from the very start. However, facing them in the pool stage will be a great opportunity to measure ourselves early in the tournament," India captain Salima Tete said. "Our focus will be on playing smart, disciplined hockey and taking it one match at a time. The ultimate goal is to lift the trophy and earn a direct spot in the 2026 women's FIH Hockey World Cup." Echoing Salima's sentiments, vice-captain Navneet Kaur said, "It will be a challenging tournament with Asia's top teams competing with each other, but we see it as a chance to bring out our best right from the first whistle."

"We've been training with intensity and purpose, and we will aim to execute our plans on the field during the tournament. Playing against Japan in the group stage gives us an early look at high-pressure hockey, which can only help us grow stronger as a unit. We're determined to make this Asia Cup campaign count and make the country proud."

India had won the Asia Cup back in 2017, when they defeated China in the final. According to the format, the top two teams from each pool will advance to the Super 4s Pool, where each team will play one match against each of the other three teams.

The top two teams from the Super 4s Pool will qualify for the final, while the third and fourth placed teams will compete in the 3rd/4th place match. The bottom two teams from Pool A and Pool B will play classification matches to determine the 5th to 8th positions in the tournament.

Diksha to lead contingent of 5 Indians at Tenerife Open

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Canary Islands

Diksha Dagar will lead a five-Indian contingent at the Tenerife Women's Open golf tournament in the Canary Islands this week on the Ladies European Tour (LET), which begins after a mini break. The tournament in Tenerife returns to the schedule for the first time since 2011.

Besides, Diksha, Avani Prashanth, Tvesa Malik, Hitaashee Bakshi and Sneha Singh are the other Indians in the field of 132 players from 35 nations at the Abama Golf Resort.

Pranavi Urs was also in the field but has withdrawn as she is yet to fully recover from her wrist injury.

After nine events this year, Diksha is the top Indian in eighth place on the LET Order of Merit, which decides the yearlong race to crown the Tour's number one player. Diksha has played nine events, made seven cuts and finished in Top-10 four times, including a runner-up finish in Morocco. Avani, at 39th, is the second best Indian on LET Merit list.

The Indian challenge includes the last two Hero Order of Merit winners in India.

LET rookie Hitaashee in two starts has done well to finish T-12 at the Dutch Ladies Open and T-34 at Jabra Ladies, while Sneha will make her first start.

Tvesa in six starts has made only two cuts with T-34 at Jabra Ladies as the best.

The top four of the current 2025 Order of Merit are in the field. They are England's Mimi Rhodes, compatriot Cara Gainer and Czech Republic's Sara Kouskova, who secured her maiden LET victory at Evian Resort. One spot back in the Order of Merit is Chiara Tamburlini, who will no doubt be as confident as anyone in Tenerife after she secured her best ever Major result last week. The Swiss star, winner of the 2024 Order of Merit, recorded a T-14 finish at the testing US Women's Open in Wisconsin, a score helped by rounds of 69-71 to start the week.

The field has 17 home stars, including Nuria Iturrioz, a four-time winner on the LET. The week will also see the return of Carly Booth after a three year injury absence. Booth last played at the Belgian Ladies Open in May 2022 but has since been sidelined due to an ACL injury and had a reconstructive knee surgery.

The three-time LET winner returns this week ahead of several European events in June. The tournament previously took place between 2002-2011 and the Abama Golf course provides a tricky test for the players this week with undulation and sloppy greens.

Spain beats England 2-1 in Nations League

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Barcelona

World champion Spain beat European champion England 2-1 in the UEFA Women's Nations League in their last competitive game before the Lionesses defend their title next month. Spain substitute Clàudia Pina turned the game around by scoring twice within minutes of coming on in the second half on Tuesday after England led thanks to Alessia Russo's goal in the 22nd.

Barcelona forward Pina struck in the 60th and 70th minutes at Espanyol's stadium to ensure Spain topped their Nations League group despite losing 1-0 to England at Wembley Stadium in February.

"The second half, they started really quick," England coach Sarina Wiegman said. "They pressed even higher. We had some trouble to get out of the press and keep the ball." Spain, which also beat England in the 2023 Women's World Cup final, advances to the semifinals in October. The draw is made Friday and will involve defending champion Spain, France, Germany and Sweden. The European Championship is the priority this year, and the 16-team tournament kicks off July 2 in Switzerland.

England routs West Indies to sweep ODI series

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ London



Late start, early finish. England needed just 30 of 40 available overs to beat the West Indies by seven wickets and achieve a 3-0 clean sweep of their one-day international series at the Oval on Tuesday. Jamie Smith's maiden ODI fifty, 64 of the 93-run opening stand in seven overs, launched England's successful assault on the rain-revised target of 246.

The game was delayed twice, first because a traffic lights outage trapped the West Indies bus long enough so the team wasn't even at the ground at the scheduled toss, and secondly for a 90-minute rain break. Without a warmup in the nets, and forced to bat in gloomy bowler-friendly conditions, the West Indies slumped to 28-3 before the rain and 154-7 soon afterward. That it eventually racked up 251-9 was impressive.

Sherfane Rutherford kept the innings alive with 70 off 71 balls, then teammates Gudakesh Motie and Alzarri Joseph, the Nos. 8 and 9 batters, gave their side a fighting chance with a partnership of 91 in 11.2 overs. In the highest ever eighth-wicket ODI stand by the West Indies against England, Motie and Joseph clobbered the host with five sixes and 10 boundaries. Joseph was out to a skier on 41 off 29, and Motie was bowled on the last ball on 63 off 54. Spinner Adil Rashid was the pick of the bowlers with 3-40. England players adapted to the pre-game traffic problems near the Oval by exiting their bus and hiring bicycles to get to the ground.

Smith used more of that dynamic thinking on the fly to deflate West Indies hopes again on his home ground.

Smith blasted 10 boundaries and three sixes before his off stump was bowled by Motie in the seventh over after scoring 64 from 28 deliveries. Smith scored at such a rate that England's 100 in the eight-over powerplay was the fourth fastest in ODIs, and its 121-1 after 10 overs was England's best-ever 10-over total. Ben Duckett propelled England further with 58 from 46, falling at 155-2 with the chase more than half over. The mopping up was left to Joe Root with a casual 44, and Jos Buttler's unbeaten 41.

The teams play three Twenty20s from Friday, starting at Chester-le-Street.

French Open: Lorenzo Musetti beats Frances Tiafoe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Paris



Lorenzo Musetti used his sleek one-handed backhand and sprint-then-slide court coverage to reach his first semifinal at the French Open, and second at a Grand Slam tournament, by beating Frances Tiafoe 6-2 4-6 7-5 6-2 in the same stadium where he won a bronze medal at last year's Olympics.

When the match ended on Tuesday, Musetti, a 23-year-old Italian, rolled up his green shirt's right sleeve and flexed his biceps. No one would be surprised if things get tougher on Friday: That's when Musetti will meet defending champion Carlos Alcaraz for a berth in the championship match. Alcaraz wasn't really tested Tuesday night during a 6-0 6-1 6-4 quarterfinal victory over Number 12 Tommy Paul, who had his right thigh heavily taped and wasn't able to produce his best tennis.

Number 8 seed Musetti and Number 1 Jannik Sinner — who faces unseeded Alexander Bublik in the quarterfinals Wednesday — gave Italy two male quarterfinalists at Roland-Garros for the first time since 1973. Tiafoe also was part of a rare accomplishment for his country: He and Paul were the first American men to get to the round of eight in Paris since Andre Agassi in 2003 — and the first duo to do it in the same year since Jim Courier and Pete Sampras in 1996. But with Tuesday's results, US men are 1-60 since 1999 at the French Open against opponents ranked in the top 10.

In women's action, three-time defending champion Iga Swiatek and No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka both won in straight sets to set up a semifinal showdown on Thursday.

Number 15 Tiafoe, a 27-year-old from Maryland, hadn't dropped a set on the way to the quarterfinals. But he wasn't up to the task against Musetti, a semifinalist at Wimbledon in 2024. Wearing a chain around his neck with a pendant reading "Big Foe" in capital letters, Tiafoe missed all eight first serves in his initial service game and sent a backhand wide to give Musetti a 2-0 lead. Tiafoe looked at his coach, David Witt, and complained about the wind.

"He didn't start as he wanted, but today it was really complicated to play well," Musetti said. "It was so windy and it was difficult to manage to hit properly." At match's end, Musetti had more winners, 44-33, and far fewer unforced errors, 51-32. Still, when two-time US Open semifinalist Tiafoe smacked a forehand to even the match at a set apiece, he let out a roar and shouted: "Let's go! Let's go!"

During that set, Musetti was warned for unsportsmanlike conduct for kicking a tennis ball that inadvertently hit a linesperson. Unlike most top-level tennis tournaments, which rely on electronic line-calling, there are still humans on court at Roland-Garros to decide whether shots land in or out. Told by the postmatch interviewer that he has an elegant game, Musetti joked: "I mean, we are Italian. We are elegant."

The point of the match came in the third set's sixth game.Musetti stretched wide of the doubles alley near the net to reach a shot at a seemingly impossible angle. Tiafoe then did the same in response, sending his near the baseline. Musetti ran and, with his back to the net, twisted his body to somehow flick a low ball back with a half-swing. It worked, though, and Tiafoe - perhaps startled to see the point wasn't over - netted an awkward, shoulder-high volley.

That set swung Musetti's way when he broke in its last game. On a 12-stroke exchange, Tiafoe tried an ill-advised and ill-struck drop shot that the speedy Musetti got to, conjuring up a down-the-line backhand winner. Now it was his turn to punch the air and yell.

He is 13-4 in his French Open career, and three of those losses came against an opponent ranked No. 1 - Novak Djokovic twice, Alcaraz once. The only way he'll need to deal with the top-ranked man this time in Paris is if it's his pal Sinner standing across the net on Sunday with the trophy in the offing.

Theegala has his task cut out as he tees up alongside McIlroy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Toronto

Indian-American Sahith Theegala knows his task is cut out for the next few weeks as he tries to regain the form that took him to world number 11 on the rankings. After missing the cut at the Memorial last week, Theegala will tee up at the RBC Canadian, which will also see Rory McIlroy in action at the TPC Toronto at Osprey Valley (North Course).

Theegala, who has been pushed back by a neck injury and some indifferent form has not had a single Top-10 in 2025 and has slipped to 39th in world rankings. Theegala's best in 2025 has been T-17 at the Genesis Invitational and T-18 at the Zurich Classic, the only team event on the PGA Tour. Though Theegala has missed the cut only twice this year — at the Palmer Invitational and the Memorial and withdrew from the Truist — he has not been able to find his form.

He is also trying to improve on his current FedExCup ranking, which is at 119 and he needs to be inside Top-70 to get into the play-offs in August and he is also hoping to find the rhythm ahead of the Ryder Cup, which has been his goal.

After the RBC Canadian, the schedule has two Majors and six other regular events left on and all Signature events are over. Theegala, who will also play the US Open, is the only Indian angle this week, as Akshay Bhatia has skipped the event ahead of the US Open. Aaron Rai is also sitting out for the Canadian Open. Theegala in his last three starts at the Canadian Open has finished T-53 in 2022, T-38 in 2023 and missed the cut last year. Last year, Robert MacIntyre won this tournament, finishing at 16-under. The field is headlined by two-time tournament champion and world Number 2 Rory McIlroy, who is looking to fine-tune his game one last time before the third major of the year, the US Open. MacIntyre returns to defend his title against a field that includes 2023 champion Nick Taylor, who became the first Canadian to win his national open in 69 years when he defeated Tommy Fleetwood in a playoff, as well as other notable players such as Shane Lowry, Ludvig Aberg and Wyndham Clark.

After missing the cut at the Memorial last week, Theegala will tee up at the RBC Canadian, which will also see Rory McIlroy in action at the TPC Toronto at Osprey Valley (North Course)