


Candid confession

Actor Ananya Panday speaks candidly about privilege, her father, and her career aspirations


LEISURE | **P2**



‘Zero Accident Day’

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi launches ‘Zero Accident Day’ and 55 projects worth ₹575.77 crore in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday


DOWNTOWN | **P3**



Ukraine’s offensive

Ukraine detonates underwater blast targeting key bridge connecting Russia-occupied Crimean peninsula to Russia

INTERNATIONAL | **P10**



Russian oil imports rise

India’s imports of Russian crude oil surge to a 10-month high of 1.96mn barrels per day, driven by continued availability with lesser price than global benchmark

BUSINESS | **P11**

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18-YEAR WAIT ENDS; RCB CLINCH IPL TITLE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, June 3: Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) and Virat Kohli washed away 18 years of hurt and disappointment on a dream Tuesday night, conquering Punjab Kings by six runs to lift their maiden Indian Premier League (IPL) title here Tuesday.

The final turned out to be a battle of nerves and RCB certainly channelled their years of disappointment and pain to come back roaring in the contest and seal a commanding victory.

A partisan crowd did not give up on RCB even as they struggled to find the flourish with the bat and ended up posting a total of 190/9 with superstar Kohli making a laborious 35-ball 43.

At the break, RCB’s total did not look enough but a persistent effort from their bowlers made the scoreboard pressure ultimately work in their favour.

With 29 needed off the final over, RCB’s win was sealed when Josh Hazlewood bowled the second dot ball on the trot.

Shashank Singh struck a valiant 61 not out off 30 balls (3x4s, 6x6s), but his effort came far too late as Punjab Kings ended at 184 for seven.


Hazlewood provided the first breakthrough, Krunal Pandya bowled a dream spell of 4-0-17-2 in a summit clash but it was Romario Shepherd’s dismissal of PBKS’ captain Shreyas Iyer that finally indicated which way the game was headed.

All it took was an innocuous delivery outside off to see the back of the most dangerous batter in the final as Iyer, coming off a terrific knock in Qualifier 2, edged it behind off Shepherd and walked back with his head dropped.

Josh Inglis (39 off 23 balls, 1x4s, 4x6s) made every opportunity count when it came to hitting towards midwicket but Pandya had him caught at long-on in the 13th over.

Thereafter, every dot ball drew appreciation from fans and they were at their loudest when RCB legend AB de Villiers appeared on the big screen on the ground, and also when PBKS were mathematically knocked out.

P12




RCB’s Virat Kohli holds the championship trophy as captain Rajat Patidar and others celebrate during the presentation ceremony of the IPL 2025 at Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad

CM launches ₹205cr projects for Deogarh

Bhubaneswar: In a major fillip to healthcare and education sectors in Deogarh district, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday launched 15 projects, including a 300-bed hospital, worth a total of ₹205 crore. According to official sources, out of the 15 projects, 11 are in healthcare sector and four others are education infrastructure improvement projects. On the occasion, the CM announced a financial assistance package worth ₹41.17 crore for kendu leaf pluckers and binders across the state. As per the package, each kendu leaf plucker will receive ₹160 for slippers, ₹200 for cloth, and ₹100 for hats. Besides, each binder will get ₹700 for mosquito nets and blankets. The package is set to benefit around nine lakh kendu leaf pluckers, binders and seasonal staffers.

P3


IRREGULAR by MANJUL



We tried everything but didn't get an invite. Now it's time for you to announce you're boycotting the event

Four asphyxiated

Utter recklessness during construction of a septic tank has cost the lives of four young labourers in Nabarangpur district, raising concern over adherence to safety protocols while undertaking such works. Reports indicate that proper safety precautions were not adhered to while entering the under-construction septic tank, which was left unventilated for several days, leading to asphyxiation of four daily wagers who entered into the tank in phases. Experts say entry into the tank without testing the air quality for toxic gases might have resulted in the shocking incident. Significantly, asphyxiation is the most common consequence, occurring when the body is deprived of oxygen and suffocation sets in



the next of kin of the deceased out of the CMRF.

According to reports, around 9:30am, Trilochan and Lalu entered the tank at the under-construction site of one Mohan Nag to drain water and carry out centering work. When they did not return after a considerable time, Amiya and Santu climbed down into the tank to check on them. However, none of the four labourers emerged from the tank.

Mohan then alerted the fire brigade and local police. Nabarangpur ASP Aditya Sen, DCP Krushnachandra Bhattacharya, and Nabarangpur Town Police IIC Sambit Kumar Behera reached the spot and took stock of the situation.

The Fire Services personnel found all the four labourers in an unconscious state and rushed them to Nabarangpur District Headquarters Hospital in an ambulance arranged by the police. However, doctors declared all of them dead on arrival. Postmortem examinations were conducted in the afternoon, following which the bodies were

handed over to the families.

The cops registered a case (217/25) against the construction site owner, citing negligence as the cause of the deaths.

Preliminary findings indicate lack of safety precautions and oversight during the construction process. Section 106(1) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 which deals with causing death by negligence, was slapped against the owner.

The IIC confirmed that Red Cross has provided ₹15,000 as immediate financial aid to the families of the deceased.

Experts are of the opinion that the Odisha Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act outlines specific safety measures during construction works. The Act specifies safety measures such as ensuring safe working conditions, providing necessary equipment, and implementing emergency action plans, they said.

Reacting to the incident, Umi Daniel, director of Migration and Education at Aide et Action, emphasised the negligence faced by workers in the informal sector and those in precarious forms of employment. He said, “Workers in the informal sector and those employed under precarious conditions are being neglected. The government should conduct a census of all individuals engaged in informal, precarious, and gig economy jobs.”

Man flings infant daughter to death

POST NEWS NETWORK

Parjang, June 3: In a shocking incident, a man allegedly flung his seven-month-old daughter to death following a heated altercation with his wife at Notaripasi in Kantapal Colony-4 under Kankadahada police limits in Dhenkanal district Monday night.

The accused was identified as Sanjay Chatar, a native of Udasahi village under Raruan police limits in Mayurbhanj district.

Police said that Sanjay had been staying in Notaripasi village, the native place of his wife Janani Munda, after they

got married following a love affair two years ago. However, their relationship turned sour later as Sanjay would frequently assault Janani and torture her over some frivolous issues.

A tiff ensued between them when the couple had gone to the local market to buy rice. Later that night, Sanjay returned home drunk and warned his wife that he will “remove every trace” of their love marriage and violently hurled their infant daughter on the ground resulting in her death.

Hearing the screams, locals rushed to the spot and beat up the accused black and blue before

handing him over to the police.

On being informed, a team of Kankadahada police reached the spot rushed a critically injured Sanjay to Dhenkanal headquarters hospital and later to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack as his condition worsened.

A scientific team accompanied by Kankadahad police IIC Kalpana Behera arrived at the scene, seized the body of the infant, and handed it over to the family after conducting a postmortem. “A case was registered in this connection and further investigations are on,” the IIC said.

Impeachment motion against Justice Varma in next session

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 3: The Union government is set to move an impeachment motion against Allahabad High Court’s Justice Yashwant Varma in Parliament and will seek to build an all-party consensus for action against the judge facing allegations of corruption after the discovery of a large amount of cash from his official residence in Delhi.

Government sources Tuesday said Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju will be speaking to leaders of different parties to get them on board

for the impeachment motion against Varma following his indictment by a three-member probe committee constituted by the Supreme Court.

A fire incident at Varma’s residence in the national capital in March this year, when he was a judge at the Delhi High Court, had led to the discovery of several burnt sacks of cash at the outhouse.

Though Varma claimed ignorance about the cash, the Supreme Court-appointed committee indicted him after speaking to a number of witnesses and recording his statement.

‘Thug Life’: Karnataka HC raps Kamal Haasan

AGENCIES

Bengaluru, June 3: During a hearing on upcoming Tamil film ‘Thug Life’, the Karnataka High Court Tuesday criticised actor and filmmaker Kamal Haasan for his recent remark suggesting that “Kannada was born out of Tamil”, and observed that a “single apology could have resolved the situation.”

Kamal Haasan informed the court that the movie ‘Thug Life’ will not be released in Karnataka June 5, the scheduled date for the pan-India release of the much anticipated movie.

The court posted to June 10 the hearing on his plea seeking adequate security at theatres planning to screen it in the state amidst KFCC boycott.

Justice M Nagaprassanna noted that the producers of the movie have informed that they are not willing to screen the movie in Karnataka, unless there is a dialogue or a tri-ologue involving the Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce.

The court also strongly criticised Haasan for his recent remark suggesting that “Kannada was born out of Tamil”, and observed that a “single apology could have resolved the situation.”

The remark, reportedly made by Haasan at a promotional event in Chennai for his upcoming Tamil film ‘Thug Life’, sparked a backlash in Karnataka, prompting the KFCC to announce that the film would not be screened in the state unless Haasan apologised.

‘Freedom day’ for 200 Pak prisoners as quake spreads panic

Karachi, June 3: More than 200 inmates escaped from a jail in the southern Pakistani city of Karachi late Monday and early Tuesday when they overpowered prison guards after being allowed to leave their cells following a series of earthquakes, local officials and police said.

The jailbreak began just before midnight and continued into the early hours of Tuesday after hundreds of prisoners were allowed into the courtyard of the District Malir prison because of the tremors, Zia-ul-Hasan Lanjar, the provincial law minister, told reporters at the scene Tuesday.


Police said the prisoners snatched guns from prison staff

and forced open the main gate after a shootout, evading paramilitary soldiers. At least one prisoner was killed and three guards wounded, said Provincial Police Chief Ghulam Nabi Memon.

“I heard the firing for quite some time and then some time later prisoners made their way out running in all directions,” Bukhsh, a private security guard at a residential complex opposite the jail who goes by a single name, told Reuters.

He added that some of the prisoners entered the apartment complex before being taken away by police.

On Tuesday, a Reuters reporter who visited the prison saw shattered glass and damaged electronic equipment. A



meeting room, for prisoners to see their families, had been ransacked. Anxious family members had gathered outside.

The jailbreak was one of the largest ever in Pakistan, Lanjar said. The prison, which houses 6,000 inmates, is in the Malir district of Karachi, Pakistan’s biggest city.

Prisoners ran through the area throughout the night, some

HIGHLIGHTS

- Jail officials allowed inmates into courtyard after tremors
- Prisoners snatched guards' guns and started shootout
- At least one prisoner killed, three guards hurt
- About 80 inmates have been apprehended

The jail’s superintendent, Arshad Shah, told reporters that there were 28 prison guards on duty at night, and that “only a few of such a large number of prisoners escaped”. He said the prison did not have security cameras. Officials said the inmates, many of them heroin users, had been unnerved by the earthquakes.

“There was panic here because of earthquake tremors,” said Lanjar. The provincial chief minister said it was a mistake for prison authorities to have allowed the prisoners to leave their cells. He urged the inmates still at large to hand themselves in, or face a serious charge for breaking out. “Petty crime charges will become a big case like terrorism,” Shah said.

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You will make material progress today, says Ganesha. Naturally, you want to share this abundance with your family. Ganesha suggests you give them more quality time. You may also want to take time out to pray and meditate and thank the almighty for favours received.

TAURUS
Good luck will trail you like your shadow today, predicts Ganesha. You are likely to get good news from out of the country in the afternoon. You may take a chance and express your hidden feelings to someone special. Overall, you will have a hassle-free frame of mind.

GEMINI
Today, you will look more presentable than ever, predicts Ganesha. At work, you will employ new business strategies to succeed. By evening, you will give a demo of your supreme sense for style, especially when it comes to dressing up. Your spouse will be enamoured by your new avatar.

CANCER
Ganesha predicts success for your efforts to strengthen your status or prestige through collective activities. Your kind and generous attribute will see you cross a new peak. You will spend resources for an entertainment or recreational pursuit. Get ready for a hectic and fun-filled day, says Ganesha.

LEO
Today, you will think with your heart, not with your mind, says Ganesha. While that is a good thing sometimes, it may blur your analytical logic. If you happen to be in the business of money-lending, you can be assured of a fantastic afternoon wherein you will rake in profits. Just remember that there is no substitute for hard work.

VIRGO
Lady Luck is your date for the day today. Good tidings bear their way to you from distant lands, and may be across the seas too. Chances are you make take an initiative to let the cat of love out of the bag. Your outlook will be free of confusion today, says Ganesha

LIBRA
For every matter, there is a particular solution unique to it. With your systematic approach to things, you are a firm believer of this statement. And it is a good thing too, since today, this habit shall help you grab the limelight at work, says Ganesha. In the second-half of the day, your eye for detail will go a long way in enhancing your insight. You will spend the evening buying electronic gadgets: the latest cellphone or music player, you have your eyes set on something along those lines today.

SCORPIO
A turn of tide in fortunes of life awaits you today, predicts Ganesha. The way you think – or not – will affect your health as much. Evenings may be spent in the pleasant company of friends and family, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
A lucky day for you as you go in for improving your appearance. Your social status will be boosted too. Your brainstorm will propel you into the limelight, so be prepared to receive much adulation. Expect people to get gaga over you, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN
You will love to play God today, and may make use of every tactic of the power game to yield the desired results, says Ganesha. A clear thought process and non-judgmental attitude will show you a new direction to life, but you will have to be focused to meet success. Going by your instincts will not do you any harm unless, of course, you are up to something suicidal.

AQUARIUS
The stars foretell some good news from foreign shores. Also, you will be focused entirely on work. If you are striving to discover innovative ways to achieve speed, accuracy and efficiency, you may succeed today. Ganesha advises you to keep up the hard work

PISCES
In times of adversity, it is your loved ones who will stand you in good stead, and it is your patience and persistence which will get you home. Your actions today will demonstrate your dedication and sincerity to the job at hand, says Ganesha.



THOMPSON TO BE FETED AT LOCARNO FILM FEST

Academy Award winning star Emma Thompson will be honoured by the Locarno Film Festival where her latest action thriller *The Dead of Winter* by Brian Kirk, which she executive produced, will have its world premiere.

CAMERON CO-WRITES FOR THE DEVILS ADAPTATION

Filmmaker James Cameron, whose credits include *Titanic*, *The Terminator*, and the *Avatar* franchise, is set to write a script for the movie adaptation of the best-selling novel *The Devils* by Joe Abercrombie. Both will write the script for the upcoming project.



Triptii's happy place

MUMBAI: Bollywood actress Triptii Dimri opened up about the special place where she finds true peace and comfort.

Sharing heartfelt moments from her recent trip to the hills, the *Animal* actress revealed that the hills and mountains hold a deep connection to her soul and offer her a sanctuary away from the hustle of daily life. Tuesday, Triptii shared a video capturing serene moments from her trip to the hills. In the video, she is seen enjoying the gentle rain while sitting on a rock, peacefully gazing at the lush green hills surrounding her. She also delights in making and savoring a simple meal of Maggi amidst the tranquil natural setting, embracing

the calm and simplicity that the hills offer.

Sharing this clip, the *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3* actress wrote, "Where my heart feels most at ease." Dimri also added the trending song *Pahadon Mein* by Salman Elahi to her video.

On the professional front, she is set to star alongside Prabhas in an exciting new venture. *Spirit* will be Triptii's debut collaboration with the *Baahubali* star. The *Bulbbul* actress will also star opposite Siddhant Chaturvedi in Shazia Iqbal's *Dhadak 2*. In addition, Triptii has an exciting slate of upcoming projects, including Arjun Ustara, Ma Behan, *Animal* Park and an untitled film starring Yash.

AGENCIES



MUMBAI: Actor Nushrratt Bharuccha has finally addressed the controversy surrounding a viral video that appeared to show her pushing a fellow model on the ramp at a recent fashion event. In an interview, Nushrratt clarified what really happened, explaining that the person she moved wasn't a professional model but a student designer unfamiliar with

runway etiquette.

She said the loud music and backstage instructions created confusion, and she was simply following protocol by moving to the centre of the ramp. "It's not about being a showstopper," she added. "Any model knows the basics—walk to the centre, pause, and turn. That's just runway standard." The viral moment had drawn criticism online, with many

Nushrratt opens up about ramp fiasco

accusing her of showing unnecessary attitude and overshadowing others.

Nushrratt emphasised that her intention was never to dismiss or disrespect anyone, and her actions were part of maintaining the flow of the show.

On the work front, Nushrratt was recently seen in *Chhorii 2*, directed by Vishal Furia. A sequel to the 2021 horror hit, the film featured Soha Ali Khan and Gashmeer Mahajani, and is currently streaming on Prime Video. While the performances earned praise, the film received mixed reactions for its lack of scares.

AGENCIES



Pankaj for reasonable work hours

MUMBAI: Actor Pankaj Tripathi has sparked a crucial conversation around the demanding work hours in the film industry, echoing sentiments recently raised by Deepika Padukone. In an interview, the *OMG 2* actor candidly

revealed the toll of excessive work schedules, sharing that he often finds himself working 16-18 hours a day. "Right now, I'm practicing saying 'no.' Everyone should know where the boundary is—that this is the line, and beyond this, it's a polite 'no,'" he stated.

The *Mimi* actor emphasised that even actors, often perceived as privileged, face burnout due to overextended shifts. "The work hours are getting stretched. I'm even saying, the actor has left, but the labourers are still waiting," he remarked, highlighting the ripple effect of such long days on the entire crew.

He also shared that he's learning to protect his well-being by setting firm boundaries. "At this point, you should just politely say, 'No, this is all that can be done. This is what we committed to, and we've fulfilled that commitment. Thank you. Whatever is left, we'll do tomorrow.'"

Pankaj's voice adds weight to the growing call for healthier, more humane working conditions in the entertainment industry.

AGENCIES

ANANYA'S CONFESSION

MUMBAI: Actor Ananya Panday, who made her debut with *Student of the Year 2* in 2019, recently spoke candidly about privilege, her father, and her career aspirations. In a recent interview, she acknowledged her privileged background, stating, "I've always said I know I'm privileged. There are probably people out there who are more talented, better looking, and more hard-working than I am. But I've been given this opportunity, and I don't want to waste it."

Ananya also opened up about her father, veteran actor Chunky Panday, expressing pride in being his daughter. "I've taken the shame out of being privileged and look at it with pride. My father, the son of two doctors, chased his dream to become an actor and succeeded. If I can carry forward his legacy and make him proud, that will be my biggest achievement," she said. Ananya added that she doesn't shy away from her identity, nor does she see it as a burden anymore.

On the work front, Ananya will be seen with Kartik Aaryan in *Tu Meri Main Tera, Main Tera Tu Meri*, releasing February 13, 2026. She also stars in *Chand Mera Dil* with Lakshya, set to release in 2025.

AGENCIES



SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.

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

SOLUTIONS

H	K	P	G	F	S
B	A	R	I	T	O
T	E	C	U	A	
T	E	M	P	E	S
E	D	E	T	A	T
S	U	R	R	E	A
N	M	H	A		
U	R	S	A	J	A
A	R	Y	A	R	A
A	V	E	C	C	I
E	A	I	E	L	A
G	L	A	D	D	I
S	E	S	T	T	S

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

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5
6			7	
8			9	
10	11		12	
13				
14		15		16
17			18	
19				20
21				
22				23

- Across**
6 Takes a break
7 Mason's material
8 New Zealand bird
9 Took in, as food
10 Ham it up
12 Wine bottle measures
14 Baby's toy
- Down**
16 Looks after
19 Tiny aquarium (4,4)
20 Mah-jongg piece
22 Prickly plant
23 City in Veneto
- Old Roman port**
4 Desk item
5 Stroked
7 Noisy bird
11 Almond paste confection
13 Knockabouts
15 Papeete locale
17 Bistro
18 Drink garnish
21 Camera part

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

TPSODL strengthens power infrastructure in Malkangiri district

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, June 3: Tata Power Southern Odisha Distribution Limited (TPSODL) has successfully upgraded the Mathili Primary Sub-Station (PSS) in Malkangiri district, a region known for its rugged terrain and predominantly tribal population. This enhancement ensures a more stable and reliable electricity supply to thousands of residents in one of state's most remote areas.

Malkangiri in southern Odisha known for its picturesque landscapes, dense forests, and rich tribal heritage. It is home to several indigenous communities, contributing to its vibrant cultural identity. The Mathili PSS previously operated with two power transformers—a 5 MVA unit and a 3.15 MVA unit. With the latest upgrade, the 3.15 MVA transformer has been replaced with a new 5 MVA transformer, increasing the substation's total capacity to 10 MVA.

TPSODL CEO Amit Kumar Garg emphasised the importance of this upgrade, stating, "The upgrade of Mathili Primary Sub-Station is a step toward ensuring uninterrupted and quality electricity for the people of Malkangiri. By enhancing capacity, we are improving power reliability in this tribal-dominated, hilly region. Our commitment remains strong in strengthening infrastructure and empowering communities with seamless energy access."

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Narasinghpur on dt.22.04.2025, I, Smt. Chandrakanti Naik, D/o. Sibaram Naik and W/o. Anil Kumar Naik, At- Bhitarkarikol, Ward No. 13., P.O.- Kantol, P.S.- Athagarh, Dist.- Cuttack, Odisha, Pin 754029 have changed my name from Chandrakanti Naik to Sibani Naik for all purposes.

Before the Notary Public, Bargarh, Affidavit No.164, dt. 21.05.2025, I, Sunil Kumar Agrawal, S/o. Kailash Prasad Agrawal, Ward No.1, Nadipara, Kailash Hardware Store, Bargarh do hereby declare that in my daughter's old passport my name recorded as Sunil Agrawal instead of Sunil Kumar Agrawal. Hereafter I shall be known as Sunil Kumar Agrawal for all future purposes.

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Notary Public, Birmaharajpur, dated 29.05.25, I, Srikara Padhan, R/o. Village- Baraghat, P.O.- Khandahata, P.S.- Subalaya, Dist.- Subarnapur declare that I wish to correction of my Name and DOB from Shrikar Padhan, DOB- 15.04.2005 to Srikara Padhan, DOB- 20.01.2005 in my Aadhaar card for all purposes. Srikara Padhan

Comprehensive database of water resources soon



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 3: Odisha will create a comprehensive database of all water resources, spanning from the village level to the state level. This initiative will mark the first complete census of water resources in the state, undertaken at the behest of the Ministry of Jal Shakti, department of Water Resources, River Development, and Ganga Rejuvenation, official sources said Tuesday.

The censuses will be carried out using a Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) system and a web-based application. The initiative comprises four censuses—Census of

major and medium irrigation, the first census of springs, the second census of water bodies, and the seventh census of minor irrigation.

For the first time, this effort is being conducted in a coordinated and convergent manner by the Water Resources and Planning & Convergence departments which represents a unique example of users and producers of statistics working together to ensure better data quality.

Development Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief Secretary Anu Garg said, "This comprehensive database will be crucial for planning the state's water resources for irrigation, industry, pisciculture, and for human and

animal consumption."

Senior officials from various stakeholder departments participated, including the Water Resources, Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water, Electronics and Information Technology, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Chief Engineer (Minor Irrigation), Odisha Lift Irrigation Corporation, Central Ground Water Board, and State Ground Water Board.

The focus of the initiative will be on the effective implementation of the irrigation and spring censuses to capture quality data.

Garg emphasised the importance of a coordinated and convergent approach among all stakeholders to ensure accurate data collection and the creation of a comprehensive database of the state's water resources.

At the district level, the superintending engineer, executive engineer, and Planning and Statistics deputy director will work together in a coordinated manner to ensure the successful completion of the census operations.



DIRE SITUATION: Staffers at Bhanja Kala Mandap in Bhubaneswar clear the water-logged floor of the auditorium after a brief spell of rain lashed the Capital city Tuesday

OP PHOTO

Buddha's holy relics return after exposition tour in Vietnam

The relics, escorted by a Central government delegation, led by Odisha Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati, will be ceremoniously received at the Palam Air Force Station by the officials of International Buddhist Confederation along with senior Indian monks



PNN/AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 3: The month-long exposition of Lord Buddha's holy relics, spanning multiple cities in Vietnam, drew over 17 million devotees, officials Monday said.

The sacred relics, enshrined at a vihara in Uttar Pradesh's Sarnath, had reached Ho Chi Minh City May 2.

These relics returned to India on the night of June 2 in an Indian Air Force (IAF) aircraft

after an overwhelming spiritual response during their exposition tour across Vietnam, said a senior official.

The sacred relics of Lord Buddha were taken to that country for the exposition during the gala celebrations of the United Nations Day of Vesak being hosted by Vietnam.

"An extraordinary spiritual movement swept across Vietnam as millions of devotees participated in a historic veneration pilgrimage of the Bud-

dha's sacred relics from India.

"The sacred tour, spanning multiple revered locations from the south to the north of the country, drew more than 17.8 million devotees in total, uniting Buddhists and spiritual seekers in a profound display of reverence and cultural solidarity," the Ministry of Culture said in a statement Monday.

Ay Thanh Tam Monastery, Ho Chi Minh City, from May 3 to 8, the exposition drew 18,77,000 devotees at Tam Chuc

Kambhampati bats for Odisha-Da Nang ties

Odisha Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati proposed exploring province-level ties between Odisha and Da Nang in Vietnam. He put forth the proposal during a meeting with Le Trung Chinh, the chairman of the Da Nang People's Committee, a statement issued by the Raj Bhavan said Tuesday. He said Odisha has a rich history, strong cultural traditions, and fast economic growth. "We also have many important Buddhist sites. If Da Nang is interested, we can explore building ties between our two regions," he said. Kambhampati said Buddhism has been a strong link between India and Vietnam for nearly 1,800 years. He said India values its Buddhist heritage and is working to protect and promote Buddhist sites. Cooperation between the two countries is expanding in areas like trade, defence, tourism, health, digital economy, education, and sustainable development, he said. More direct flights between the two countries have helped improve people-to-people contact, he added.

Pagoda, Ha Nam Province, from May 17-19, over two million devotees; and at Quan Su Pagoda, Hanoi, May 13-17, over seven million devotees, including two million at the central relic procession, according to data shared by the ministry.

"Originally scheduled to conclude May 21, the exposition was extended until June 2 upon special request by the Government of Vietnam due to the spiritually charged atmosphere and growing public reverence," the ministry said in a statement earlier May 30.

The relics, escorted by a Cen-

tral government delegation, led by Odisha Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati, will be ceremoniously received at the Palam Air Force Station by the officials of International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) along with senior Indian monks, the ministry added.

The holy relics of Lord Buddha were transported to Vietnam by the special IAF aircraft from the Hindan Air Base in Ghaziabad, befitting the status of a 'State Guest'.

The holy relics hold special significance for the Buddhist community around the world and their exposition in Vietnam

took place for the first time.

Following their arrival in Delhi, the holy relics will be placed on public exposition at the National Museum for a day from the morning of Tuesday (June 3).

A formal prayer meeting will be held in the afternoon by senior monks, the secretary general of the IBC and representatives of the diplomatic corps. The relics will depart Delhi in a presidential cavalcade Wednesday (June 4) with full protocol reserved for the Heads of State. They will be escorted to Sarnath via Varanasi, where they will be ceremonially enshrined at Mulagandha Kuti Vihar.

H&UD Minister inspects monsoon prep in Capital

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 3: With the early onset of monsoon rains in the state, Minister for Housing and Urban Development Krushna Chandra Mahapatra reviewed the monsoon preparedness and took stock of the drainage situation in the Capital city Tuesday.

Accompanied by senior officials and engineers from Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), Mahapatra inspected several waterlogging-prone areas, including the ISKCON Temple site near Krishna Tower, Kalinga Studio Square near Ayurvedic Hospital, Rajiv Nagar, Esplanade Mall and Durga Mandap in Bomikhal and major drain channels (Drain no 9 & 4) in the City.

The Minister expressed concern over blockages and delays in cleaning operations and issued immediate instructions for the deployment of additional manpower and machinery to speed up desilting and clearing of drains on war footing.

Following the field visit, the minister reviewed the overall monsoon preparedness across



The minister reviews the overall monsoon preparedness across the state with 115 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) through video conference, warns officials against any negligence

the state with 115 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) through video conference. Key focus areas and discussion included sanitation, drainage readiness, revenue

generation, holding tax collection, and preparatory plans for the 'One Year Celebration' of departmental initiatives.

"Any lapses or negligence leading to waterlogging or public inconvenience would invite strict accountability. The safety and convenience of citizens during monsoon is non-negotiable," Mahapatra emphasised.

H&UD principal secretary Usha Padhee advised all ULBs to rigorously follow the SOPs issued by the department and assured that full support will be extended wherever needed. "Officers must remain proactive and ready to face any challenge," she added.

Environmentalist Bapi Gochhayat appeals citizens to use bicycle

Paradip: The increasing environmental pollution has become a major threat to human society and the living world. Starting from the country's Capital Delhi to industrial cities Paradip and Angul in the state, dust, smoke and air pollution has increased massively. Population growth and the excessive use of fossil fuels in vehicles emit harmful and polluting gases in the environment, resulting in rise of global temperature. In this context, environment activist Bapi Gochhayat, with the help of Paradip Municipality celebrated 'World Bicycle Day' here Tuesday. Students from various nearby schools participated in this initiative. With an aim to use bicycle in order to commute to nearby places, to remain fit and keep peace of mind, the day is celebrated across the globe. On the occasion, 35 students started their journey from light house near Paradip beach and cycled to Paradip bus stand, creating awareness through slogans and urged the workers and residents of the City to use bicycle to their workplace or to commute to nearby market. At the event, Preeti Ranjan Padhi of Paradip Municipality, Sanjit Kumar Jena of Saraswati Sishu Mandir and youths, including Sachitananda Kandar, Bishwajit Swain, Subham Balarsingh were present in the programme.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	85.72 ▲ 0.19	SENSEX	80737.51 ▼ 636.24	GOLD	₹96,560 ▼ ₹364
EURO	97.89 ▲ 0.09	NIFTY	24542.50 ▼ 174.10	SILVER	₹101,129 ▲ ₹118

WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	37.8°	37.8°	Partly cloudy sky
Min Temp	28.5°	27.4°	
Humidity	97%	62%	
Rainfall	57.2mm	Nil	

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.



Turning Right

Poland’s Right-wing Opposition candidate Karol Nawrocki, backed by the nationalist Law and Justice Party (PiS) and US President Donald Trump’s administration, narrowly won the presidential election securing 50.89 per cent vote against liberal Warsaw Mayor Rafał Trzaskowski’s 49.11 per cent. The result was a dramatic shift from initial exit poll results released immediately after voting ended. In that survey, which had a 2 percentage point margin of error, Trzaskowski was shown the winner garnering 50.3 per cent vote compared to 49.7 per cent for Nawrocki. The turnout was 71.6 per cent. Right-wing advances in Poland come close on the heels of victory by liberal forces in Romania only a few weeks back.

The results are a clear indication of the growing frustration of the people, especially young voters, with the brand of politics practised by established liberal parties that have failed to deliver. Europe is being swept by Far-Right parties for this very reason. Traditional voters are seemingly tired of pro-immigration, pro LGBTQ and other policies of Left parties and the trend shows the populace is reposing faith in parties that swear by regional interests and nationalism, no matter whether it is pseudo or genuine. Nawrocki, backed by the nationalist PiS and also by the Trump administration, could rightly gauge the mood of the Polish population whom he won over with his promise of pulling Poland away from the European mainstream in a more populist direction.

A Nawrocki victory deals a body blow to the government of Prime Minister Donald Tusk which has already been plagued by many of its legislative efforts blocked by PiS-aligned incumbent President Andrzej Duda. The election result is likely to have repercussions in bigger proportions. Though the president under Polish constitution has no powers to rule the country, he has the veto power to every legislative measure of the government. Tusk should now be prepared for challenges from the new president to what he wants in the form of legislations.

Rubbing salt into Tusk’s injuries, Nawrocki said in his speech immediately after the polls closed: “We will save Poland, we will not allow the power of Donald Tusk to be complete.” Hence, Nawrocki’s presidency means a high level conflict between the president and the prime minister leading to governance paralysis for all practical purposes. It is clear that it will be difficult for the government to implement key reforms because the president can stall most of them.

The Polish presidency is essentially a ceremonial function, and the government is in charge of foreign policy, but the president can veto legislation or send it for judicial review. The Tusk-led coalition does not have the votes in parliament to override that. This is why Nawrocki could to make it very difficult for the PM to govern. Watchers of Polish politics say the Opposition camp, now led by Nawrocki, may also strive for early parliamentary polls, though it is not clear if the gamble will pay off.

The victory of Nawrocki offers important lessons to liberal politicians as he emerged like a phoenix battling a series of revelations about his past. He is accused of helping arrange prostitutes for guests of a luxury hotel while working as a security guard. He is also known to have taken part in fights as a football hooligan and that he acquired an apartment from a pensioner under questionable circumstances. Even these could not deter conservative voters from strongly backing Nawrocki since they were worried about Trzaskowski’s liberal record as mayor of Warsaw, where he supported LGBTQ+ rights and did not see eye to eye with the powerful Roman Catholic Church hierarchy on many issues.

Nawrocki ran on the ticket of making Poland “normal,” hinting strongly he would fight the EU’s federalist tendencies, oppose climate policy, torpedo attempts to give more rights to LGBTQ+ people or relax Poland’s strict abortion rights.

These are familiar election pledges being mouthed by Far-Right forces in many countries in Europe, which have been facing growing immigration problems in recent times. It is time for Left leaning parties and leaders to tune in to the voice of the people.

WISDOM CORNER

- Power is given only to those who dare to lower themselves and pick it up. Only one thing matters, one thing; to be able to dare!

FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY
- This is my simple religion. There is no need for temples; no need for complicated philosophy. Our own brain, our own heart is our temple; the philosophy is kindness.

DALAI LAMA
- Even a happy life cannot be without a measure of darkness, and the word happy would lose its meaning if it were not balanced by sadness. It is far better take things as they come along with patience and equanimity.

CARL JUNG

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1783:** Joseph-Michel and Jacques-Étienne Montgolfier launched an uncrewed hot-air balloon, the first public demonstration of the discovery that hot air in a large lightweight bag rises. The flight of the Montgolfière lasted only about 10 minutes, but it secured the French inventors a place in the history books.
- 1796:** Napoleon Bonaparte commanded the Siege of Mantua, which resulted in the exclusion of Austrians from northern Italy.
- 1913:** British suffragette Emily Davison entered the racetrack during the Epsom Derby and moved in front of King George V’s horse, which struck her; she died four days later and became a martyr to the cause of women’s suffrage.
- 1919:** The Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which gave women the right to vote, was passed by the Senate, two weeks after being approved by the House of Representatives; the amendment was ratified the following year.
- 1940:** Dunkirk evacuation ended. Following a massive rescue effort that included civilian boats, the withdrawal of Allied troops trapped at Dunkirk, France, was completed on this day during World War II; more than 300,000 soldiers were saved.
- 1989:** Poland holds the first free elections after World War II. The landslide victory of the Polish trade union, “Solidarity”, marked the beginning of the Autumn of Nations, a wave of revolutions resulting in the fall of communism.

power post

FOCUS POLITICS

THE QATARI PLANE

Remember the airplane that Qatar gave Donald Trump? It was just over a week ago that the American president accepted this \$400 million “gift” from the Gulf monarchy – a move that was somehow certified as legal by his attorney general, Pam Bondi, herself a former lobbyist for Qatar. In the days since, Trump has doled out seats for a private dinner to the largest holders of his personal “memeocoin.” With Trump, the corrupt conduct has come so fast that it is hard to keep up, making it difficult for public opinion to focus on any particular scandal.

Yet there is something special about the plane story. It sheds more light on the peculiarities of Trump’s regime in comparison to other kleptocracies, and it may foreshadow future political turbulence for what is already the most corrupt administration in US history.

The backstory is that, after receiving a private tour of the Qatari Boeing 747 – a gilded “palace in the sky” – in Florida, Trump is said to have become fixated on it. Boeing’s delivery of new Air Force One jets apparently has been delayed until 2027 or later, and here was a plane with all Trump’s favourite trappings: gold (whether real or fake) and an excess of ornamentation in a style that one architecture critic calls “regional car dealership rococo.”

Originally, palaces served as the residences of Roman emperors. By mixing official administration and private life, they signaled that the state belonged to a particular person. Thus, as an aesthetic form, the palace is fundamentally inappropriate in a democracy (unless, as in some former or current monarchies, there are clear design choices that distance the occupant from anything resembling dictator chic).

Trump’s total disregard for the functional requirements of Air Force One further demonstrates that he is mainly interested in a made-for-



Even die-hard Trump supporters are queasy about his taking ‘sacks of goodies’ from a state known for funding Hamas. The supposedly ‘free’ gift might yet turn out to be politically costly

TV presidency. Only what is immediately visible matters. Never mind that it may take years to bring the “flying palace” up to standard (Air Force One is supposed to be a flying command post capable of surviving nuclear war, free of any enemy listening devices). The fact that this process might cost billions is secondary to the immediate impression of getting a great “deal” and basking in the ersatz glamor of Gulf state royalty.

No wonder Trump’s administration has ended up being staffed by inexperienced – and, in more than one case, evidently incompetent – TV talking heads, mostly from Fox News. But even more important, the plane signals to everyone that America’s president is open for business and eager to monetise his office. As South African President Cyril Ramaphosa put it during his recent visit to the White House: “I am sorry I don’t have a plane to give you.”

In this regard, the Trump regime is fundamentally different from other autocracies in which the ruler enriches himself and his family. After all, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán have always been careful to hide their ill-gotten wealth. The murdered Russian dissident Alexei Navalny was targeted precisely because he exposed

Putin’s corruption, offering undeniable evidence of “Putin’s Palace” on the Black Sea. Similarly, Orbán faces growing public scrutiny of his son-in-law, one of the country’s richest individuals.

Thus, when it comes to corruption, Trump is in a class of his own. Since he has always sold himself as a successful businessman, any new venture – no matter how obvious the conflict of interest – appears to strengthen his brand. And unlike other aspiring autocrats, he does not worry about international organisations, let alone international opinion. There is no need, for example, to try to fool the European Commission into thinking that European Union funds are not being siphoned off to your cronies and family – as Orbán has long taken pains to do.

On the contrary, by having his attorney general shut down anti-kleptocracy units and abolish penalties for US companies paying bribes abroad, Trump is sending a clear signal that self-dealing is now the business of America. And once people are convinced that everyone is corrupt, those truly committed to kleptocracy have won the game.

Americans are learning the hard way that simply exposing corruption takes you only so far. There is a long-running pattern of right-wing populists coming to power as great an-

ti-corruption crusaders, only to extend the swamp. It is naive to think that such flagrant betrayals will doom them politically. All too often, they convince their followers that corruption is not corruption, but rather a legitimate part of the mass clientelism typical of populist regimes. The “real people” get benefits and bureaucratic favours (including clemency), while everyone else gets nothing.

Other populist tricks work only in particular contexts. For example, former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, shadowed by accusations of tax fraud throughout his career, would wink at Italians: “Everyone is doing it. I’m just particularly good at it.” If this sounds familiar, that is because Trump said much the same thing when he ran for the presidency in 2016. But he has gone further than Berlusconi in actually gutting the tax authority, making things easier for cheats.

That said, the Qatari plane scandal could disrupt the pattern of impunity. As evidence of brazen corruption, it is much easier to grasp than, say, abstract schemes to profit from cryptocurrency purchases (at least until a financial crash that affects everyone). It can also be read as a flying admission of failure. Have we really reached the point where a major US company, Boeing, can no longer deliver equipment on time to the most powerful person in the world? One is reminded of the East German leaders who were ferried around in Volvos – a tacit acknowledgement that the state socialist regime’s industrial capacities were insufficient.

Last but not least, even die-hard Trump supporters are queasy about his taking “sacks of goodies” from a state known for funding Hamas. The supposedly “free” gift might yet turn out to be politically costly.

The writer is Professor of Politics at Princeton University ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

IN JEST THIS

Climbing Everest is quite a feat



Melvin Durai

THANKFULLY, COMMERCIAL PLANES ARE PROHIBITED FROM FLYING OVER MOUNT EVEREST, PREVENTING PEOPLE LIKE ME FROM EASILY CHECKING OFF A BUCKET LIST ITEM

Many people have bucket lists — lists of things they’d like to do before they die, such as running a marathon, swimming across the English Channel or getting gored by a bull in Spain.

I’ve never written a bucket list, but if I did, climbing Mount Everest would definitely be one of the things I’d leave out.

I’m not going to fool myself into thinking I could ever climb Mount Everest, especially since I lose my breath just watching other people climbing.

Climbing can be exhausting, as I realised recently when I made my way to the 21st floor of a building. I had to catch my breath several times as people got on and off the elevator.

Mount Everest is 8,849 metres high, which is like climbing 50,000 steps, according to Glorious Eco Trek Nepal. That’s 3,000 to 4,000 flights of stairs, depending on the number of steps in each flight. At my age and physical con-

dition, I’d want to take only two flights: one flight onto a plane, and another flight to the mountain top.

There’d be no landing spot, of course, so I’d have to use a parachute, which would result in me achieving three bucket list items: (1) Getting to the top of Mount Everest; (2) skydiving; and (3) being carried on a stretcher.

Thankfully, commercial planes are prohibited from flying over Mount Everest, preventing people like me from easily checking off a bucket list item. Anyone who wants to climb Mount Everest has to do it the hard way. I’d never be able to make it to the summit even once, so I’m full of awe when I hear about Kami Rita Sherpa, a Nepali guide who recently broke his own record by reaching the summit for the 31st time.

Climbing Mount Everest 31 times is a huge achievement. It’s like walking barefoot 31 times across Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in the middle of the road during the hottest month,

while holding a sign that says, “The crown prince is evil.” Your chances of survival are slim, unlike the prince.

Kami Rita is 55, an age when many people are counting down the years to retirement and would never attempt a mountain climb. But Kami Rita has been doing it since 1994, when he was 24, guiding other climbers as they achieve their dreams of reaching Everest’s summit.

During his latest climb, he led a team of 22 Indian Army members and 27 fellow Sherpas to the summit.

“I’m proud of this achievement,” he told the New York Times. “As a guide, I fulfilled the long-cherished dreams of climbers to stand atop the world’s highest point. I’m happy that I fulfilled their dreams this year as well.”

The biggest lesson he has learned over the years is about valuing life. “Taking clients to the summit is not the ultimate success; bringing them safely back to the base of the moun-

tain is more important,” he said. “Reuniting clients with their families is the greatest achievement.”

Yes, there’s no point in making it to the top if you can’t make it to the bottom and be admired by bottom-dwellers like me. You can take photos at the top, but you can’t share them online until you have wifi at the bottom.

While Kami Rita’s record is impressive, so is the record set by another climber, Tashi Gyalzen Sherpa, 29, who reached the summit of Everest four times in just 15 days. How is that possible? I have no idea, but someone needs to check if Tashi Gyalzen has a twin brother.

Whatever the case, he deserves not just the hero’s welcome he received in Kathmandu, but also a statue (or twin statues).

As for me, I’m not contemplating Mount Everest. I’m contemplating a comfy reclining chair, which is easy to mount and gives me “ever rest.”

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

OrissaPOST
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Truth in crossfire

Sir, This refers to “Trumpeting claims,” Orissa Post, June 3. US President Donald Trump’s repeated assertions that the US. brokered the ceasefire during Operation Sindoor clash head-on with India’s official version—one rooted in direct military negotiations between Indian and Pakistani commanders. The discrepancy isn’t just diplomatic; it’s strategic misinformation. Operation Sindoor saw India emerge decisively dominant, forcing Pakistan into de-escalation. In that context, Trump’s claims appear less about facts and more about self-serving global posturing. His history of inconsistency, fickle-minded statements, and an obsession with grabbing credit—even on grave international matters—makes his narrative suspect. Such false or inflated claims are not new in the fog of war. Truth becomes a hostage—twisted, withheld, or weaponised to suit political agendas. For India, acknowledging US brokerage would dilute its hard-won leverage and military success. For Trump, it’s a convenient story to amplify global relevance. In the case of Operation Sindoor, expecting clear, unfiltered truth is naïve, too. What remains are conflicting versions shaped by ego, ambition, and political theatre. Until independently verified, Trump’s claims are just that—claims.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Attacks on universities

Sir, Universities across the world are facing an intensifying wave of political interference, financial disinvestment and ideological attacks. Nothing illustrates this better than the recent episode of Harvard, for which the Trump administration froze billions of federal funds. Ironically, at a time when advances in biotechnology, engineering and artificial intelligence are poised to transform science and medicine and improve lives of people globally, American universities are struggling to respond to increased political control and the prospect of draconian funding cuts. The academic and institutional autonomy and the scientific process promoted and championed by former president George Bush for generations as a core principle, are under threat in the Trump regime now. Attacks on universities with political meddling and gains, will not only harm education and students’ careers, but importantly will have a disastrous effect on society at large.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Heavy rains trigger floods across Northeast

The flood situation in the Northeast remained critical as the toll due to deluge and landslides triggered by heavy rain over the past few days rose to 45, while over 8 lakh remained affected

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, June 3: The flood situation in Assam deteriorated Tuesday with six more people dying, taking the toll in this year’s deluge and landslides to 17, while the number of the affected population increased to over 6.33 lakh in 21 districts, an official bulletin said.

Seven rivers were flowing above the danger level in the state, including the Katakhal overtopping its highest flood level at Matizuri in Hailakandi district, it said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi took stock of the flood situation from Chief Minister

Arunachal flood toll rises to 11; 938 affected in 23 districts

Itanagar: The death toll in floods and landslides triggered by relentless rain in Arunachal Pradesh has increased to 11 as a labourer died in a wall collapse incident in Anjaw district, officials said Tuesday. According to a State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC) statement, while 38-year-old Bhaben Murmu died when a wall collapsed during a landslide June 1, three GREF workers were injured in the incident. A total of 938 people are now affected by floods in 156 villages in 23 districts, it said. Lower Subansiri district reported significant damage, including the destruction of 114 kutcha houses, 45 pucca houses, and nine huts. The district has also seen serious infrastructure losses, including the damage of 51 roads, 17 power lines, 23 water supply lines and two schools, officials said. Widespread destruction has also been reported in the Itanagar Capital Region (ICR) and Pakke Kessang, where key assets such as ICR’s main water pipeline and the road at Dariya Hill have been severely affected.

Himanta Biswa Sarma, assuring him of full support from the central government.

Sarma visited Cachar district, which is among the worst-hit, during the day and assured of

Cong MP Randhawa seeks Amritsar be declared ‘no-war zone’



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, June 3: Punjab Congress MP Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi urging him to take steps toward declaring Amritsar district, which is home to the Golden Temple, a ‘no-war zone’.

The letter was sent weeks after the latest India-Pakistan armed conflict. India carried out pre-dawn missile strikes on nine terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir May 7 in response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that claimed 26 lives.

Following the Indian action, Pakistan launched an offensive against Indian military bases and resorted to shelling the border areas for the next three days.

In the letter, Randhawa wrote that the city is the spiritual heartbeat of the Sikh faith. “Its sacred aura transcends religious boundaries, offering comfort, unity, and compassion in a world increasingly torn apart by conflict and division. I wish to clarify that this appeal is not a request for political sovereignty akin to the Vatican City, but rather a plea for international spiritual recognition and enduring security protections. In an era marked by rising global tension and militarisation, it is imperative that Sri Amritsar is shielded from the threats of war and violence - now and forever,”

“As many global powers lean increasingly toward conflict, the Sikh ethos of ‘Sarbat da Bhala’ (the welfare of all) must be elevated and preserved as one of humanity’s last hopes for co-existence and peace,” he said.

He said that recent geopolitical tensions, particularly during the Indo-Pak standoff, have revived legitimate concerns regarding Amritsar’s potential vulnerability in the event of military conflict.



Rain, landslides wreak havoc in Nagaland

Kohima: Landslides triggered by heavy rains damaged roads across Nagaland, with crop destruction reported from some districts, officials said Tuesday. In Kohima district, a major land sinking occurred near Kisama Heritage Village, while a major landslide was reported along the Kigwema-Mima-Chakhabama road. Deputy Chief Minister TR Zeliang visited the site of the road sinking at Phesama village near Kisama Heritage Village, where a 50-meter stretch of NH-2 has collapsed, cutting off the key route between Nagaland and Manipur. Accompanied by officials from the Public Works Department and the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (NHID-CL), Zeliang took stock of the situation and directed immediate action to restore connectivity. He instructed NHIDCL to create an alternate road for stranded goods trucks and commuters and emphasised the urgency of the situation, given the highway’s importance as Manipur’s lifeline.

Mizoram issues travel advisory

Aizawl: 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 until June 13 due to incessant rains that battered the state since May 24. The advisory came after incessant heavy rainfalls that hit the state over the past several days triggering widespread landslides, mudslides and flash floods, leading to loss of lives and affecting normal life across several districts. “The advisory is being issued solely to ensure safety and to allow the administration to focus entirely on disaster relief operations,” the government said. It said that District Disaster Management Authorities (DDMAs), under the leadership of respective Deputy Commissioners, are currently engaged in round-the-clock disaster response, relief, and rehabilitation efforts.

Over 1.64L affected in Manipur, 1 dead

Imphal: The flood situation in Manipur worsened Tuesday as more than 1.64 lakh people were affected by the calamity, after several rivers overflowed and breached embankments following heavy rainfall in the state, officials said. The body of a person who was washed away in floodwaters was found in Imphal West district during the day. A population of 56,000 people had been affected by the calamity Monday. Though the water level of rivers flowing across the Imphal Valley districts decreased significantly Tuesday, several areas of Imphal East district continue to be inundated for the fourth day. At least 1,64,879 people have been affected by the flood while 35,143 houses have been damaged. Officials said that 643 localities have been affected, mostly in Imphal East district, while 82.79 hectares of agricultural field have been under water. At least 3,917 flood-hit people have been evacuated while 77 relief camps have been opened.

kandi, Sribhumi, Morigaon, Cachar, Sonitpur and Tinsukia, were reported since Monday.

With these, the toll in floods and landslides so far has reached 17.

Nagaland to review reservation policy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kohima, June 3: The Nagaland government Tuesday agreed in principle to set up a commission within 15 days to examine the core demands of five tribes concerning the state’s reservation policy.

This was stated by CORRP, a panel comprising representatives of five major tribes of Nagaland.

Its members held a meeting convened by Deputy Chief Minister (Home) Y Patton during the day over their demand for a review of the state’s reservation policy. Patton told reporters after the meeting that the state Cabinet would discuss the matter later this month.

Tesinlo Semy, Convenor of the Committee on Review of Reservation Policy (CORRP), told reporters that the discussions were “fruitful” and that the government has assured them that a commission would be formed by June 17.

“The commission will examine the core demands of the

precautions and follow the advisories from local authorities.

An Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) bulletin said that six deaths, one each from Hail-

five tribes and submit its recommendations to the government. The cabinet will then take a decision,” Semy said.

While no date was fixed for the next meeting, he said that the CORRP would meet with the government again after 15 days. Asked about the composition and leadership of the Commission, Semy said the decision rests with the Cabinet.

The five major Naga tribes of Nagaland held coordinated protest rallies in various districts May 29, demanding a review of the state’s long-standing job reservation policy.

The coordinated action was led under the banner of the CORRP, an organisation formed in 2023 as mandated by the apex tribal organisations of the five tribes – Angami, Ao, Lotha, Rengma and Sumi. They had submitted an “Ultimatum Reminder”, citing the Nagaland government’s alleged failure to respond to two key communications: a memorandum dated September 20, 2024, and a 30-day ultimatum served April 26, 2025.

Punjab waives ₹68cr loan for Dalit families

All 4,727 cases (including 4,685 defaulting loanees and 42 regular loanees) will be covered under this loan waiver scheme

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, June 3: The Punjab Cabinet Tuesday gave its nod to waive loans amounting ₹68 crore taken by over 4,000 Dalit families from the Punjab Scheduled Castes Land Development and Finance Corporation, Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said.

At a cabinet meeting chaired by Mann in Chandigarh, it was decided that loans disbursed till March 31, 2020 will be waived.

Addressing the media after the meeting, the chief minister said the state government will waive the debt incurred due to loans taken by Dalit families from the corporation for various purposes, including for opening shops, dairy farming, etc.

The decision will benefit 4,727 beneficiaries, he said.

Mann said Finance Minis-



ter Harpal Singh Cheema in his budget speech this March had promised to waive the debt. With the cabinet approval, the promise will now be fulfilled, he said.

Cheema, who was also at the media briefing, said the debt would include the principal amount and any interest on it, including penal interest. It is a big relief for the SC community, he said.

The minister said the debt had been pending for the past 20 years and added that neither the Congress nor the Akali Dal-BJP governments of the past cared for SC families when they were in power.

Later, an official spokesper-

34 airlifted from Sikkim’s landslide hit Chaten



The Army’s 112nd Brigade has established a vital foot route between Lachen and Chaten enabling the possibility of phased ground movement in areas currently inaccessible by road.

The state government has outlined a strategic evacuation plan whereby tourists from Lachen will be moved to Chaten via the foot route and subsequently airlifted, depending on weather conditions, officials said. However, persistent inclement weather, including heavy rainfall in Chaten, prevented any further helicopter sorties. Due to this, teams from the state administration, which were scheduled to be airlifted to Chaten during the day, will now be deployed Wednesday to bolster relief operations on the ground.

Senior officials are monitoring the evolving situation, coordinating inter-agency operations and facilitating the rapid deployment of personnel, aid, and communication infrastructure to the impacted region.

Meanwhile, the state government has officially declared the situation a natural disaster, prompting an urgent and coordinated multi-agency response.

Chief Secretary R Telang is leading a team which is working in close coordination with the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority (SSDMA) and Indian Army to help stranded civilians and restore critical access to the affected areas of Chaten and Lachen in Mangan district.

In Guwahati, as part of ‘flood-free mission’ the authorities demolished the building of Institute of Cooperative Management to clear encroachment along a waterbody known as Silsako beel.

Road, rail and ferry services remained affected in the state due to heavy rain in several areas. More than 5.15 people in 65 revenue circles and 1,254 villages of 22 districts remained affected, with Sribhumi the worst-hit district with 1,94,172 flood-hit population.

A total of 165 relief camps are sheltering 31,212 displaced people, while another 157 relief distribution centres are also functional.

A crop area of 12,610 hectares has been inundated, while 94 animals have been washed away in the last 24 hours.

amount will be the date on which the government issues the notification to implement the scheme,” said the spokesperson.

Loanees who have previously availed benefits under earlier waiver schemes are also eligible for coverage under this initiative. No recovery proceedings will be initiated against loanees under PSCFC loan regulations post-waiver.

Their accounts will be considered fully settled as of the cut-off date. However, loanees who filed court cases against the Corporation will not be eligible unless they unconditionally withdraw their cases and provide documented proof.

As per the 2011 Census Scheduled Castes constitute 31.94 percent of Punjab’s total population. Many members of this community availed loans from PSCFC to establish self-employment ventures aimed at their economic upliftment.

However, some borrowers have been unable to repay their loans due to circumstances beyond their control, leading to defaults, said the spokesperson.

Ferozepur fort thrown open to public after 200 years

The move reaffirms the government’s commitment to preserve national heritage and promote responsible border tourism

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ferozepur, June 3: In an initiative to boost tourism and align the local populace with the military heritage in this border region, the Army’s Golden Arrow Division has opened the historic two centuries old Ferozepur Fort to the public.

It is for the first time in over 200 years that this significant architectural and historical site has been made accessible to the public.

The move reaffirms the government’s commitment to preserve national heritage and promote responsible border tourism, said Major General RS Manral, General Officer Commanding (GOC), Golden Arrow Division.

“Strategically positioned near the Indo-Pakistan border, Ferozepur Fort is a remarkable example of 19th-century military architecture from the Sikh empire” said the GOC, adding that its unique hexagonal design and robust defensive features showcase the strategic ingenuity of its time.

“The reopening of Ferozepur Fort not only reconnects the region with its storied past but also reaffirms its identity as a symbol of valour, resilience and national pride, firmly placing it on Punjab’s cultural and heritage tourism map,” said Major General Manral.

Brig Bikram Singh, Station Commander, said Ferozepur holds a special place in India’s freedom movement, having pro-



duced numerous martyrs and revolutionaries who bravely resisted colonial rule.

This fort and its surroundings have borne witness to pivotal historical events, which continue to symbolize national

pride and sacrifice, he added.

Once a critical outpost in the Sikh empire frontier defence network, the fort holds enduring tales of courage and resistance and also features prominently in narratives of

Once a critical outpost in the Sikh empire frontier defence network, the fort holds enduring tales of courage and resistance and also features prominently in narratives of the first war of Independence in 1857

This fort was converted into British Garrison in 1839 under the instructions of the Duke of Wellington

Later, the British converted this fort as an arsenal (Weapon Store) in 1858 and subsequently, the dry gun cotton store, the powder magazine and ammunition stores were also constructed here

the first war of Independence in 1857.

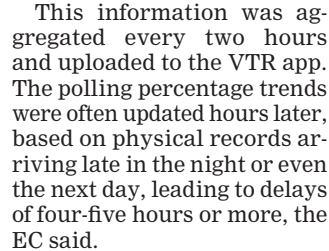
This fort was converted into

British Garrison in 1839 under the instructions of the Duke of Wellington.

Later, the British converted this fort as an arsenal (Weapon Store) in 1858 and subsequently, the dry gun cotton store, the powder magazine and ammunition stores were also constructed here.

This fort served as the mother depot for the supply of guns, ammunition, trained horses and bullocks. About 10,000 bullocks and as many horses and even 150 camels were tethered at any time in this fort.

The fort continued to play the role of arsenal till 1941 when the ammunition was shifted to Kasubegu as a tactical move by the British at the beginning of World War-II.



Under the Conduct of Elec-

A call came from Trump and Narendra ji immediately surrendered - history is a witness, this is the character of BJP-RSS, they always bow down

RAHUL GANDHI | LEADER OF OPPOSITION

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has envisioned a developed India (by 2047). There is a need to increase per hectare agricultural income. An agriculture minister's work cannot be considered complete until he visits farmers' fields. Let us make the 'Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan' a success

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN | UNION AGRICULTURE MINISTER

The Leader of Opposition has come to our state. He should come. It is a democracy. Everyone has the right to come. He offered floral tribute to his Dadi ji (grandmother) and did not remove his shoes. This did not suit me. This is against our sanskar (culture). He should take care of this

MOHAN YADAV | CHIEF MINISTER, MADHYA PRADESH

POST

OF THE DAY

I've deleted my post on Kamal Haasan and Kannada language issue. But let me make one thing clear.

Tamil and Kannada are united. No matter how hard Sanghis try, they can't divide us. South India stands together. Always

@Politix2029

SHORT TAKES

PM Modi to inaugurate Kashmir rail link June 6

Jammu:

In his first visit to Jammu and Kashmir post Operation Sindoor, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the much-anticipated Kashmir rail project later this week, marking a milestone in the region's connectivity. Modi will start his visit June 6 by dedicating to public the Chenab rail bridge, which is a key part of the 272-km Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla railway link (USBRL) that will provide direct train connectivity to the valley.

5 killed in two road accidents

Gonda (UP):

Five people were killed in two separate road accidents that took place within 24 hours here, police said Tuesday. Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Manoj Kumar Rawat said the first accident occurred Tuesday on the Darjikan-Mankapur road under Motiganj police station limits. Ranjeet Yadav (18), a resident of Uttar Purwa Sothiya village, was returning home on a motorcycle after visiting a temple in Kolhampur, Nawabganj, with his mother Meena Yadav (43) and fellow villager Bindu Devi (35).

12-year-old boy dies while playing cricket

Firozabad (UP):

A 12-year-old boy died after being hit in the chest by a cricket ball during a match in Tundla town of Firozabad district, police said Tuesday. The boy, identified as Ansh, was batting when the incident took place, they said. Ansh, a resident of Gadhi Ranchhor locality under Narkhi police station area, had gone to Tundla Monday evening to play the final match representing Future Cricket Academy, Superintendent of Police (City) Ravi Shankar Prasad said.

Oppn parties demand special session of Parl

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 3:

INDIA bloc parties Tuesday rallied together to push their demand for a Special Session of Parliament in the wake of Operation Sindoor, with leaders from 16 parties writing to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, stressing that there were "serious questions facing the nation".

Senior Opposition leaders, who held a meeting here, asserted that the session was needed to discuss a series of events, including the Pahalgam attack, followed by Operation Sindoor, US President Donald Trump's claim of brokering a ceasefire between India and Pakistan, and the death of civilians in border areas in Pakistan shelling.

«Several Opposition parties have been demanding a special session of Parliament since the Pahalgam terror attack

«The demand was also raised in an all-party meeting held to inform the lawmakers about Operation Sindoor

«Operation Sindoor, India's military response to the April 22 attack in Pahalgam in Kashmir that left 26 people, mostly tourists, dead

The leaders said they stood with the government after the Pahalgam attack, and through Operation Sindoor, and they should now accept their demand for a special session.

“There are serious questions facing the nation about the terror attack, killing of civilians in Poonch, Uri and Rajouri, the ceasefire announcements, and the implications on our national security and foreign policy. We have supported the government's efforts to engage with the international community on India's position,” Opposition leaders said in a joint letter.

Congress' Jairam Ramesh and Deependar Hooda, Trinamool Congress' (TMC) Derek O'Brien, Rashtriya Janata Dal's (RJD) Manoj Jha, Samajwadi Party's (SP) Ramgopal Yadav, and Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Sanjay Raut attended the meeting.

“Sixteen parties have written a letter to the Prime Minister demanding a special session of Parliament. The government

Pak planned 48-hour operation against India but it folded up in 8 hours: CDS

Pune:

Pakistan launched multiple attacks on early May 10 aiming to bring India to its knees in 48 hours but it had to fold up the offensives in eight hours and reach out to New Delhi for talks seeking an end to the hostilities, Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan said Tuesday. In the first detailed account of India's clashes with Pakistan, Gen Chauhan said India's response to the Pahalgam terror attack was to draw "limits of tolerance" to cross border terrorism and not tolerating Islamabad's nuclear blackmail. In an address at the Savitribai Phule Pune University, the top military commander appeared to reject criticism against him for acknowledging three days ago that India lost an unspecified number of combat jets during the initial phase of Operation Sindoor.

is responsible to Parliament, Parliament is responsible to people,” O'Brien told reporters after the meeting. Opposition leaders said the letter would be sent to the Prime Minister's Office soon. Lok Sabha Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi and Rajya Sabha Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge of the Congress, Akhilesh Yadav of the Samajwadi Party (SP), Abhishek Banerjee of the TMC, T R Baalu of the DMK, and Arvind Savant of the Shiv Sena (UBT) are among the signatories. The Rashtriya Janata Dal, the National Conference, the CPI(M), the IUML, the CPI, the Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP), and the JMM, among others, are also among those who signed the letter. The DMK could not join the meeting as it coincided with Karunanidhi's birth anniversary.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) will write a separate letter to the prime minister raising the same demand. While the Nationalist Congress Party (SP) had earlier said it did not have any demand for a special session of Parliament, Raut said he will talk to NCP leaders over the issue. Sharing a copy of the letter on X, Jairam Ramesh

This family-centred party expects its leaders to only praise the family and not the country. This is not just condemnable and worrisome. Is such thinking acceptable in a flourishing democracy?

JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER

DELHI GOVT LAUNCHES AIR POLLUTION ACTION PLAN

Deployment of 2,300 electric autos at Metro stations, installing of mist sprayers at 13 pollution hotspots and audit of PUC centres every six months -- these are some of the features of the Air Pollution Mitigation Plan 2025 launched by Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta Tuesday

INDIA'S G7 EXCLUSION

Another diplomatic blunder: Congress

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 3:

The Congress Tuesday said India not being invited at the G7 meeting in Canada is "yet another big diplomatic bungle" after the "blunder" of allowing the US to "mediate" between India and Pakistan.

Canada is hosting the summit from June 15 to 17 that is expected to deliberate on pressing challenges facing the globe including the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the situation in West Asia. For the first time in six years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is unlikely to attend the upcoming G7 summit to be held in Canada's Alberta province, people familiar with the matter have said.

It is learnt that Ottawa is yet to send an invitation to the Indian prime minister for the summit but Modi, in any way, would have skipped it as such a visit would have required a lot of groundwork considering the current state of ties between the two sides, said the people cited above.

Congress general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh said the G7 Summit of the presidents of the USA and France; the prime ministers of the UK, Japan, Italy and Canada; and the Chancellor of Germany is taking place in Kananaskis in Alberta, Canada, from June 15.

The presidents of Brazil, Mexico, South Africa and Ukraine and the prime minister of Australia have also been invited to the summit, he noted. "Before 2014, G7 was actually G8 for many years and had included Russia. Dr Manmohan Singh would be invited for G8 Summits where his voice would be heard. It was at one such summit in Germany in June 2007 where the famous Singh-Merkel formula for climate change negotiations had been unveiled," Ramesh said in a post on X.

He said the tradition of inviting Indian prime ministers continued after 2014. "But now, for the first time in 6 years, 'Vishwaguru' will not be in attendance at the Canada summit. Whatever spin may be given, the fact remains that this is yet another big diplomatic bungle - after the blunder of allowing the US to overturn decades of Indian foreign policy by mediating between India and Pakistan and allowing American authorities to call for continued talks at a 'neutral site'," the Congress leader said in his post.

The India-Canada relations had hit rock bottom following then Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations in 2023 of a potential Indian link to the killing of pro-Khalistan separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

Women personnel of the Border Security Force (BSF) keep vigil near the India-Pakistan border ahead of the annual Amarnath Yatra 2025 in Jammu

Bihar minister sues Prashant Kishor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, June 3:

Senior Bihar minister Ashok Choudhary Tuesday filed a defamation suit against Jan Suraj Party founder Prashant Kishor for alleging that he had bribed Union minister Chirag Paswan to secure a Lok Sabha ticket for his daughter.

Choudhary, whose daughter Shambhavi is Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) MP from the reserved constituency of Samastipur, spoke to journalists at the civil court. Kishor, however, said he cannot be intimidated by filing cases.

“After Prashant Kishor made objectionable remarks against my daughter and me,

I sent him a legal notice, to which his reply was unsatisfactory. He clearly has no regret for what he had said,” the JD(U) national general secretary said.

“I have therefore taken recourse to legal remedy. I challenged Prashant Kishor to prove that I had paid money to Chirag Paswan or withdraw his allegations with an apology. I am determined to take this fight to the Supreme Court, if the need arises,” he added.

Choudhary described Kishor, a former poll strategist who had been briefly associated with the JD(U), as “a political trader, who has offered his services to parties of all hues for a fee”.

Bihar slashes VAT on aviation turbine fuel to four per cent

Patna:

The Bihar Cabinet Tuesday approved a proposal for reducing value-added tax (VAT) on aviation turbine fuel (ATF) from 29 per cent to 4 per cent, Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary said. The state Cabinet meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, approved the proposal of the Commercial Tax department to reduce VAT on ATF to attract more commercial flights. In a statement issued after the cabinet meeting, Choudhary said, "The Cabinet approved the reduction of VAT on ATF from 29 per cent to 4 per cent under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS). With this decision of the government, the air ticket prices will further reduce and attract more commercial flights in the state. It will further enhance the state's revenue and will also generate employment."

Gaurav Gogoi takes charge as Assam Congress chief

Guwahati:

Lok Sabha MP Gaurav Gogoi Tuesday launched his innings as the Assam Congress president with the slogan 'Juz Hobo' (there will be battle) as he urged party workers to prepare themselves for next year's Assembly polls. Assuming charge as the state unit chief, he also appealed for the support of all sections of society to topple the current BJP regime and replace it with a government that works for "harmony and inclusive development". Gogoi took charge from outgoing president Bhupen Kumar Borah, who had helmed the state's main opposition party for over four years, at the state Congress headquarters, Rajiv Bhawan, here earlier in the day.

NDRF to search for missing Indore woman in Meghalaya

Shillong:

NDRF personnel Tuesday joined the search for a missing tourist from Indore a day after her husband's body was found in a gorge in Sohra area of Meghalaya's East Khasi Hills district, police said. Raja Raghuvanshi (29) and his wife Sonam had gone missing May 23 hours after they checked out of a homestay at Nongriat village, 20 km from where his body was found Monday. "A team of 17 rescuers from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) joined the search and rescue operations at Sohra today," district Superintendent of Police Vivek Syiem told PTI. He said NDRF will expedite the search even as rescuers are already using drones, mountaineers and special police forces to search for the woman. Raja's brother identified his body through a distinctive tattoo on the deceased's right hand which read 'Raja', the officer said. A woman's white shirt, a strip of medicine, a part of the LCD screen of a mobile phone and a smartwatch were also seized at the spot, he said, adding that a homicide case was registered.

No contempt if Parl, state legislature simply make laws: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 3:

The Supreme Court has said any law made by Parliament or a state legislature cannot be held to contempt of court.

A bench comprising Justices B V Nagarathna and Satish Chandra Sharma made the observation while disposing of a 2012 contempt plea filed by sociologist and former Delhi University professor Nandini Sundar and others.

The contempt plea alleged failure of the Chhattisgarh government to comply with its

2011 directions to stop support to vigilante groups like Salwa Judum and arming tribals in the name of special police officers (SPO) in the fight against Maoists.

The petition contended that there has been contempt of the order of the apex court as the Chhattisgarh government has legislated the Chhattisgarh Auxiliary Armed Police Force Act, 2011 which authorised an auxiliary armed force to assist security forces in dealing with Maoist/Naxal violence and legalising existing SPOs by inducting them as members.

Besides accusing the Chhattisgarh Government of not acknowledging the directions on Salwa Judum, the petition-

ers said instead of “desisting” from using SPOs and disarming them, the state government passed the “Chhattisgarh Aux-

iliary Armed Police Force Act, 2011” regularising all SPOs with effect from the date of the top court order July 5, 2011.

They alleged that state government has also not vacated all school buildings and ashrams from the occupation of the security force nor has it compensated the victims of Salwa Judum and SPOs.

The top court May 15 said that the passing of an enactment subsequent to the order passed by the top court by Chhattisgarh cannot be an act of contempt.

The top court said in order

Cal HC directs state to produce case diary in Sharmistha arrest

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 3:

The Calcutta High Court Tuesday directed the West Bengal government to produce the case diary in connection with the arrest of law student Sharmistha Panoli June 5, when her interim bail prayer will be heard again.

The vacation bench of Justice Partha Sarathi Mukherjee directed that the Garden Reach police station case in connection with which Panoli was arrested will be investigated, while proceedings in all other FIRs in this regard will remain stayed till further orders.

The court said that the state will ensure that no further case will be registered on the alleged action of Panoli.

The court directed the state to produce the case diary on the next date of hearing June 5.

Justice Mukherjee observed that one must be careful in making comments in public in a diverse country like India. Petitioner Panoli's lawyer claimed that no offence is made out in the complaint filed against her for allegedly making some remarks on social media during the Operation Sindoor against Pakistan.

He claimed that there was a war of words on social media between users across India and Pakistan during Operation Sindoor, which was undertaken by India in response to the Pahalgam terror attack that claimed the lives of 26 men, most of whom were tourists.

of the day

quote

India is a leading country, and India is doing well. So, India needs to open the way for other developing countries, for example, on investment facilitation for development, we want it to support, because so many developing countries - 90 out of the 126 who are members, would like to move with this




NGOZI OKONJO-IWEALA | WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION CHIEF

We look forward to having relations (with Lebanon) based on mutual respect and non-interference in each country's internal affairs



ABBAS ARAGHCHI | IRAN FOREIGN MINISTER

You can't just sit around and make excuses because one guy in a very nice White House on Pennsylvania Avenue doesn't agree with you



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER | FORMER GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA

SHORT TAKES

Gunmen kill 20 in Nigeria

Abuja: At least 20 people have been killed during simultaneous attacks by unidentified gunmen on several communities in Nigeria's north-central Benue state, police said Tuesday. The attacks occurred late Sunday in communities within the Gwer West and Apa areas, said Udemie Edet, spokesperson for the Benue police. Edet said 12 people were killed in Apa and 10 in Gwer West, but local reports suggest the death toll may exceed 30. Five people who survived the attacks are currently receiving medical treatment in a local hospital, she added. Nigeria's police often provide lower death tolls than local authorities and witnesses when reporting on attacks. Paul Biam, chief of staff to Benue Gov. Hyacinth Alia, visited the communities Monday and said the administration is doing all it can to prevent attacks in the state. The Gwer West and Apa areas of Benue state have witnessed an uptick in attacks in recent months. Last week, gunmen killed at least 20 people in an attack on the village of Aondona, in Gwer West. While it remains unclear who was responsible for the killings, such attacks are common in Nigeria's northern region, where local herders and farmers often clash over limited access to land and water.

Teenage influencer shot dead in Pak

Islamabad: A teenage social media influencer, who had more than a million followers across TikTok and Instagram, was shot dead at her residence in Islamabad, officials said Tuesday, in a third such incident in Pakistan in the last five months. Sana Yousaf, 17, was shot dead Monday at her house in Islamabad's Sector G-13/1, falling under the jurisdiction of the Sumbal police station, police said. She has over 740,000 followers on TikTok and close to 500,000 on Instagram. Islamabad police arrested an accused, identified as Umar Hayat, also known by his nickname "Kaka", in Faisalabad, Geo TV reported Tuesday. Hayat, also a TikTokker, has confessed to the murder, the channel said. The accused, who had come to meet Sana at her residence, is said to have fired two shots, resulting in her death. A female TikTokker in Punjab's Khushab area was killed by her cousin recently. Similarly, in February, another female TikTokker was found dead at her home in Peshawar.

Ukraine blasts Crimea-Russia bridge

AGENCIES

Kyiv, June 3: Ukraine has detonated a massive underwater blast targeting the key road and rail bridge connecting the Russian-occupied Crimean peninsula to Russia, damaging its underwater supports.

The operation, claimed by Kyiv's SBU security service, is the second high-profile operation by Ukraine in days striking significant Russian assets after a sophisticated drone raid on Moscow's strategic bomber fleet Sunday.

The attack came as Ukraine confirmed it had been invited to the NATO summit later this month, after President Volodymyr Zelenskyy warned it would be a "victory" for Russia if it was not present. The latest strike on the 12-mile-long Kerch bridge – a prestige project of the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, which he opened in 2018 – comes amid what appear to be determined efforts by Ukraine to change the narrative promoted by the Trump administration that Kyiv holds few cards in the war.

The mining of the bridge, which is heavily defended by Russian forces, follows the audacious long-range drone attack on airbases deep in



side Russia, which Zelenskyy claimed had damaged "34% of [Russia's] strategic cruise missile carriers".

In a further development Tuesday Russia's state investigative committee accused Ukraine Tuesday of carrying out "acts of terrorism" by blowing up two railway bridges in Russia over the weekend. It said seven people were killed and 113 injured, including children, when two trains crashed as a result of the attacks.

The SBU said the operation against the bridge had been planned for several months

and involved the equivalent of more than a metric tonne of TNT, which it said had "severely damaged" the base of the bridge supports.

It is the third time that Ukraine has targeted the key logistics route since Moscow's full-scale invasion in 2022.

In October 2022, a truck exploded on the bridge, while in July 2023, the SBU said it had blown up a part of the bridge using an experimental naval drone. Both times, Russia repaired the damaged sections.

Lt Gen Vasyl Maliuk of the SBU, who supervised the latest

operation, described the bridge as "an absolutely legitimate target, especially considering that the enemy used it as a logistical artery to supply its troops".

He added: "Crimea is Ukraine, and any manifestations of occupation will receive our tough response."

The SBU published footage showing a blast coming out of the water and debris flying, along with a photo of some damage to the side of the bridge.

Road traffic on the bridge linking Russia and the Crimean peninsula had been temporarily suspended, Russian authorities said on Telegram Tuesday. Russian state media reported it had been closed to traffic for about four hours.

The attack on the bridge came as Russia Tuesday said it was wrong to expect a quick breakthrough in Ukraine talks, a day after Moscow rejected Kyiv's call for an unconditional ceasefire at negotiations in Istanbul – more than three years into a Russian offensive that has killed tens of thousands on both sides and forced millions from their homes in eastern Ukraine. Russia instead offered a partial truce of two to three days in some areas of the front-line, its top negotiator said after the talks.

Dutch govt collapses after Wilders quits coalition



REUTERS

The Hague, June 3: Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof announced his resignation Tuesday, most likely ushering in a snap election, hours after anti-Muslim politician Geert Wilders quit the right-wing coalition for failing to back tougher migration policies.

Ministers from Wilders' PVV party will leave the cabinet, while the others will continue for now as a caretaker government. Any election is unlikely to be held before October, and the fractured political landscape means formation of a new government may well take months.

Anger over migration and the high cost of living are boosting the far right and widening divisions in Europe, just as it needs

unity to deal effectively with a hostile Russia and an unpredictable and combative US president in the form of Donald Trump.

"I have told party leaders repeatedly in recent days that the collapse of the cabinet would be unnecessary and irresponsible," Schoof said after an emergency cabinet meeting triggered by Wilders' decision.

"We are facing major challenges both nationally and internationally that require decisiveness from us."

Schoof said he would hand his resignation to King Willem-Alexander later on Tuesday. Wilders had said he saw no other option than to quit the coalition, as it had not backed the stricter migration policies he had demanded.

Pro-monarchy protest continues in Nepal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, June 3: The pro-monarchists Tuesday continued their indefinite protest for restoration of monarchy for the sixth consecutive day, barring Monday when they observed the memorial of slain king Birendra Shah.

On Monday, Nepal observed the 24th memorial day of the Narayanhiti Royal Palace massacre, a tragic event that claimed the lives of King Birendra Shah and several members of the royal family June 1, 2001.

During the protests led by Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) president Rajendra Lingden and former home minister and RPP president Kamal Thapa, the agitators chanted slogans against the republic system and Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli.

Tuesday's protest, which remained peaceful according to the police, was organised at Sifal ground near Pashupatinath temple area, where hundreds of pro-monarchists gathered and shouted slogans, demanding reinstatement of monarchy.



The pro-monarchist groups, including the RPP, had launched Kathmandu-centred protest programmes from May 29 with the objectives of reinstatement of monarchy and establishment of a Hindu state in Nepal. On May 30, the authorities had banned protests and public gatherings around the Narayanhiti Palace area in Kathmandu, amid demonstrations by pro-monarchist groups.

According to a notice issued by Chief District Officer Rishiram Tiwari, the restriction was imposed until July 8.

Similar prohibitory orders had earlier been enforced in front of the residences of the President and Vice President, the Parliament building as well as in Bhadrakali, Singha Durbar and surrounding areas.

Gaza officials say Israeli forces killed 27 heading to aid site

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rafah, June 3: Palestinian health officials and witnesses say Israeli forces fired on people as they headed toward an aid distribution site Tuesday, killing at least 27, in the third such incident in three days.

The army said it fired "near a few individual suspects" who left the designated route, approached its forces and ignored warning shots. The near-daily shootings have come after an Israeli and US-backed foundation established aid distribution points inside Israeli military zones, a system it says is designed to circumvent Hamas. The United Nations has rejected the new system, saying it doesn't address Gaza's mounting hunger crisis and allows Israel to use aid as a weapon.

The Israeli military said it was looking into reports of casualties on Tuesday. It previously said it fired warning shots at suspects who approached its forces early Sunday and Monday, when health officials and witnesses



said 34 people were killed. The military denies opening fire on civilians or blocking them from reaching the aid sites.

The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, which operates the sites, says there has been no violence in or around them. On Tuesday, it acknowledged that the Israeli military was investigating whether civilians were wounded "after moving beyond the designated safe corridor and into a closed military zone," in an area that was "well beyond our secure

distribution site."

The shootings all occurred at the Flag Roundabout, around a kilometre from one of the GHF's distribution sites in the now mostly uninhabited southern city of Rafah. The entire area is an Israeli military zone where journalists have no access outside of army-approved embeds.

Yasser Abu Lubda, a 50-year-old displaced from Rafah, said the shooting started around 4 am Tuesday and that he saw several people killed or wounded.

India 'rubbed US the wrong way': Lutnick

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, June 3: India did certain things, like buying military gear from Russia and aligning with BRICS which seeks to reduce dollar dependence, that "rubbed the US the wrong way," Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick said, stressing that President Donald Trump deeply admires India and the two countries are going to have a "great relationship together."

"The Indian economy is extraordinary, your human capital capacity is amazing, your growth rate is amazing. But, you know, there were certain things that the Indian government did that generally rubbed the United States the wrong way," Lutnick said in his keynote address at the eighth edition of the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) Leadership Summit here Monday.

"For instance, you generally buy your military gear from Russia. That's a way to kind of get...under the skin of America, if you go to buy your armaments from Russia. So I think India is starting to move towards buying the military equipment from the United States, which then goes a long way," he said.

Lutnick also cited the example of India being a part of



BRICS grouping, "which is, 'oh, let's move to not support the dollar and dollar hegemony'. That's not really the way to make friends and influence people in America."

"So, you know, the President calls that out directly and specifically and the Indian government is addressing it specifically and directly and that's how you move on to a really positive place - put it on the table, address it straight on, resolve it straight on, and get to a really good place. And I think that's where we are," Lutnick said.

At the event Lutnick said one should expect a trade deal be-

tween India and the US in the "not too distant future".

"So the idea is when they put the right person and India put the right person on the other side of the table, and we've managed, I think, to be in a very, very good place. And you should expect a deal between the US and India in the not too distant future because I think we found a place that really works for both countries," Lutnick said at the USISPF Leadership Summit 2025.

"I would say very optimistic," Lutnick said about the trade deal between India and the US.

South Korea's Lee poised to win presidential election

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seoul, June 3: South Korea's liberal opposition candidate Lee Jae-myung was poised to win an early presidential election, vote counts and media projections suggested, while his challenger conceded defeat early Wednesday.

The victory would cap months of political turmoil triggered by the stunning but brief imposition of martial law by now-ousted conservative leader Yoon Suk Yeol.

Even before Lee's win was formally declared, his main conservative rival, Kim Moon Soo, conceded, telling journalists he "humbly accepts the people's choice" and congratulated Lee for winning the election.

It was unclear whether Lee's election would cause any major, immediate shift in South Korea's foreign policy. Lee, previously accused by critics of tilting toward China and North Korea and away from the US and Japan, has repeatedly stressed South Korea's alliance with the US as the foundation of its foreign policy.

The toughest external challenges awaiting a new president are US President



Donald Trump's tariff policy and North Korea's advancing nuclear programme. But experts say whoever becomes president in South Korea can't do much to secure major progress in South Korea's favour on those issues.

With more than 86 per cent of ballots counted as of 1:45 am Wednesday, Lee, the Democratic Party candidate, led with more than 48 per cent of votes and Kim had 42.7 per cent.

The exit poll by South Korea's three major television stations — KBS, MBC and SBS — earlier showed Lee projected to obtain 51.7 per cent of total votes cast, beating Kim with 39.3 per cent.

ADB approves \$800mn for Pak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, June 3: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved USD 800 million for Pakistan to strengthen fiscal sustainability and improve public financial management, an official said Tuesday.

Khurram Schehzad, advisor to the finance minister confirmed the development in a brief statement on social media, saying that the package includes a USD 300 million policy-based loan (PBL) and a USD 500 million programme-based guarantee (PBG).

He said, "ADB approves USD 800 million financing package for Pakistan" under the Resource Mobilisation Reform Programme. Separately, the Philippines-based lender also confirmed the development in a statement, saying that subprogramme 2 of the "Improved Resource Mobilisation and Utilisation Reform Programme" includes a policy-based loan of USD 300 million, and ADB's "first-ever policy-based guarantee" of up to USD 500 million, which is expected to mobilise financing of up to USD 1 billion from commercial banks.

"Pakistan has made significant progress in improving macroeconomic conditions," said ADB country director for Pakistan, Emma Fan.

of the day

quote

India's strategy for AI, is to build AI in India, make AI work for India and build AI applications that are truly responsible, safe, trustworthy, and that make a difference to the lives of common people

ABHISHEK SINGH | CEO, INDIAAI

SMID offers a compelling mix of growth potential, valuation, comfort and supportive macro trends, making it a strong candidate for investment

MANISH SONTHALIA | DIRECTOR, EIML

I think what people like us in the industry look for is stability. And what we look for is transparency. And I think those are factors that we find in great abundance here in the US, which makes it a very attractive destination for investment for us

KUMAR MANGALAM BIRLA | CHAIRMAN, ADITYA BIRLA GROUP

SHORT TAKES

Vedanta to raise ₹4,100 cr via NCDs

New Delhi: Vedanta Ltd is raising Rs 4,100 crore through unsecured non-convertible debentures to repay existing debt and meet capex needs, sources said. The base issue of Rs 4,100 crore along with a greenshoe option allows the company to raise up to a total of Rs 5,000 crore, as per the placement memorandum. The proceeds would be used for general corporate purposes, repayment-prepayment of the existing debt and for capital expenditure requirements. Vedanta is touting its strong cash flows and ongoing growth projects and has already managed to get anchor investors. Anchor investors for the Series-1 debentures, which have a base issue size of Rs 2,250 crore and a greenshoe option of Rs 750 crore, include ICICI Prudential MF, Aditya Birla Sun Life MF, Kotak Mahindra MF, and Axis MF. Reliance General Insurance Company and two other financial institutions are the anchor investors for the Series-2 which has a base issue size of Rs 1,000 crore and a greenshoe option of Rs 750 crore. A third series has a base size of Rs 850 crore. In its Q4 earnings call, the company said it foresees a 20 per cent EBITDA growth with about 10 per cent growth in volumes and around 10 per cent from cost compressions and marketing premiums.

Transrail bags bumper orders

New Delhi: Mumbai-based Transrail is an EPC player in the T&D segment, along with civil, railways, poles and lighting, having a footprint across 59 countries. It has secured new orders worth Rs 534 crore in domestic and international markets. The orders have been secured by the transmission & distribution (T&D) segment of the company, Transrail said in a statement. "With FY26 order intake already crossing Rs 1,600 crore, we remain focused on efficient execution and timely delivery," Randeep Narang, MD & CEO said. As of March 31, the un-executed order book stood at Rs 14,551 crore, registering a growth of 44 per cent on a year-on-year basis. The company has completed more than 200 projects in the power T&D vertical, along with comprehensive and extensive project execution capabilities in terms of manpower, and supply of materials (including self-manufactured products).

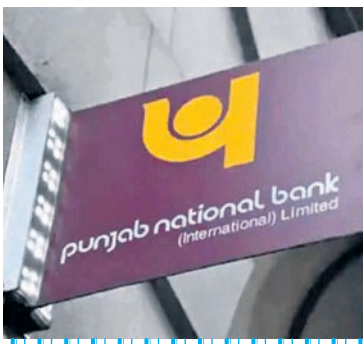


It is only the US, China and Germany which are larger than India, and if we stick to what is being planned and what is being thought through, in 2.5-3 years, we will be the third largest economy

BVR SUBRAHMANYAM | NITI AAYOG CEO

PNB SLASHES RATES ON EDUCATION LOAN

Punjab National Bank (PNB) Tuesday said it has reduced interest rates on its education loan offering under the Vidyalaxmi Scheme by 20 basis points. This initiative further strengthens the bank's commitment to enhance education accessibility. The Vidyalaxmi Scheme is designed to provide comprehensive financial support to students towards quality-driven higher education, it said



India seeks WTO talk with US over tariff on auto components



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jun 3: India Tuesday sought consultations with US under the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) safeguard agreement over American tariffs on auto components.

This move comes shortly after India reserved the right to impose retaliatory duties on select US products in response to American tariffs on steel and aluminium.

On March 26, 2025, US adopted a measure in the form of a tariff increase of 25 per cent ad valorem on imports of passenger vehicles and light trucks, and on certain automobile parts originating in or from India, a communication sent by India to WTO said.

"India considers that the measure, in its design and effect, constitutes a safeguard measure within the meaning of General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT) 1994 and the Agreement on Safeguards, as it is intended to protect US domestic industry from increased

imports," it said.

It added that America has failed to notify the WTO Committee on safeguards under a provision of the Agreement on Safeguards (AoS) on taking a decision to apply the safeguard measure.

"Accordingly, as an affected Member with significant export interest to the United States in the products concerned, India requests consultations with the United States," it said.

In the consultations, India would like to exchange views on the measure.

"India looks forward to receiving a prompt reply to this request from United States and to setting a mutually convenient date and venue for the consultations," it said.

India reserves all its rights under the agreement establishing the WTO. The US imported \$89 billion worth of auto parts globally last year, with Mexico accounting for \$36 billion, China for \$10.1 billion, and India for just \$2.2 billion.

Markets fall for 3rd day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jun 3: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled nearly 1 per cent Tuesday, weighed down by a wide-spread selloff amid foreign fund outflows and growing geopolitical uncertainties.

Domestic markets stayed on the back foot for the third straight session as investors offloaded energy, finance and IT stocks, traders said. 30-share BSE index tanked 636.24 points or 0.78 per cent to settle at 80,737.51. During the day, it dropped 798.66 points or 0.98 per cent to 80,575.09.

The NSE Nifty plunged 174.10 points or 0.70 per cent to 24,542.50. As many as 2,266 stocks declined, while 1,731 advanced and 147 remained unchanged on the BSE.

The domestic market re-

mained in negative terrain amid mixed global cues, geopolitical issues and a volatile currency market led by a weak USD. Profit-bookings is evident across sectors, except for real estate stocks, supported by expectations of an interest rate cut by the RBI.

From the Sensex firms, Adani Ports declined 2.42 per cent. Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, Power Grid, Eternal, IndusInd Bank, Maruti, Tata Consultancy Services and UltraTech Cement were among the biggest laggards.

Mahindra & Mahindra emerged as the only gainer in the pack. Adani Group's 11 listed companies ended lower. The BSE midcap gauge declined 0.52 per cent, while the smallcap index dipped 0.07 per cent.

On the other hand, commodities and realty were the gainers.

FY26 GDP target raised to 6.4%: UBS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jun 3: Swiss brokerage UBS Tuesday raised its FY26 GDP growth forecast for India to 6.4 per cent from an earlier 6 per cent, underlining that economic momentum is holding up despite the trade war.

Official data released last week said India's economic growth slowed to 7.4 per cent in the March quarter, bringing down the annual growth rate to 6.5 per cent during 2024-25. In FY24, the economic growth was 9.2 per cent.

UBS said its expectation of a higher economic growth is driven by a better-than-expected domestic demand momentum, a likely easing of tariffs

on Chinese imports, hopes of cinching an US-India trade deal, and the tailwind of lower global crude oil prices.

"We now raise our forecast of India's FY26 real GDP growth to 6.4 per cent from 6 per cent. Our higher GDP forecast assumes no significant increase in the effective tariff rate against India and the overall global tariff situation remaining the same," it said.

The brokerage said its composite economic indicator suggests economic momentum held up in April despite the trade war. It expects household consumption growth to pick up and become broad based as rural consumption gathers pace on hopes of a favourable

monsoon and lower food prices, and an improvement in urban demand on policy stimulus including income tax relief, lower inflation and rate cuts.

The growth in capital expenditure is likely to decelerate marginally in FY26 on the risk of China offloading excess capacity in the manufacturing sector and heightened global uncertainty dragging on private corporate capex, it said, adding that stretched balance sheets will lead to a disappointment in the state capex.

India's goods exports are likely to lag amid weaker global trade prospects, it said, adding that services exports will likely remain supportive.

India's Russian oil imports surge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jun 3: India's imports of Russian crude oil surged to a 10-month high of 1.96 million barrels per day in May, driven by continued availability at significant discounts compared to global benchmark prices, according to ship-tracking data from Kpler.

India, the world's third largest oil importing and consuming nation, bought from abroad around 5.1 million barrels of crude oil. Whereas, Russia was the largest supplier, accounting for over 38 per cent of the supplies.

India, which has traditionally sourced its oil from the Middle East, began importing a large volume of oil from Russia soon after the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. This is primarily because Russian oil was available at a significant discount to other international benchmarks due to Western sanctions and some European countries shunning purchases.

This led to India's imports of Russian oil seeing a dramatic rise, growing from less than 1



Overall, India's crude import profile for May 2025 highlights its price-sensitive, diversified sourcing strategy. Russian volumes remain elevated despite external pressures, reinforcing the primacy of economic pragmatism in India's energy policy

SUMIT RITOLIA | LEAD RESEARCH ANALYST, KPLER

per cent of its total crude oil imports to a staggering 40-44 per cent in a short period.

A key advantage lies in the pricing of Urals crude from Russia, which, although not always steeply discounted, remains significantly cheaper than West African and Middle

Eastern grades.

This pricing edge has supported stronger refinery gross margins for Indian processors. For instance, in May, average FOB prices for Urals stood around \$50 per barrel, comfortably below the \$60 a barrel; price cap set by Western allies.

Celebi's plea rejected



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 3: Celebi Ground Handling India's arbitration application for interim measures against Ahmedabad International Airport over the cancellation of security permits has been dismissed, according to an exchange filing by the Turkish firm's parent company.

"The arbitration application filed by our company, Celebi Ground Handling India Pvt Ltd, in which our company owns 61 per cent of the capital, against Adani Ahmedabad International Airport Limited in the Ahmedabad Commercial Court on 27.05.2025, seeking interim measures due to the cancellation of security clearances by the Civil Aviation Security Bureau in relation to its operations at Ahmedabad International Airport, was rejected on 02.06.2025," the company stated.

The company said it would appeal to the Supreme Court on the issue.

The Indian government has revoked the security clearance for Turkish ground-handling firm Celebi Airport Services at Indian airports, in the wake of Turkey's support to Pakistan after the Pahalgam terror attacks and Operation Sindoor launched by India to avenge the killings of 26 tourists.

In a notification, the Ministry of Civil Aviation said, "In the exercise of power conferred

upon DG, BCAS, the security clearance in Celebi Airport Services India Pvt Ltd is hereby revoked with immediate effect in the interest of National Security."

The Turkish company handles around 70 per cent of the ground operations at Mumbai airport, including passenger services, load control, flight operations, cargo and postal services, warehouses and bridge operations.

Minister of State for Civil Aviation and Cooperation, Murlidhar Mohol, also stated that there were requests from across India to ban Celebi NAS Airport Services India Ltd.

"Recognising the seriousness of the issue and the call to protect national interests, we have taken cognizance of these requests and Ministry of Civil Aviation has revoked security clearance of the said company. Ensuring the safety and interests of the nation remains our top priority," the minister posted.

Since its entry in 2008, Celebi has expanded its presence in India's aviation sector.

As per reports, the firm is partly owned by Sumeyye Erdogan, daughter of Tayyip Erdogan. Sumeyye Erdogan is married to Selcuk Bayraktar, the man who produces Bayraktar military drones, which Pakistan used against India.

Dual-track approach in India-US trade: NITI Aayog

A dual-track approach is essential now. In the short term, India should consider to selectively reduce high tariffs on non-sensitive imports and negotiate non-tariff safeguards on vulnerable segments such as poultry

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jun 3: In the aftermath of 'reciprocal tariffs' by US, India should adopt dual-track approach and selectively reduce high tariffs on non-sensitive agricultural commodities imports from Washington, while also strategically offer concessions where domestic supply gaps exist, a NITI Aayog working paper has said.

Paper, titled 'Promoting India-US Agricultural Trade under New US Trade Regime', said that India's agricultural sector needs safeguards, to ensure price stability for both pro-

ducers and consumers, against excessive volatility in international markets.

It noted that sudden announcement of "reciprocal tariffs" and enhanced market access for US exports following re-election of Donald Trump as President of the United States in January 2025 have sent shock waves across the world.

India is the largest importer of edible oil in the world and US has huge export surplus of soybean which is GM, the paper said India can offer some concession to US in import of soybean oil to meet demands in that country and reduce trade imbalance, without harming



domestic production.

The paper also suggested that India should negotiate more access to US market for high-performing exports like shrimp, fish, spices, rice, tea, coffee, rubber. India earns

approximately \$5.75 billion annually from agri-exports to US. Expanding this through duty waivers or TRQs should be part of trade talks.

Alongside strategic trade management, it said India

must undertake medium-term structural reforms to improve the global competitiveness of its farm sector.

"This includes bridging the productivity gap by embracing appropriate technologies, market reforms, private sector participation, improvement in logistics and development of competitive value chains," it said.

The Indo-US agricultural trade has experienced significant changes and steady growth in the last two decades, signalling deepening bilateral economic ties. The composition of agricultural trade between India and the US revealed that

both countries are diversifying their export portfolios.

While traditional items such as frozen shrimp, basmati rice, and spices continue to dominate, there has been a marked increase in the export of processed cereals, and other value-added products.

India's imports from US remain concentrated in high-value commodities such as almonds, pistachios, and walnuts. India has maintained surplus in agriculture trade with USA and the same has increased over time. However, the relative importance of agriculture in the bilateral trade is diminishing.

VIRAT KOHLI LIFTS IPL TITLE AFTER 18 LONG YEARS

VK18 MEETS DESTINY ON 18TH YEAR



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, June 3: 11.20 pm. The chiselled, sweat-glistened face of Virat Kohli was filled with impatience. The maiden IPL title for him and the Royal Challengers Bengaluru was a good over away.

He was desperate for that famous Kohli run — fingers pointed heavenwards with a wide grin plastered across the face. 11.25 pm: Josh Hazlewood successfully defended 29 runs in the 20th over. But all Kohli could do was to hide his face in his palms with tear-filled eyes and baulk. Teammates soon enveloped him as their endearing No. 18 met his destiny after 18 years.

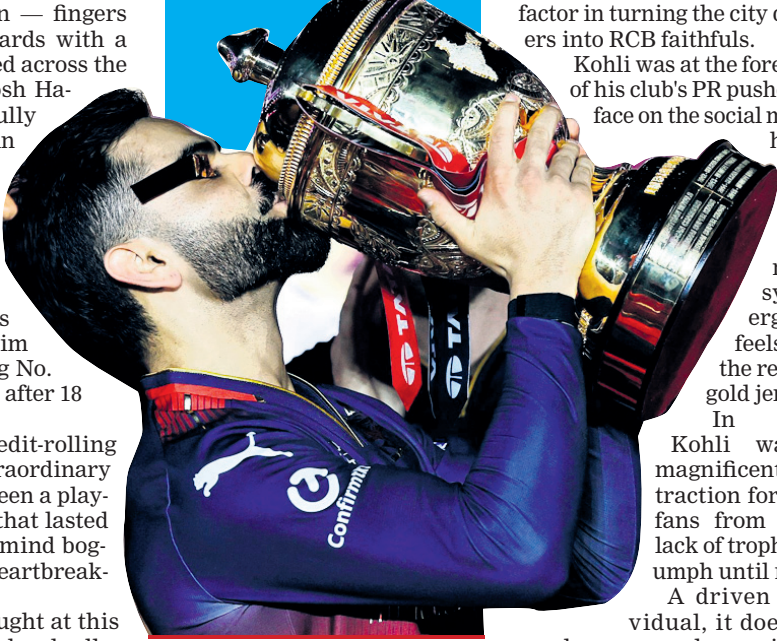
Was it the credit-rolling moment of an extraordinary relationship between a player and franchise that lasted 18 years through mind boggling highs and heartbreaking lows?

It's a weird thought at this moment of personal and collective glory. But it could not be avoided as the journey came to its much-desired full circle.

The first chapter of the Kohli and the RCB series began in 2008, and it has transformed into a long-drawn TV drama like the 'Young and Restless'. Kohli was young and restless 18 years back — an irreverent, chubby South Delhi dandy who just wanted to take on the whole world in pursuit of victory. An anomaly in the dressing room that then contained Rahul

This win is as much for the fans as it is for the team. I've given this team my youth, prime and experience. Tried to win it every season, gave it everything I can

VIRAT KOHLI



Dravid, Anil Kumble, Jacques Kallis etc.

But RCB trusted Kohli, and their former owner Vijay Malya, a horse lover, let him be his own and allowed him time to mature into a thoroughbred.

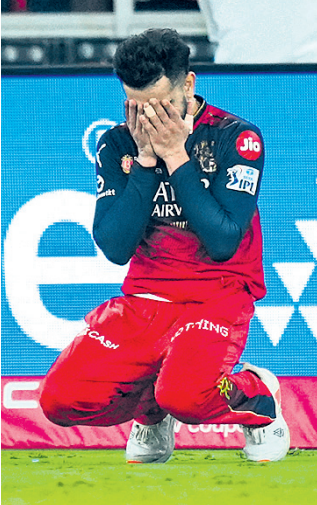
Perhaps, he fitted seamlessly into the upmarket and bold image of the franchise. It was a soap opera. But the relationship took a new turn in 2011. The Royal Challengers trusted a 22-year-old with the leadership role. Many 22-year-olds could

have wilted in the high-pressure environment, but not this 22-year-old. Kohli was in the hot seat for 12 years and 143 matches, and he remained firm there too even when the team failed to bag a trophy.

Gradually, he established a close connection with Bengalureans. His charisma was a big factor in turning the city dwellers into RCB faithfuls.

Kohli was at the forefront of his club's PR pushes, its face on the social media, he reiterated the inner synergy he feels to the red and gold jersey. In fact, Kohli was a magnificent distraction for RCB fans from their lack of trophy triumph until now.

A driven individual, it does not need any second guessing to realise that Kohli felt the hurt seeing a bare cupboard even as two rival Southern clubs added trophies. But Kohli never showed the angst in public or never thought of severing his ties with RCB. In fact, he always underlined his closeness to the outfit. The finest showman of this decade of cricket, the lead guitarist of the IPL and T20s stood crowned. Nothing else mattered more on this emotional moment.



Fans celebrate after Royal Challengers Bengaluru won the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 T20 final cricket match against Punjab Kings, in Bangalore Tuesday

PTI PHOTO



Virat Kohli's wife and Bollywood actor Anushka Sharma and others cheer during the final match

PTI PHOTO



Former UK prime minister Rishi Sunak celebrates RCB's triumph. Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, ICC Chairman Jay Shah, BCCI vice-president Rajeev Shukla and businesswoman Akshata Murty are also seen

PTI PHOTO

FIVE BEST FINDS

Red-hot form of Sai

Sai Sudharsan proved to be a sensational performer for Gujarat Titans this IPL and is all set to win the Orange Cap this season. Over 15 matches, he amassed 759 runs at a commanding average of 54.21. His highest score is an unbeaten 108, reflecting his ability to anchor the innings and accelerate when needed. Sai's strike rate of 156.17 shows he balances patience with aggression effectively. His tally includes 88 fours and 21 sixes, showing his capability to find the boundary consistently. Although Sai has been part of GT for a couple of seasons before this reason, IPL 2025 is the true season where he proved his capabilities to the full extent.



14-year-old scripts history

Vaibhav Suryavanshi made history with his debut at just 14 years of age, making him the youngest player to play in the IPL. On top of that, he also scored a 35-ball century this season vs GT, the second-fastest overall and the fastest by an Indian batter in tournament history. In terms of numbers, he played 7 matches this season and amassed 252 runs at a solid average of 36.00. His highest score is 101. Vaibhav's strike rate stands at an impressive 206.55, underlining his aggressive batting style.



Bright spark for Chennai

Ayush Mhatre was a mid-season signing by CSK as a replacement for skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad, but he made a strong impression and was a bright spark for Chennai Super Kings in the limited appearances he made. He played 7 matches and accumulated 240 runs. He has maintained a healthy batting average of 34.29 and a strike rate of 188.97, reflecting his ability to score quickly.



Punjab's new hitter

Priyansh Arya has emerged as a key player for Punjab Kings in IPL 2025. Over 16 matches, he has scored 451 runs, averaging 28.19. His highest score of 103 demonstrates his capacity to play long innings. With a strike rate of 183.33, Priyansh has been effective in maintaining a brisk scoring rate. He also has a knack for finding the boundary, smashing 51 fours and 25 sixes, contributing heavily to PBKS's batting strength throughout the season. He, along with his opening partner Prabhsimran Singh, played a big role in securing a final spot for PBKS for the first time in 11 seasons.



All-rounder Vipraj shines

Vipraj Nigam has been an intriguing all-round option for Delhi Capitals. Although Delhi failed to qualify for the playoffs, Vipraj's name will still be considered in the list of one of the best players of IPL 2025. He played 14 matches, bowled 39 overs and picked up 18 wickets with best bowling figures of 2/18. His economy rate of 9.12 complements his bowling strike rate of 21.27, showcasing his efficiency in restricting runs and taking timely wickets. With the bat, Vipraj has scored 142 runs at an average of 20.29, hitting 15 fours and 8 sixes, highlighting his ability to contribute crucial lower-order runs.



MOST EXPENSIVE FLOPS

Rishabh Pant - Lucknow Super Giants (₹27cr)

The Lucknow Super Giants were in desperate need of a fresh leader for their franchise after the departure of KL Rahul, and the franchise pulled out all stops to bag Rishabh Pant. LSG fended off competition from a few other franchises, especially Punjab Kings, and splashed out Rs 27 crore for the swashbuckling wicketkeeping batsman. However, the weight of the price tag seemed to be too much to bear for Pant as he put on a horror show for LSG in IPL 2025 as they failed to qualify for the playoffs. Pant endured a difficult season and was the butt of social media memes due to many questionable captaincy decisions and a poor overall show with the bat. He did redeem himself, with the bat, in the final league game of the season against Royal Challengers Bengaluru as he hit a superb century.



Venkatesh Iyer - Kolkata Knight Riders (₹ 23.75cr)

After letting go of their star captain Shreyas Iyer ahead of IPL 2025, defending champions Kolkata Knight Riders dished out big money to retain star top-order batsman Venkatesh Iyer, spending ₹23.75 crore in the auction for his signature. However, Iyer was another player who couldn't bear the pressure of the price tag. The lanky southpaw never got going in IPL 2025 as the defending champions crashed out in the league stage as they finished eighth in the table. While Iyer flattered to deceive with the bat, a lower batting position definitely contributed to his poor show for the defending champions. In the last league game against the Sunrisers Hyderabad, which SRH won by a whopping 110 runs, KKR threw a hint at what's next for the left-handed batter. Iyer was dropped for that fixture against SRH for the second time in IPL 2025, and it seems KKR is moving on from their expensive 'mistake'.



Jake Fraser-McGurk - Delhi Capitals ₹9cr)

DC retained the 23-year-old top-order batsman for Rs 9 crore after a standout season in IPL 2024. The aggressive right-handed batsman entered IPL 2025 carrying a big reputation, but his season crashed and burnt before being dropped midway through. Fraser-McGurk couldn't find the middle of the bat every time he was on the pitch, and the Delhi franchise dropped him after just 6 innings, where he scored a measly 55 runs. He returned to Australia after the IPL 2025 was temporarily suspended due to the military tensions between India and Pakistan and never returned, as he was too rattled by the conflict. And based on his performances this season, Fraser-McGurk's exile from DC could be a permanent one.



Ravichandran Ashwin - Chennai Super Kings (₹9.75cr)

CSK brought back their 'prodigal son' to much fanfare, but R Ashwin's return to his hometown franchise was anything but celebratory. The veteran off-spinner was expected to be the five-time champions' frontline bowler, but he was ineffective throughout the season as CSK finished dead last. His performances were even more disappointing when you take into consideration that CSK plays their home games on the spin-friendly surfaces of the MA Chidambaram stadium, which Afghanistan left-arm spinner Noor Ahmad made full use of. In fact, Ahmad was the lone bright spark in CSK's disastrous campaign, as the 24-year-old picked up 24 wickets in 14 matches.



Mohammad Shami - Sunrisers Hyderabad (₹10cr)

Last year's runners-up Sunrisers Hyderabad splashed Rs 10 crore on Mohammad Shami as they looked to onboard an experienced new ball specialist to lead their bowling attack. However, Shami failed to deliver on all fronts as he picked up only six wickets throughout the season and failed to be economical with his bowling. The 34-year-old had a forgettable season as SRH finished sixth in the table. In fact, SRH were languishing near the bottom of the table, but they rounded off the league stage with a hat-trick of wins, which propelled them to sixth. Shami was a shadow of his usual self as he leaked runs in the powerplay and at the death and was ineffective in picking up wickets to stem the flow from the opposition batters. Not only did Shami end the season on a disappointing note of his team not qualifying for the playoffs, but also the heartbreak of missing out on India's tour of England.

