

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES
Today, you will meet with success, and you do it on your own merit, without any divine intervention. You may be a student of science or arts, but you will excel due to your deep knowledge of the subject. There are chances you may decide to study further, says Ganesha.

TAURUS
You will wake up feeling adventurous today, says Ganesha. Experimentation and an unusual attitude will manifest itself in how you think today. Your subordinates may influence some of your decisions at work this afternoon. On the whole, you will take time to think things out before making any vital decisions, predicts Ganesha.

GEMINI
Though you are always open to advice, you need to take your own, independent decision today. You may spend the afternoon putting things in order. In the evening, you will possibly have a romantic dinner with your sweetheart and may event want to propose marriage. Ganesha won't advice, as today, it's entirely your call.

CANCER
Both your physical and mental health will remain stable today, predicts Ganesha. In the afternoon, you may meet one of your clients for lunch. It is an auspicious day to propose and finalise wedding dates, hopes Ganesha.

LEO
Necessity is the mother of invention, and today, you will draw from your large pool of scientific and technological knowledge to achieve your goals at work. Family matters will keep you occupied in the afternoon, but do not let that come in the way of your evening activities that get your blood flowing through the veins, such as dance or music lessons.

VIRGO
The tempest of anger runs wild. You are most likely to blow hotter than Mount Vesuvius ever did, predicts Ganesha. In the afternoon, you may chalk out a big business plan. Peers will stand by your side at the workplace. But in the evening, try spending your time meditating and cooling those nerves, advises Ganesha.

LIBRA
The mind is a pool of infinite thoughts; this is more true for you today than any other day. Ganesha says you will explore the depths of your thoughts. At work, you may share some precious moments with peers of the opposite sex.

SCORPIO
Your entrepreneurship today will reflect a lot of your creativity and artistic sense. Romantic diversions will bring you immense pleasure in the afternoon. Have your close friends over in the evening and spend some quality time, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
A delightfully emotional experience would stir up your soul today. Later perhaps, success will touch your feet either through the electronic media or through a brilliant idea. Love will steam and bubble as you expect to be asked out by your prospective life mate, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN
It takes years of hard work, optimism and unceasing support of loved ones to reach the pinnacle of success. But you will only have to be tactful, says Ganesha. You will take matters more seriously today and will treat your subordinates as equals for achieving your targets. At home, you will spend some quality time with family members and realise that they need you more than anything else.

AQUARIUS
Today, you will seek direct and frank communication like never before, and it does seem to solve some of your problems. You will remain edgy, and at work, minute things will bother you no end. Later in the day, Ganesha will grant results.

PISCES
Your social standing ought to receive a boost today, and the financial success coming your way today plays no small part in it, says Ganesha. You may find yourself enjoying your own company in the afternoon, but come evening, you are likely to find yourself indulging in some intellectual discussion in the company of like-minded people.



SABRINA CARPENTER SCORES HER FIRST-EVER NO-1 DEBUT SINGLE

Popstar Sabrina Carpenter's *Manchild* has become the singles chart at number one as her second leader, and first number one debut. She previously scored it with *Please Please Please*, a single from her Grammy-winning *Short n' Sweet* album, which spent a week atop the list this time last year, reports *varity.com*.

JUSTIN BIEBER ADMITS HAVING ANGER ISSUES

International pop sensation Justin Bieber shared a lengthy note on his social media, addressing how people keep telling him to heal, and admitted having anger issues. Bieber, whose credits include popular tracks such as *Boyfriend* and *Baby*, posted a note on his Instagram handle.



Raashii takes a soulful stroll

Mumbai: Actress Raashii Khanna recently took a soulful stroll through the bustling streets of Mumbai, embracing the warmth, stories, and smiles that make the city so unique.

The actress was seen interacting with locals, sharing light-hearted moments, and celebrating the everyday beauty of life in Mumbai. Dressed in a breezy outfit and wearing a warm smile, she posted pictures with local women. In one image, Raashii is seen placing fragrant gajras (flower garlands) in their hair. In another shot, she is seen posing with flowers in her hands.

Alongside the heartfelt images, she wrote, "Every street holds a story, every smile carries a memory. Dreams don't just live in eyes — they grow in every corner of this city. Somewhere a gajra, somewhere a smile — here, dreams walk on the ground." She ended her post with the hashtag #Mumbai.

On the professional front, Raashii was last seen in the Tamil film *Aghathiya*, where she

shared the screen with Arjun Sarja and Jiiva. Up next, she is gearing up for her role in *Telusu Kada*, which marks the directorial debut of stylist Neeraja Kona. Backed by TG Vishwa Prasad under the People Media Factory banner, the film also features Siddu Jonnalagadda, Srinidhi Shetty, and Viva Harsha in prominent roles. **IANS**

Sara's bucket list

Mumbai: Sara Ali Khan is not just a rising Bollywood star—she's a vibrant personality who seamlessly blends her love for adventure, food, and fitness. In a recent interaction, she offered fans a peek into her personal world, from travel dreams to foodie indulgences, once again proving why she remains so relatable and loved.

A passionate traveller, Sara frequently shares snapshots from her explorations across India and beyond. But one destination tops her bucket list—Mount Everest. "I want to do the Everest trek. A little bit of training would be required, but I think I will be able to do it," she shared. Her love for the mountains is clear, as her ideal way to unwind is trekking through North India, combining her love for nature and wellness.

When it comes to food, Sara strikes a perfect balance between indulgence and healthy eating. Her cheat day favorite? "Extra butter on Makki ki Roti with Sarso ka Saag!" she revealed gleefully, while her everyday go-to is Lasooni Palak.

Fitness is a key part of her life, and she even admits she'd happily date someone who hits the gym on a Sunday. On the work front, she's gearing up for *Metro In Dino*, opposite Aditya Roy Kapur, directed by Anurag Basu.

AGENCIES



Chitrangada on cosmetic procedures

Mumbai: Chitrangada Singh has taken a firm stand against the online trolling celebrities face for opting for cosmetic enhancements. The Housefull 5 actress voiced her views during an interview on a YouTube channel, defending those in the entertainment industry—especially women—who choose to enhance their appearance to feel more confident.

"I think if somebody is in a visual medium and is using something to enhance themselves, it's absolutely fine," Chitrangada said. "We are evolving, so I feel that unnecessarily assassinating somebody's whole character over it—I don't approve of that at all." She emphasized that

while constructive criticism is welcome, trolling often crosses the line. "Sometimes people say very demeaning things. It's very hurtful, and I'm shocked at times," she added.

Chitrangada's comments come at a time when public scrutiny of celebrities' looks has become increasingly harsh, often overshadowing their talent and work. Her honest take is being appreciated for calling out the double standards and encouraging a more accepting, supportive view of personal choices in the public eye.

Chitrangada recently appeared in Housefull 5, released June 6, 2025.

AGENCIES



Wamiqa gets candid

Mumbai: Wamiqa Gabbi recently stirred buzz online with her candid and unexpected remark about wanting to "steal" Karan Johar from Alia Bhatt. In an interview, when asked what she would take from Alia, Wamiqa

explained, "Karan Johar," explaining her choice with heartfelt honesty. "Because he has been her biggest supporter, and I think to have someone that powerful, talented, and in that position — and to have that love that you share with that person, to have that person in your life — isn't that a beautiful thing?" she said. She further added that she'd like to steal Ananya Panday's skin,

Keerthy Suresh's humility, Varun Dhawan's energy, Shah Rukh Khan's legacy, and Kriti Sanon's height.

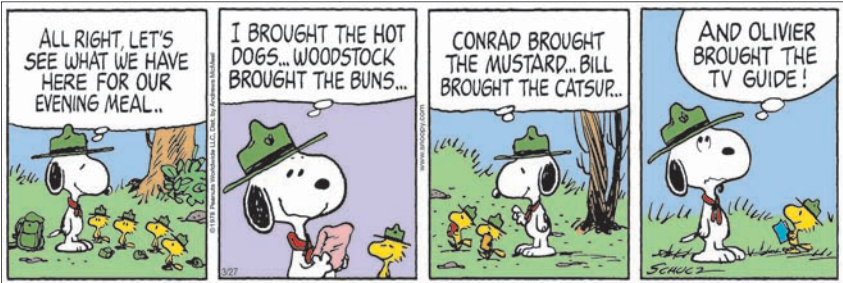
Her response instantly set social media abuzz, especially on Reddit, where users drew comparisons between her and Aishwarya Rai, who had previously hinted at Karan Johar's special treatment of Alia. Some praised Wamiqa for her boldness. One user

commented, "She has more guts than nepo kids", while others saw her words as a subtle but striking commentary on the privileges Alia has received in the industry.

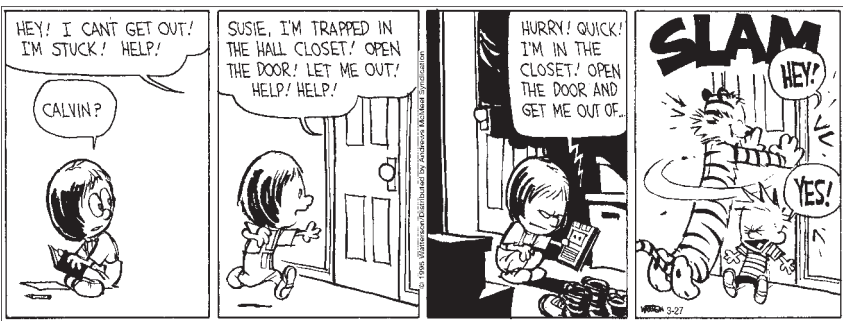
The comment reignited long-standing conversations around Alia's close relationship with Karan and his instrumental role in shaping her career. While Wamiqa's tone remained respectful, her honesty stood out in an industry where such dynamics are often tiptoed around.

AGENCIES

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD

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Across
1 Pigeon's home
3 Tooth type
9 Wiggles
10 Blood line
11 Like some movies (6-6)
14 Nile reptile
16 Underground network
17 Golfer's gadget
18 Wedding party member (4,2,6)

21 Top dog
22 Staff
23 Forgetful person, medically
24 Initial stake

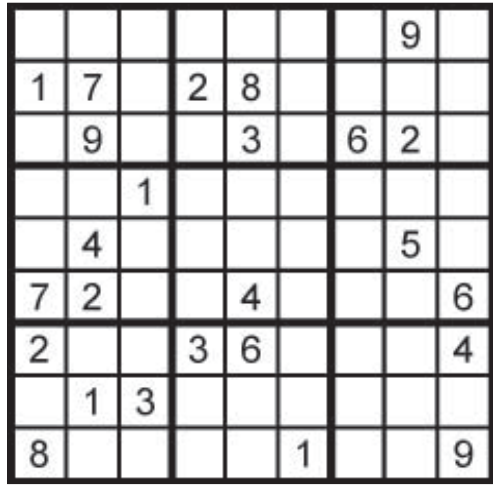
6 Utopian
7 Bargain
8 Money movers (8,4)
12 Validation
13 Condemned man's hope
15 Nursery item
19 Frequently
20 Spanish sparkling white wine
22 Jacuzzi

Down

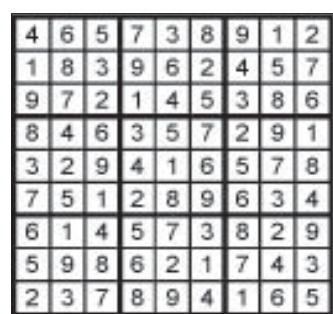
1 Shipwrecked person
2 Needle
4 Psyches
5 Unfamiliar with

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.



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

GOVT COMMITTED TO EMPOWERING FARMERS: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 17: The BJP government is committed to empowering farmers of Odisha, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said, Tuesday.

Addressing the Kisan Shakti Samavesh, which was being held in Bolangir to mark one year of the BJP government in the state, Majhi said, "Our government is committed to empowering farmers of the state. Efforts are underway to increase their income by different means."

“One of our major election promises was to ensure fair value for the hard work of lakhs of our farmer brothers and sisters — a promise we have fulfilled,” he said. As soon as the new government took the oath of office on June 12, 2024, it decided to provide ₹800 towards per quintal of paddy as input subsidy to the farmers, Majhi said.

He noted that over 60 per cent of the state's population depends on agriculture and allied sectors for their livelihood.

Govt reviews preparedness to welcome PM June 20



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 17: Ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's one-day visit to Bhubaneswar June 20, two high-level meetings were held here Tuesday to review preparedness for the event.

Security officials held a meeting at the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) in Bhubaneswar, while Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja took stock of the preparedness at the state secretariat, Lok Seva Bhawan.

Senior ministers Suresh Pu-jari and Bibhuti Bhushan Jena inspected the Janata Maidan, the venue where the PM is scheduled to address a public meeting.

"We are prepared to welcome the Prime Minister. Apart from holding a roadshow and participating in a Triranga Yatra, the PM will also launch projects worth ₹17,000 crore for Odisha," Pujari told reporters.

All arrangements were made

Diarrhoea outbreak: Raids at eateries in Jaipur, twin cities



Capital Hospital's director Rupabhanu Mishra said a separate ward has been set up to treat diarrhoea patients

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 17: Raids were conducted Tuesday at several restaurants in Bhubaneswar, Jajpur and Cuttack to assess the standard of hygiene amid the diarrhoea outbreak in parts of the state, officials said.

Highlighting the government's achievements, the Chief Minister said that as of May, 78,681 units of agricultural machinery have been distributed, with subsidies amounting to ₹459.68 crore provided directly to farmers through DBT (direct

benefit transfer).

Majhi urged citizens to support the growth of agriculture and help establish it as the backbone of the country's economy.

"We are working with full commitment to expand irrigation facilities across farmlands.

Our target is to bring irrigation to 15 lakh hectares of currently un-irrigated land within five years," he added.

The Chief Minister described the Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan, launched May 29 from Sakhigopal in Puri, as a signif-

“We are working with full commitment to expand irrigation facilities across farmlands. Our target is to bring irrigation to 15 lakh hectares of currently un-irrigated land within five years

MOHAN CHARAN MAJHI | CHIEF MINISTER

icant milestone in agricultural development, aligning with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for the sector.

Detailing the ongoing agricultural initiatives, Majhi said the Shree Anna Abhiyan is improving the livelihoods of small and marginal farmers through the revival of traditional crops and promotion of nutrition-based farming practices.

Under the CM Kisan Yojana, financial assistance of ₹4,000 is being provided to farmers, including those in urban areas.

On the occasion of Akshaya Tritoaya, over 50 lakh small and marginal farmers, including 2,381 Particularly Vulnerable

Tribal Group (PVTG) farmers and 25,532 urban farmers received financial support amounting to ₹1,025 crore.

The Chief Minister added that the CM Kisan Yojana is being integrated with the PM Kisan Yojana to provide enhanced financial support to farmers.

“In a first-of-its-kind initiative to fully empower farmers families, we have also introduced the Krishi Vidyanidhi Yojana, which provides scholarships to support higher education for farmers’ children,” he said.

Speaking at the event, Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardehan Singh Deo, who also holds the Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment portfolio, said the government has allocated increased financial resources in this year's state Budget for the development of agriculture and farmers.

He added that more provisions are being planned in the upcoming Budget to further strengthen the agricultural sector.

Majhi condemns Gopalpur shame

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 17: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday strongly condemned the alleged gang-rape on Gopalpur beach and assured that exemplary action would be taken against all the accused.

Terming the incident 'a crime against humanity', the Chief Minister said such acts are highly condemnable and no one involved will be spared. He affirmed that the strictest punishment permissible under the law would be imposed.

Majhi emphasised that everyone connected to the crime — whether directly or indirectly — will be apprehended and dealt with according to legal provisions.

According to police sources, the victim, a college student, had gone to Gopalpur beach with her boyfriend Sunday to celebrate the Raja festival. She was allegedly gang-raped by a group of 10 youths, who overpowered and tied up her boyfriend before taking her to a secluded location.



A promotional poster for GST Pakhwada. The top left features the Ministry of Finance logo and the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) logo. The main title 'GST Pakhwada' is in large, bold, orange letters. Below it, text in white and orange states: 'As part of GST day celebration, CGST offices across the nation are organizing the GST Pakhwada from June 16 to June 30, 2025'. A calendar icon is next to the dates. On the right, a hand points to a glowing 'GST' box. A central text box says: 'A helpdesk will be setup in all CGST Commissionerates across the Country for resolving GST related queries and providing necessary guidance to GST taxpayers.' Below this, a QR code is shown with the text 'Scan for details of Help Desks'. To the right, an illustration of a man at a laptop is shown with the text 'Please visit the Help Desks for your GST queries'. The bottom features a yellow banner with the text 'GST – A Journey of Trust, Transparency & Transformation'. The footer contains social media handles for Facebook (@cbicindia), Twitter (@cbic_india), Instagram (@cbicindia), YouTube (@CBICINDIA), and WhatsApp (CBIC India).

विद्युत मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
FINANCE

कलकत्ता

GST

GST Pakhwada

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GST – A Journey of Trust, Transparency & Transformation

Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs

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CBC 15502/13/0004/2526

ODISHA MARKS 50 YRS OF PROJECT CROCODILE

Min urges mass movement for crocodile conservation



Forest Minister Ganesh Ram Singkhuntia highlights Odisha's 50-year legacy as a global role model in crocodile conservation

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 17: Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister, Ganeshram Singkhuntia, Tuesday appealed to people to make the conservation of crocodiles a mass movement.

The state celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Crocodile Conservation Project in Odisha here.

In a video message, which was played at the event organised on the occasion of International Crocodile Day, the minister said that Odisha is an important habitat for crocodiles as all the three crocodile species -- saltwater crocodile (Baula), Mugger and Gharials -- are found in the state.

"For the past 50 years, our state has been setting an example for the whole world in the conservation of crocodiles," he said.

He further said that crocodile

conservation is not just about saving a single creature, it is a symbol of preserving the rivers, water bodies and the entire ecosystem.

Being an integral part of the food chain, crocodiles play a vital role in maintaining natural biodiversity by removing dead organisms from rivers, lakes and other water bodies, creating a healthy environment, Singkhuntia said.

Stating that the state is committed to the protection of water, forests and wildlife, he stated, "We must take a pledge to take forward the great work started by our ancestors towards nature and environment protection and turn it into a mass movement."

The challenge of today is to make the crocodile conservation project in the state as successful as possible by maintaining the ecological balance of the wetlands, he added.

Forest, Environment and Climate Change Additional Chief Secretary Satyabrata Sahu, said, "Today, we are not just celebrating an ordinary event, but we are celebrating 50 years of a unique and glorious journey of Odisha in the field of nature

(crocodile) conservation."

About fifty years ago, the three species of crocodiles living in the rivers, lakes and reservoirs of Odisha were on the verge of extinction. Their number was limited to a handful, he said, while narrating the history behind the crocodile conservation project.

In that critical situation, in 1975, the ambitious project was launched in Odisha with the joint support of the Government of India and the United Nations, Sahu said, adding, Odisha's role in the success of this project has become an example for the whole world today.

From 96 Baula crocodiles in Bhitarkanika mangrove then, their number has increased to 1,880. Similarly, due to natural reproduction of the Gharial crocodile at Satkosia Gorge in Tikarpada of the Mahanadi, its number has increased to 16.

Due to successful breeding efforts, the state now has more than 200 Mugger crocodiles, he added. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief of Forest Force, Suresh Panth, highlighted the growing challenge of human-crocodile conflict due to shrinking habitats and loss of spawning grounds.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) & Chief Wildlife Warden Prem Kumar Jha outlined the project's key achievements, highlighting habitat restoration, community participation, and financial aid for individuals affected by crocodile-human conflicts.

Looking ahead, a national-level workshop on crocodile conservation will be held June 18, bringing together experts and forest officials from across the country.



PATIENT VISIT: Cuttack-Barabati MLA Sofia Firdous visits cholera patients undergoing treatment at SCB Medical College and Hospital, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

'Journey of Mind to Market' workshop kicks off

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 17: A two-day workshop on 'Journey of Mind to Market' commenced Tuesday at the Krushi Bhawan auditorium, aiming to foster innovation, entrepreneurship, and self-reliance among higher secondary students across Odisha.

The workshop is organised by the Directorate of Higher Secondary Education (DHSE) under the Department of School and Mass Education in collaboration with the Ministry of Education's Innovation Cell (MIC) and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

The event focuses on the implementation of the School Innovation Council (SIC), providing students and educators with insights into design thinking, idea generation, market research, prototype development, entrepreneurship, and intellectual property rights (IPR).



Subhashree Nanda, Additional Secretary, S&ME, inaugurated the workshop as chief guest, expressing confidence that such initiatives will contribute significantly to the vision of a "Viksit Odisha."

Other dignitaries present included Raghuram R Iyer, Director, DHSE; Smita Rout, SPD, OAVs; Elangovan Kariappan, Assistant Innovation Director, MIC and Jyoti

Lingaraj Temple ritual rights panel office inaugurated

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 17: The office of the two-member committee set up to review the Record of Rights (RoR) concerning ritual services at the Lingaraj Temple was inaugurated Tuesday at the Independent Circuit House here by committee chairman Durga Prasanna Choudhury, retired judge of the Orissa High Court.

Present during the inauguration were committee member Professor Prafulla Kumar Mishra, Law Secretary Pranab Kumar Patra, Second Additional Legal Adviser and Additional Secretary Arun Kumar Sahu, and Additional Secretary (Judicial) Shiba Prasad Mahapatra. The committee's working procedures were discussed in detail during the occasion.

The Odisha government

has constituted this expert committee to review and finalise the Record of Rights associated with various ritual services performed by different appointed servitors at the Lingaraj Temple. The formation of the committee was notified by the Law department through letter no. 7714/Leg dated 08.05.2025.

The committee will study the various services, roles, and rights of temple servitors and will submit a detailed report to the state government. As part of this effort, the committee has requested the Khurda District Collector to provide documents related to the daily ritual practices and established customs of Lord Lingaraj.

200 drivers trained in road safety by BMC



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 17: In a bid to raise awareness on road safety, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Tuesday launched a driver awareness programme here at Unit-VIII.

As part of the Zero Accident Day campaign, the initiative will continue till June 21, focusing on educating drivers about safe and responsible driving practices.

In the first phase of the programme, 200 drivers received

training and awareness on road safety. Mayor Sulochana Das attended as the chief guest, while BMC Corporator (Ward 7) Samyata Mohanty was the guest of honour.

"Road safety is a collective responsibility," Das said adding, "I commend BMC for this initiative and urge all drivers to adopt safe driving practices."

Additional Commissioners Ratnakar Sahoo and Kailash Chandra Das, along with other senior BMC officials, were also present at the event.

Odisha Yatri App to roll out ambulance services

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 17: In a major boost to emergency medical response in Odisha, the state government has announced that its flagship mobility platform, the Odisha Yatri App, will soon include ambulance services, both government and private, under its umbrella.

Commerce and Transport Minister Bibhuti Bhushan Jena made the announcement Tuesday, highlighting the state's push to digitise and streamline emergency healthcare transportation. "Following the successful integration of autorickshaw and taxi services, Odisha Yatri App will now offer citizens the ability to book ambulances online. The Commerce and Transport department will initiate the



process shortly," he said.

"This initiative marks a significant step in our commitment to an inclusive, citizen-centric transport and healthcare ecosystem," said Minister Jena, reaffirming the government's focus on equitable, accessible public services.

"The new service will be operated by Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT), while the Transport department will

manage the system's maintenance and regulatory oversight. The move is seen as a vital step toward improving last-mile healthcare delivery, especially in remote and underserved areas," he said.

The initiative stems from a broader government vision to create a seamless, tech-enabled platform that ensures timely access to medical transport. The app, launched last year and

powered by the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), already offers various affordable transport services including AC and non-AC minicabs, sedans, inter-city rides, and rentals.

At a recent review meeting, Commerce and Transport department Principal Secretary Usha Padhee emphasised the importance of leveraging digital infrastructure for emergency healthcare. "Our aim is to bring all ambulances under a single, standardised platform to improve service reliability, ensure faster response times, and enhance citizen access," she noted.

To achieve this, the government plans to launch a campaign-mode registration drive for private ambulances, encouraging them to join the platform. These ambulances will be linked to the Vehicle Location

Tracking System (VLTS), enabling real-time GPS monitoring and efficient deployment during emergencies.

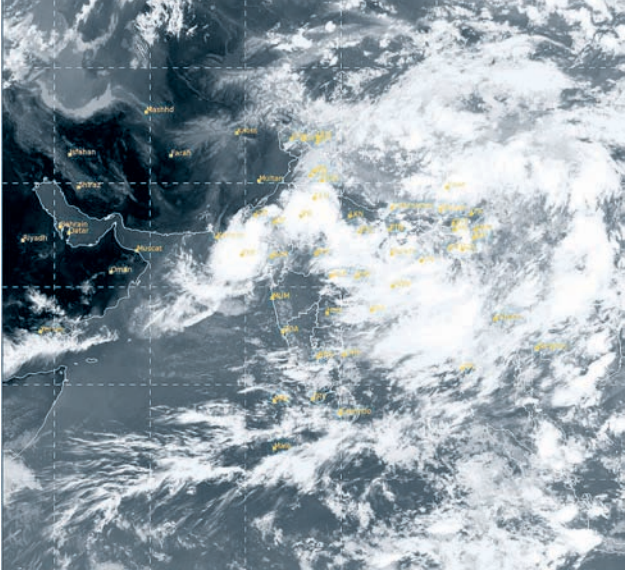
The platform will also feature a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for ambulance fare regulation, a move designed to protect citizens from arbitrary or exploitative pricing. Incentives and regulatory clarity will be provided to encourage private ambulance operators to register and comply with service norms.

Officials underscored that strict enforcement mechanisms will be put in place to prevent unauthorised operations and ensure service quality. With the integration of ambulance services, the Odisha Yatri App is set to become a comprehensive mobility and emergency care solution for the people of Odisha.

YMCA launches Drowning Prevention Week


BHUBANESWAR: YMCA Bhubaneswar inaugurated Drowning Prevention Week (June 15-22) at the YMCA conference hall. Panchayat Raj and Drinking Water department joint director Bimbadhar Sethi, guest of honour, urged youth to compulsorily learn swimming and praised YMCA for its charitable efforts. Unicef's Manna Biswas emphasised the importance of swimming skills for young people. Secretary of YMCAs of India, Koshy Alexander Vaidyan, spoke on the theme "Safe Waters, Strong Communities." Jaydip Sarkar from Eastern Regional YMCA highlighted efforts to spread awareness in schools and colleges. YMCA Bhubaneswar president Purnananda Pradhan welcomed guests, while vice president Ashim Das offered the opening prayer. Treasurer Antony Mathew proposed the vote of thanks. Editor Gyana Ranjan Das of Mukhta Kalam encouraged youth to be cautious around water and appreciated YMCA's initiative. The programme was coordinated by YMCA Bhubaneswar general secretary Sudhansu Sekhar Naik.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	86.29 ▲ 0.20	SENSEX	81583.30 ▼ 212.85	GOLD	₹99,438 ▲ ₹0.26
EURO	99.81 ▲ 0.05	NIFTY	24853.40 ▼ 93.10	SILVER	₹108,750 ▲ ₹2.05



WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	31.6°	31.4°	Partly cloudy sky with rain or thunderstorm
Min Temp	25.0°	23.6°	
Humidity	94%	94%	
Rainfall	1.4mm	10.4mm	



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GOPALPUR

GANGRAPE

4 minors among 10 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur/Gopalpur, June 17: Two days after a college girl was gangraped on Gopalpur beach in front of her male friend who was assaulted and restrained, police arrested 10 persons including four minors in this connection Tuesday.

The adult accused were identified as Pramod Kumar Nayak, 23, of Hundata village under Purushottampur police limits, Baburam Dalei, 23, Lakhsman Pradhan, 24, of Burupada village, Kunal Pradhan, 24, of Patapur village under Hinjili police limits, their associates Om Pradhan, 24, and Deepak Tarai, 19 of Sikiri village under Hinjili police limits .

Pramod, the prime accused, is a history-sheeter and carries cases of attempted murder and bomb-making in his name. He committed the crime when he had come home from Bangalore on holiday.

Four minor boys have also been detained by police in this connection. The accused were produced in the court and remanded to judicial custody while the minors produced before a Juvenile Justice Board. Three bikes and eight mobile phones were seized from their possession.

Three of the 10-member group raped the girl while the rest seven beat up the male friend of the survivor and held him hostage, police said. The survivor hailing from outside the district is a student of Plus III final year in a local college.

This was stated by Berhampur SP Saravana Vivek M at a presser organised at Gopalpur police station Tuesday. The Juvenile Justice Board will be requested to treat the four minor accused as adults during the trial in view of the heinous crime, as they have attained the age of 17, the SP said.

Police said that the prime accused Pramod and his friends visited Gopalpur beach and took bath in the sea. They soon went up to a deserted place and



The Juvenile Justice Board will be requested to treat the four minor accused as adults during the trial in view of the heinous crime, as they have attained the age of 17, police said

sat there. The survivor and her male friend visited the beach Sunday evening and also sat at the deserted place at some distance from the group of accused.

Seven of the accused then went near the survivor and beat up her male friend while Pramod, Baburam and Kunal dragged the girl and took turns to rape her. They threatened to make a video of her rape and make it viral and extracted ₹1,000 from the survivor's male friend and also some money through the payment app PhonePe.

The survivor and her male friend visited the Gopalpur police station and informed the police. Police IIC Prasant Kumar Mallick and his team immediately raided various places and picked up seven persons for interrogation. Three other police teams were formed and the remaining three accused were arrested, he stated, adding that two of them were trying to flee to Bangalore and Surat when police nabbed them.

DSP Akshaya Kumar Panda of Investigative Units for Crime Against Women (IU-

CAW) is investigating the matter assisted by a woman DSP Alma Lakra.

Police also collected the blood samples of the survivor for DNA test while the blood samples of the three prime accused were collected Tuesday. The statements of the survivor and her male friend were recorded and a case (186/25) was registered in this connection under Section 70(1) (gangrape), 296 (obscene acts and songs), 351(3) (criminal intimidation involving severe threats), 310(2) (a gang of persons associated for the purpose of habitually committing crime) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

The SP said that the police will file the chargesheet in this case very soon and will make all efforts for maximum punishment to the accused persons.

“To avoid a recurrence of such an incident, we will strengthen patrolling on the beach. We have one patrolling vehicle while a request will be made for deployment of two more vehicles,” the SP said, adding that the local administration is requested to install

lights along the beach.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida said she has spoken to the SP and has ordered a thorough investigation, besides taking necessary steps to ensure that such incidents do not happen in the future.

The incident sent shockwaves across the state as tourists from far-off places visit the beach in the Ganjam district.

Leader of the Opposition Naveen Patnaik termed the incident “deeply shocking”. “The news of the gangrape at Gopalpur beach, a major tourist destination in Odisha, is deeply shocking and has left everyone shaken. It is strongly condemned. The safety of women in tourist destinations has been questioned,” he said.

“The government should be vigilant in preventing the increasing atrocities against women every day. The government should take strict steps to ensure the safety and security of women in the state,” he added.

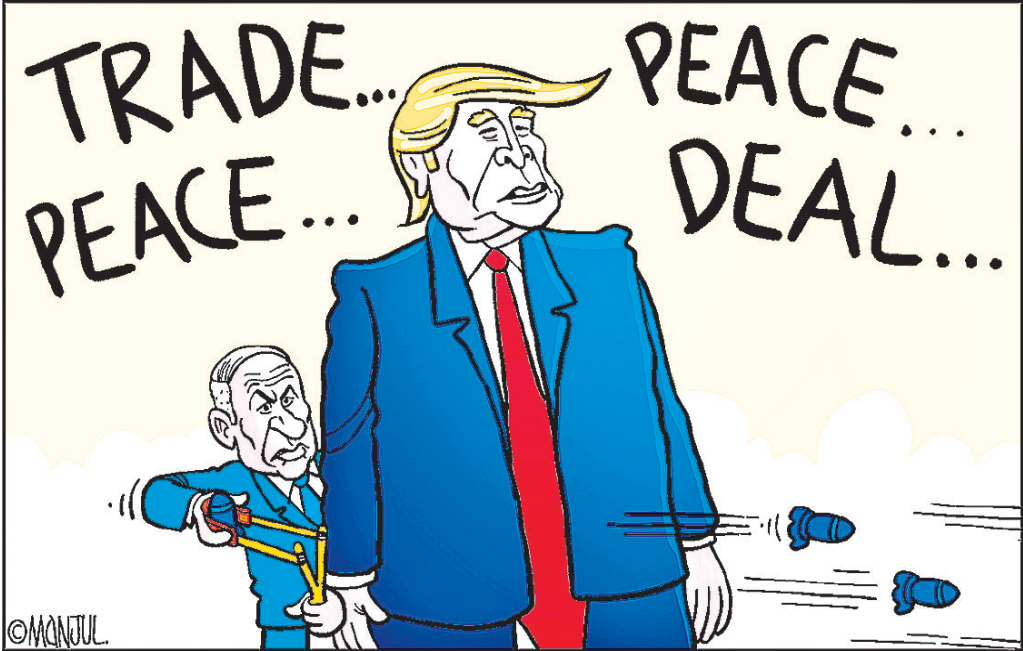
The Opposition party rushed a team to Gopalpur to meet the local administration and the survivor, said BJD vice-president Debi Prasad Mishra.

Congress MLA Sofia Firdous said she was “shaken” by the incident. “This isn’t just a crime; it’s a chilling reflection of the complete collapse of law and order in our state,” she said.

Firdous alleged that the state government has failed to protect the people. “The BJP government must be held accountable for the erosion of public safety under its watch. As a woman, I refuse to stay silent. No delay. No mercy. The guilty must face the harshest punishment. To the survivor: You are not alone. We will not let this be forgotten,” she said.

Local MLA and state minister Bibhuti B Jena said all the accused persons have been arrested and the government would ensure that the culprits get exemplary punishment.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Decaying carcass of female elephant found in Kuldiha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nilagiri, June 17: The decomposed carcass of a female elephant was recovered from Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary, re-igniting concerns over the rising number of elephant deaths in the region.

Frequent deaths of the pachyderms over the past few years, despite Kuldiha being officially recognised by the state government as an elephant sanctuary, have raised serious questions about the effectiveness of patrols and conservation efforts by the Forest department. Environmentalists warn that if the trend continues, the sanctuary could soon lose its elephant population altogether.

Local villagers reportedly noticed a foul odour Tuesday while grazing goats near the upper forested area of Putibandh on the foothills of the sanctuary. Upon investigating, they



discovered the decomposed remains of an elephant.

Soon after the news spread, officials from the Kuldiha forest range office, including Range Officer Subrat Behera, reached the spot and informed the higher authorities, including the acting Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Balasore. Senior forest officials, a veterinary team, and local administration officials, including the Nilagiri additional tehsildar and police from Berhampur, also visited the location.

A preliminary investigation

was conducted, and the carcass was sent for post-mortem examination. Though the exact cause of death is yet to be determined, the DFO stated that it will be revealed once the post-mortem report is available.

The incident has sparked public concern, especially as the Forest department claims to conduct regular patrolling within the sanctuary. Locals have questioned how the elephant death could go unnoticed despite ongoing surveillance.

Coastal Kendrapara buzz with fishing activity as ban lifted

PNN & AGENCIES

Kendrapara, June 17: After a gap of six-and-a-half months, marine fishermen in Kendrapara district have resumed fishing activities following the lifting of the annual fishing ban within a 20-km radius of the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary.

The Odisha Marine Fisheries department had imposed the ban from November 1, 2024 to May 30, 2025, in accordance with the provisions of the Orissa Marine Fishing Regulation Act (OMFRA), 1982.

In addition, a second ban was in effect from April 15, 2024 to June 14, 2025, under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, the OMFRA, and the Orissa Marine Fishing Rules, 1983.

These measures aimed to protect the endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles, which nest in large numbers at Gahirmatha.

The ban was introduced with conservation in mind, as trawlers using fine-mesh nets risk capturing eggs and juvenile fish, thereby disrupting the breeding cycle and depleting fish population.

With the fishing season now open, trawler and mechanised

boat owners performed traditional rituals, worshipping their vessels and the sea god ‘Baruna’ before setting out.

“More than 25 to 30 boats ventured into the sea on the first day,” said Tushar Sardar, an office-bearer of the Maa Ramchandi Boat Owners’ Association in Kharanashi.

The Marine Fisheries department has directed fishermen to carry valid registration certificates and licences for their boats or trawlers before going to the sea. They are also required to carry their biometric marine fishery identity cards, according to official sources.

Although the fishing ban in general waters has been lifted, fishermen have been strictly prohibited from entering the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary with trawlers. The Forest department enforces a year-round ban on fishing within the sanctuary limits.

“Any act of trespassing and fishing within the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary will invite strict action. Forest personnel will not only arrest the violators but also seize their boats,” warned Kapilendra Pradhan, Ranger of the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary.

Married man held for ‘raping’ woman with promise of marriage

Jeypore: A man from Nabarangpur district has been arrested by Jeypore Mahila Police on charges of cheating and sexually exploiting a young woman under the pretext of marriage. The accused has been identified as Mantu Utra, 27, a resident of Bangalaguda village under Khatiguda police limits in Nabarangpur district. According to police sources, Utra had allegedly lured the woman from the Jeypore area with a false promise of marriage and raped her. However, he later refused to marry her. After the victim filed a complaint at the Jeypore Mahila Police Station, a case (69/25) was registered and an investigation was launched.

Blood-soaked, hanging body of teen girl found; rape, murder suspected

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, June 17: Police recovered the blood-soaked body of an 18-year-old girl student hanging from a tree near her house in Tentalapasi village under Harichandanpur block and Pandapada police limits Tuesday morning. It is suspected that she was raped before being murdered.

Family members cried foul over the incident claiming it to be a murder. Whether it is suicide or murder will be ascertained after a proper investigation, police said. The incident sparked tension in the area as



villagers demanded immediate arrest of the culprit.

Police sent the body for post-mortem and started an investigation with the help of a scientific team, IIC Laxmikanta Pradhan of Pandapada police station said. Police also seized some clothes and other items from the spot, he said. A case was registered over a complaint lodged by the family members

Sacred streams of Gandhamardan draw devotees seeking redemption



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, June 17: Nestled in the verdant foothills of the Gandhamardan range, a region renowned for its natural beauty and unique biodiversity, lie the spiritually significant twin pilgrimage sites of Harishankar and Nrusinghanath. While Nrusinghanath adorns the northern slope of the hills in Bargarh district, Harishankar rests on the serene southern edge in Bolangir district. Both are revered tirthas (pilgrimage spots), steeped in mythological

heritage and ecological wonder.

Amid the rocky terrain, lush forests, and echoing valleys of Gandhamardan flow more than 30 perennial waterfalls, the most famous of which is ‘Papanasini’ — a sacred cascade near the Harishankar temple believed to possess the divine power to absolve sins. The name itself means ‘the destroyer of sins’.

Every day, scores of pilgrims gather there, hoping to wash away their known and unknown sins in the crystal-clear waters of Papanasini. Many

from Odisha and neighbouring Chhattisgarh consider this waterfall no less sacred than the Ganga river. Rituals like asthi visarjan (immersion of ashes), balpaka (tonsure ceremony of children), and various shuddhi karmas (purification rites) are routinely performed on its banks.

Locals believe that Papanasini’s flowing waters hold a life force, an ethereal energy capable of purifying the soul. It is also said to offer liberation from serious transgressions, including the sin of cow slaughter (gohatya), through special prayers and offerings. Similarly revered is the waterfall near Nrusinghanath, which is also considered to be a sin-cleansing

stream by devotees.

Adding to the sanctity of Gandhamardan is its reputation as a natural pharmacy. According to botanists and Ayurvedic experts, the hill range hosts over 1,000 rare medicinal herbs and plant species whose essence is believed to enrich the streams. This lends therapeutic properties to the water, which many claim can cure skin diseases and other ailments.

For the countless devotees who throng these hills, the continuous streams of Papanasini and Papaharini are more than just natural wonders — they are a spiritual lifeline, flowing with ancient faith and unwavering devotion.

IndianOil

IndianOil

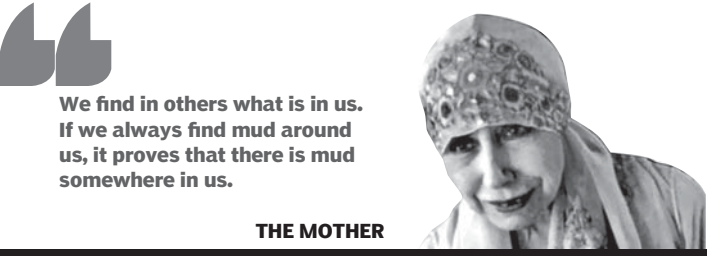
Marketing Division – Odisha State Office

CORRIGENDUM

In reference to the advertisement published on 15.05.2025 in the newspapers regarding requirement of land for retail outlet (petrol/ diesel pump) in the state of Odisha, it is to inform that the last date to submit applications has been extended till 15.07.2025. Other terms and conditions shall remain the same. Applications already received shall be considered valid and such applicants need not apply again.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

(1) e-Tender Notice No: e-Tender-Elect-G-19-25
Description of work: REHABILITATION OF POWER SUPPLY ARRANGEMENT WITH REPLACEMENT OF LT CABLE AND DISTRIBUTION PANEL AT RAILKUNJ AND RAILKUTIR.
Approx cost of the work ₹ 1,35,17,970.40, EMD: ₹ 2,17,600/-
(2) e-Tender Notice No: e-Tender-Elect-G-20-25
Description of work: AUGMENTATION OF LIGHTING FACILITIES WITH PROVISION OF HIGHMAST IN COACHING YARD AND MARSHALING YARD AT KHURDA ROAD.
Approx cost of the work ₹ 1,26,37,209.31, EMD: ₹ 2,13,200/-
(3) e-Tender Notice No: e-Tender-Elect-G-21-25
Description of work: SHIFTING OF GENERAL ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH CONSTRUCTION OF RAILWAY OVER BRIDGE AT KM. 60/200 OF NH-316 KM. 3.2 OF OLD NH-203E AT MATIAPADA ON PURI-KONARK (LC NO. KP-42 OF KHURDA-PURI-RAIL LINE).
Approx cost of the work : ₹ 12,45,637.23, EMD: ₹ 24,900/-
Completion period: 04 months (for SI. No. 1 & 2) & 03 months (for SI. No. 3)
Tender closing date & time: at 1500 hrs. of 02.07.2025 (for all tenders).
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website www.irops.gov.in
Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigendum issued for this tender.
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Trouble For Iran

The escalating conflict between Israel and Iran has plunged the Middle East into deeper turmoil, with ramifications stretching far beyond the region. The latest round of hostilities, marked by Israel’s targeted strikes on Iran’s nuclear sites and Iran’s retaliatory ballistic missile launches, has intensified fears of a broader war. The situation is further complicated by the ongoing crisis in Gaza, the shifting dynamics of air superiority over Tehran, and the geopolitical maneuvering of global powers, including the United States.

The Middle East has long been a tinderbox of geopolitical tensions, but the latest Israel-Iran conflict threatens to ignite a full-scale regional war. Israel’s Operation Rising Lion, launched on June 13, 2025, struck key Iranian nuclear and military sites, including Natanz and Fordow, killing top Iranian military leaders and nuclear scientists. Iran responded with a barrage of ballistic missiles, some of which breached Israel’s defenses, striking Tel Aviv and Haifa. The exchange of fire has led to significant civilian casualties on both sides, with Iran reporting over 224 deaths and Israel confirming 24 fatalities.

One of the most striking developments in this conflict has been Israel’s rapid establishment of air superiority over Tehran. Within 48 hours of launching its offensive, Israel claimed to have dismantled a significant portion of Iran’s air defenses, allowing Israeli fighter jets to operate freely over Iranian airspace. This shift has given Israel a strategic advantage, enabling it to conduct further strikes with minimal resistance. The loss of air superiority has severely weakened Iran’s ability to defend its territory, and its long-term military capabilities.

Israel’s decision to strike Iran’s nuclear facilities marks a significant escalation. The attacks on Natanz, Fordow, and Isfahan were aimed at crippling Iran’s ability to develop nuclear weapons. While Israel has long viewed Iran’s nuclear ambitions as an ‘existential threat’, the direct targeting of these sites has drawn international condemnation. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has warned of potential radiological risks, though no elevated radiation levels have been detected so far. Iran, meanwhile, has vowed to rebuild its nuclear infrastructure, signaling that the conflict is far from over.

US President Donald Trump’s abrupt departure from the G7 summit in Canada has added another layer of complexity to the crisis. Trump, who has historically been a staunch supporter of Israel, left the summit early, citing the escalating conflict. His administration has signaled tacit approval of Israel’s actions, with Trump himself warning Iran to evacuate Tehran. While European leaders have called for de-escalation, Trump’s stance suggests that the US may take a more active role in supporting Israel’s military campaign.


Speculation is mounting over whether US aircraft based in Qatar will participate in Israel’s strikes against Iran. Reports indicate that American military assets, including aerial refueling tankers, have been repositioned closer to the Middle East. The presence of US forces in the region raises questions about Washington’s true level of engagement. If American air power was used with Israeli operations, it would mark a significant escalation.

Beyond the immediate military exchanges, the Israel-Iran conflict has far-reaching consequences. The crisis in Gaza remains unresolved, with civilians on all sides caught in the crossfire. The conflict has also disrupted global trade routes, particularly in the Strait of Hormuz, a vital artery for oil shipments. Additionally, the war threatens to derail nuclear negotiations between Iran and Western powers, further isolating Tehran on the global stage whereby it could easily turn up as another Moslem rogue state.

The latest Israel-Iran conflict is a dangerous escalation that could reshape the Middle East’s geopolitical landscape. Israel’s air superiority, its strikes on nuclear sites, Iran’s missile retaliation, and Trump’s unwavering support for Israel all point to a prolonged and volatile confrontation. Whether the US will deepen its involvement remains uncertain, but the potential for a broader war looms large. As the world stands worried about the crisis, the fate of the region hangs in the balance.


WISDOM CORNER

I can control my destiny, but not my fate. Destiny means there are opportunities to turn right or left, but fate is a one-way street. I believe we all have the choice as to whether we fulfil our destiny, but our fate is sealed.



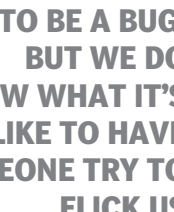
PAULO COELHO

How is it possible that a being with such sensitive jewels as the eyes, such enchanted musical instruments as the ears, and such fabulous arabesque of nerves as the brain can experience itself anything less than a god.



ALAN WATTS

Your entire life only happens in this moment. The present moment is life itself. Yet, people live as if the opposite were true and treat the present moment as a stepping stone to the next moment - a means to an end.



ECKHART TOLLE

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

■ **1812:** On this day U.S. President James Madison signed a declaration of war against Great Britain, initiating the War of 1812, which arose chiefly from U.S. grievances over oppressive maritime practices during the Napoleonic Wars.

■ **1815:** Napoleon suffers a shattering defeat at the Battle of Waterloo. The battle was Napoleon’s last. The French Emperor was exiled to Saint Helena where he died six years later. “To meet one’s Waterloo” is still a figure of speech today indicating total defeat.

■ **1873:** American suffragist Susan B. Anthony was fined after being convicted for voting in the 1872 presidential election, though she refused to pay it; in 2020 President Donald Trump pardoned Anthony, but the move was criticized by those who argued that it validated the trial.

■ **1940:** A speech by Charles de Gaulle sparks the French Resistance to German occupation. The Appeal of June 18, transmitted by radio from de Gaulle’s exile in the United Kingdom, was pivotal in mobilizing the French after Germany had declared more than half of the country an occupied zone. On August 25, French and Allied troops liberated Paris.

■ **1948:** The LP record is introduced. The vinyl Long Playing record developed by Columbia Records soon became the music industry’s standard medium. It allowed for a total playing time of 20 minutes per side.

■ **1979:** Leonid Brezhnev and Jimmy Carter sign SALT II. The second “Strategic Arms Limitation Talks” (SALT) agreement was a ground-breaking arms reduction treaty between the Soviet Union and the United States.

FOCUS

SYRIA

FEAR & HOPE



Like his predecessor, Sharaa governs by decree, with little to no transparency, causing many Syrians to fear they have merely exchanged one autocrat for another, replacing a secular dictatorship with an Islamist one

Much like Germans during the hyperinflation that plagued the Weimar Republic a century ago, Syrians today rarely leave home without carrying thick stacks of cash. As sectarian tensions – long repressed in a country ruled by the Alawite minority until recently – continue to fuel instability, ATMs cap withdrawals at around \$40 per week, if they are working at all.

Six months after the ouster of President Bashar al-Assad, which ended the country’s brutal 13-year civil war, Syrians are still struggling just to make it through each day. Despite the overwhelming hardships, many cling to the hope that a measure of normalcy may soon be within reach. But every week brings hardships that belie such optimism. Most recently, by using Syrian airspace to attack Iran, Israel places Syrians in a quandary they would rather avoid.

In a culture where hospitality is sacred, most Syrians can no longer afford to offer visitors more than a single cup of coffee. The country is grappling with a severe drought – worse than the one often linked to the 2011 uprising – that now threatens 75% of wheat crops, undermining access to bread and exacerbating food insecurity.

Few Syrians long for Assad’s return, but many are skeptical of his successor, Ahmed al-Sharaa. A former al-Qaeda commander, Sharaa ruled the rural province of Idlib for several years, enforcing a strict Sunni Islamist code. Although he has since moderated his stance, he remains as much an enigma as the soft-spoken, Western-educated Assad, who promised reform only to become one of the worst war criminals since World War II.

Like his predecessor, Sharaa governs by decree, with little to no transparency, causing many Syrians to fear they have merely

exchanged one autocrat for another, replacing a secular dictatorship with an Islamist one. Moreover, Sharaa’s ideological leanings and economic priorities remain unclear. His detractors deride him for his al-Qaeda past, while those who fought alongside him in Iraq have questioned his jihadist zeal.

Regardless of Sharaa’s agenda, sectarian divisions continue to imperil meaningful government action, as the Druze in the south and the Alawis in Assad’s longtime stronghold along Syria’s coast refuse to accept the new government. “They are hypocrites,” Druze spiritual leader Hikmat al-Hijri told me, describing Sharaa and his allies with a loaded religious term for those who resist the Prophet Muhammad’s message. When asked whether he supports a federal state, al-Hijri replied that he opposes centralism. In reality, what he and his co-religionists want is a weak central government incapable of asserting control over their remote province.

The Alawis face a different problem. As Syria’s former ruling minority, they share little with the Sunni elite toppled by the United States in neighboring Iraq. Given that Sunnis are the predominant sect across the broader Arab and Islamic world, Iraq’s

and minority rule. Under the Assads, Syria would have been the first to denounce Israel’s strikes against Iran and offer support – both vocal and material – to any party willing to tangle with the Israelis. Today, Syrians have become insular, more concerned with national healing than with regional events. Though Israel has increasingly encroached on Syrian territory since Assad’s fall, many Syrians are content to have normal neighborly relations.

In a society plagued by scarcity, the one thing Syrians are not short of is hope – a free commodity that, unlike most goods, is neither expensive nor subject to international sanctions. “Without hope, we cannot live,” a middle-aged man told me as he contemplated whether to spend his meagre savings on new sneakers for his children or repair his apartment’s faulty wiring.

Syrians face an abundance of such tradeoffs. What they lack are sudden strokes of luck like Trump’s unexpected decision to loosen US sanctions, which has led many Syrians to expect more such flukes. “It is Allah who planted the seed of Syria in Trump’s heart,” a man told me confidently while holding a satchel of decomposing tomatoes – bought at a discount – in his calloused hands.

According to US special envoy to Syria Tom Barrack, the administration’s decision to lift certain sanctions was intended to “flood the zone with hope.” But what Syrians are hoping for is that Americans will flood their country with capital and investment, sparing them the need to choose between existential needs and basic comforts, and allowing them, at the very least, to buy produce that is ripe rather than rotting.


The writer is a former research fellow at New America and a former visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

IN JEST THIS

Sorry, bed bugs, we can’t return your love

Dear Bed Bugs, On behalf of humans everywhere, I’d like to take this opportunity to recognize your amazing love for us. I did not realize the depth of your love until I read about a research study at Virginia Tech University in the US that indicated that you have been attached to us for about 245,000 years — even longer than we humans have been attached to booze. Back then, we lived in caves and did not have beds and couches, so you were just “floor bugs” to us. You had previously lived on bats, another cave-dwelling creature, and decided that we would make better hosts. This was a brilliant choice. Bats would not have taken you to as many places as we did: ships, apartment buildings, cheap motels. You flew on Turkish Airlines, British Airways and a number of other airlines. You even flew first class, something you could have never imagined when you left a cave on the hairy back of a Neanderthal.



Melvin Durai

WE DON’T KNOW WHAT IT’S LIKE TO BE A BUG, BUT WE DO KNOW WHAT IT’S LIKE TO HAVE SOMEONE TRY TO FLICK US AWAY OR SAY TO US, ‘STOP BUGGING ME!’

Your relationship with humans has been a great one for you (not so much for us). As Andrew Jacobs writes in the New York Times, “When it comes to successful relationships, there’s nothing quite like the long, long marriage between bedbugs and humans, even if the affection goes in one direction.” It’s worth noting, however, that affection going in one direction is something we humans are quite familiar with. You haven’t been to high school if you haven’t experienced one-way love. We don’t know what it’s like to be a bug, but we do know what it’s like to have someone try to flick us away or say to us, “Stop bugging me!”

Your relationship with humans is extraordinary not just because of duration, but also loyalty. As Jacobs notes, ever since you dumped bats for us, you’ve been “monogamous” with us. You do not sleep around with other species. Not once did you even consider leaving a scruffy human for

a cute dog. You like to move around, not fool around.

You love us dearly, but the best part is, you do not love us to death. You transmit no diseases. All you do is give us a little bite. Sometimes you leave patterns on our skin, perhaps realizing that many of us can never have enough patterns on our skin. We even put them on our necks and faces. But for some reason, when you leave dots on our skin, we never try to connect the dots and see what appears. A picture of the Pope? A bar of soap? Our horoscope?

It’s important for me to note that not all bed bugs dumped bats for us. Some of your relatives stayed on bats, eventually forming a different species from those of you who were smart enough to switch allegiance to the cave-dwellers with considerably more surface area. According to scientists, those guys — a little too batty — just haven’t thrived like you guys. About 12,000 years ago, when many humans

stopped migrating and settled down in cities, you guys enjoyed a resurgence. You had been dwindling in numbers, but now, living in buildings among humans, you decided to reproduce like Elon Musk.

That is an understatement, of course, because as Jacobs writes, “a single pregnant female stowed away in a suitcase or hitched to a pant leg can produce 30,000 offspring in six months, all genetically related.” That’s a lot of mouths to feed. No wonder you love motels. Every day, a new human.

According to Dr. Warren Booth, lead author of the Virginia Tech study, one of your superpowers is your ability to overcome what we humans try to do to you. We keep rejecting you, trying our best to make you go away permanently, but you keep coming back, saying, “Will you love me this time?”

No, I’m sorry bed bugs, but after 245,000 years, we still can’t love you back.

Strategic signal

Sir, This refers to “India, Cyprus condemn terrorism, agree to boost defense ties,” **Orissa POST**, June 17. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Cyprus is being seen as a diplomatically sharp signal aimed at Turkey. Though India and Turkey share cordial trade ties, Ankara’s open support for Pakistan during India’s recent Operation Sindoor crossed a strategic red line. Turkey allegedly supplied arms and intelligence to Pakistan, indirectly aiding efforts to destabilise India’s security operations. Modi’s high-profile stop in Nicosia, ahead of the G7 Summit, carries weight. Cyprus, a nation long at odds with Turkey over the illegal occupation of its northern territory, welcomed Modi with its highest civilian honour. Beyond the optics, the visit resulted in expanded cooperation in defense, cybersecurity, maritime security, and regional energy partnerships—strategic domains Turkey closely monitors. The timing is not accidental. It reflects India’s willingness to recalibrate its geopolitical posture in response to Turkey’s provocations. By standing with Cyprus and strengthening India’s Eastern Mediterranean foothold, Modi subtly warns Ankara: India will counter any alliance that endangers its national interest, even through diplomatic and strategic partnerships. The message is clear—friendship cannot coexist with sabotage.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Wake-up call

Sir, The shocking gangrape of a young girl at Gopalpur beach is yet another grim reminder of the unsafe environment women continue to face in India. Despite the enactment of stringent laws like the Disha Act, such crimes persist, revealing the systemic failure in enforcement and deterrence. What is more disturbing is the ease with which perpetrators secure bail and continue to roam freely, mocking the system and further traumatising victims. Fast-track courts, swift convictions, and stricter bail norms must be enforced to instill fear among offenders. It is high time that women’s safety is treated not just as a legal issue but as a moral and social emergency. Society and the state must act in unison to end this culture of impunity and ensure that no girl lives in fear.

Ch. Pratap, HYDERABAD

STRANDED IN CONFLICT-HIT TEHRAN

Bengal mountaineer pleads to cross Iran border by road

Relentless sounds of explosions from Israeli war machines especially at night and sights of thick black smoke billowing from targets that have been hit in Teheran visible from his hotel window during the day, have only added to Dey's anguish and anxiety

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 17: Forty-year-old Falguni Dey has barely slept during the last six nights. Stuck inside a hotel room in central Tehran, the assistant professor at Women's Christian College in south Kolkata and a mountaineer by passion, Dey is currently at his wit's end in figuring out how to return home.

Relentless sounds of explosions from Israeli war machines especially at night and sights of thick black smoke billowing from targets that have been hit in Teheran visible from his hotel window during the day, have only added to Dey's anguish and anxiety.

With no respite currently in sight and money running out quickly, the now-desperate adventure sports enthusiast is mulling a dangerous bid to escape Iran via the land route and cross over to an adjacent country like Turkey, Armenia Azerbaijan, Afghanistan or even Pakistan.

"I had no intention of staying in Teheran for so long and I barely have money left with me to sustain at this hotel where I am stuck. I can't fetch money from home since banks here are closed. I am the only Indian in my hotel and I have no evacuation promises from the Indian government so far."

"So, I have no choice but to take this decision of moving out by road and crossing over to a neighbouring country from where I can catch a flight back



home. My local travel agent here has assured me of help in this," an exasperated Dey told PTI from Tehran.

He had reached Tehran June 5 with an aim to conquer Mount Damavand, Asia's highest volcanic peak standing at an elevation of 5,610 metres in the northeastern fringes of the Iranian capital. This was Dey's third attempt at a volcanic summit after having previously successfully scaled Mount Kili-manjaro and Mount Elbrus, the two highest dormant volcanoes in the eastern hemisphere.

Dey's hopes in Iran, however, remained unfulfilled after a nasty blizzard forced him to abandon the climb barely 400 meters below the summit.

"I returned to Tehran with a heavy heart. But the moment I set foot in the city, I realised something here was terribly wrong. The city was being bombed and I was caught in the middle of an all-out war. I was scheduled to take my return flight the next day, but then the Iranian airspace had been shut down and all flights in and out of Tehran were cancelled," Dey said.

Asked whether he managed to contact the Indian embassy in Iran to inform the officials about his plight, the adventure tourist said he was in constant touch with the embassy, which hasn't been able to provide evacuation hopes so far and have, instead, laid down a set of protocols to follow.

"I hear that there are some

10,000 Indians stuck in Iran, including nearly 4,000 students from Kashmir. But, I do not know any of them. Here I am all by myself and the embassy has asked me not to venture out far from my hotel. People here are going about their daily lives despite the bombings," Dey said.

But, the anxiety of his relatives back home in Kolkata's Jadavpur where he lives seems to have pushed Dey to take a call to escape Iran by any means possible. "The nearest international border is about a thousand kilometers away, and I understand that a lot of protocol and paperwork would be involved in crossing the land border. But, I have to take that chance since I am running out of means to stay put here, given there is no help from any quarters. I do not know which country I will be crossing over to, because that will depend on India's diplomatic relations with these neighbouring nations," he stated.

Meanwhile, all Indians in Tehran were Tuesday advised to move out of the city to safe locations and be in touch with the embassy, as the conflict between Iran and Israel intensified.

"All Indian Nationals who are in Tehran and not in touch with the Embassy are requested to contact the Embassy of India in Tehran immediately and provide their Location and Contact numbers. Kindly contact: +989010144557; +989128109115; +989128109109," the Embassy of India in Tehran said in a post on X.

Delhi University launches UG admission portal for 2025-26

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: Delhi University Tuesday launched its Common Seat Allocation System (CSAS) portal for undergraduate admissions for the academic year 2025-26, marking the formal start of its multi-tiered admission process.

DU Vice Chancellor Yogesh Singh inaugurated the UG admission portal during a press conference, where he also released the university's Bulletin of Information.

The portal for five-year integrated law, B.Tech, PhD, and postgraduate programmes was launched simultaneously. He described the occasion as the official "admission bugle" for

the year. Singh announced two new postgraduate programmes - MA in Hindi Journalism and MA in Tourism Management - beginning this year. An MA in Journalism under the Department of English is also planned.

For the first time, a seat has been reserved for a single girl child in each PG programme. The vice chancellor also confirmed that the academic session will begin from August 1, 2025.

DU Dean of Admissions Prof Haneet Gandhi said UG admissions will take place in two phases.

The first phase, which opened Tuesday, allows students to enter personal details, Class 12 marks, and CUET application numbers.

Mamata promises new structure, financial aid

Banerjee said a detailed investigation and assessment of the damage caused by the pre-dawn blaze at the nearly 150-year-old market would be carried out

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 17: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Monday visited the fire-ravaged market on Orphanange Road at Khidderpore here and announced a comprehensive rehabilitation plan, including

KHIDDERPORE MARKET FIRE



the construction of a new market, financial assistance for affected traders, and temporary rehabilitation arrangements for business continuity.

Banerjee said a detailed in-

vestigation and assessment of the damage caused by the pre-dawn blaze at the nearly 150-year-old market would be carried out.

"I have spoken to the mayor

and a new market will be constructed at the affected site with a modern, scientific and safe design, including a proper fire management system. You will not have to spend anything. The government will build this market so that you don't face problems in the future," she assured the affected traders.

The chief minister, who left the state Assembly for a visit to the fire-ravaged site a few hours after the flames were doused, also announced financial aid to shop owners based on the extent of damage.

"Traders whose shops were completely destroyed will receive ₹1 lakh, covering the cost of reconstruction and materials. Those who suffered partial damage will receive ₹50,000 in

assistance. These amounts will be disbursed only after relocation," she said.

To help affected traders continue business, Banerjee said the market will be temporarily relocated to a nearby site till a new structure is built.

"We are finalising the relocation site in consultation with the councillor and the mayor. A spot has already been identified. Your market will be temporarily shifted there so that your business, livelihood, and family life can continue without major interruption," she said.

Banerjee said a survey will be conducted to identify the beneficiaries, and that no new person will be allocated shops in the proposed market.

In Delhi, only 3% of year sees clean air, thermal comfort

The study shows that convergence of heat and pollution is becoming widespread across Indian metros

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: Only three per cent of the hours in a year in Delhi offer both clean air and thermally comfortable conditions necessary for safe natural ventilation, according to a new study.

The study, conducted by CEPT University and climate-tech firm Respirer Living Sciences, found that Delhi records around 2,210 thermally comfortable hours with outdoor temperature in the range of 18 degrees Celsius to 31 degrees Celsius.

But 1,951 of those hours also coincide with poor air quality (air quality index above 150). That leaves just 259 hours in the year, about three per cent, when residents can enjoy both clean air and pleasant temperatures.



The study, presented at the Healthy Building 2025 Conference of the International Society of Indoor Air Quality June 8, said the overlap of heat and air pollution severely limits opportunities for safe natural ventilation.

Compared to Delhi, Bangalore fared much better with over 8,100 hours of acceptable

air quality and minimal overlap between thermal comfort and pollution. Ahmedabad, despite being warmer, also offered more usable outdoor conditions.

However, Chennai, like Delhi, saw 88 per cent of its comfortable hours affected by poor air quality. The researchers said the study shows that convergence of heat and pollution

is becoming widespread across Indian metros. Conventional building operations, either based on fully sealed air-conditioned spaces or unfiltered natural ventilation, no longer meet the needs of urban India, they said.

To address the challenge, the study recommends mainstreaming Personalised Environmental Control Systems (PECS) in Indian buildings.

These systems offer filtered ventilation, occupant-level control and localised thermal comfort and are especially useful in mixed-mode buildings that shift between natural and mechanical ventilation based on time of day, season or pollution levels.

"PECS (ventilation) contributes to both short-term and long-term health and energy perfor-

mance outcomes," said Rajan Rawal of CEPT University, a leading building science expert.

"With ongoing improvements in AQI across Indian cities, there is growing potential for occupants to utilise natural ventilation when outdoor conditions permit. Nevertheless, PECS continues to offer substantial energy savings under prevailing conditions," he said.

The modelling by researchers found that PECS can save up to 72 per cent energy used for ventilation in Chennai, 70 per cent in Ahmedabad and 68 per cent in Delhi, compared to conventional air-conditioned setups.

"PECS work especially well in conjunction with low-energy solutions like ceiling fans and task-based ventilation," Rawal added.

Hi-tech tools launched to curb Delhi pollution

The chief minister during the event said that the government had decided to hire machines like mechanical road sweepers, water sprinklers and anti-smog guns to reduce dust and air pollution in Delhi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa Monday took part in a demonstration of new machines aimed at tackling pollution in the city.

The chief minister during the event said that the government had decided to hire machines like mechanical road sweepers, water sprinklers and anti-smog guns to reduce dust and air pollution in Delhi.

"We plan to send these machines to every assembly constituency so that the roads can be cleaned properly," she added.

Gupta said these cleaning machines are advanced and come in different types, including electric ones.

"We are trying to use electric machines so that they don't cause more pollution," she added. The Mechanical Road Sweeping (MRS) machines being introduced can sweep roads, spray water and pick up garbage. Earlier May 20, the chief minister had announced that the Cabinet had approved a detailed plan to control dust and



improve sanitation on roads managed by the Public Works Department (PWD).

According to the plan, the PWD will use 250 water sprinklers with anti-smog guns, 70 sweeping machines with 210 sprinklers and anti-smog guns along with 18 dump trucks and 18 water tankers.

A number of machines, including water sprinklers with anti-smog guns, electric and CNG sweeping machines, litter pickers and water jetting machines, were demonstrated at the Delhi Secretariat here, said

a statement.

The chief minister said the goal is to ensure that roads across Delhi are cleaned and sprayed with water throughout the year.

The demonstration shows that the government is moving towards more modern and technology-based cleaning, she added. One of the machines shown during the event was a water sprinkler with an anti-smog gun. It can hold 17,000 litres of water and run for four hours. It sprays a fine mist that helps reduce harmful dust in the air and

can even clean off dust from tall trees, the statement said.

An electric road sweeping machine with a 3.5-metre sweeping range can clean up to 45 km in one shift. It has a water tank that can be expanded up to 2,000 litres and is useful for removing dust, small stones and litter from roads, it added.

The CNG-powered sweeping machine is similar and works at a speed of 8 to 10 kilometres per hour, the statement said.

A battery-operated litter picker was also on display.

It can be used while riding or walking and it comes with a bin and features like automatic brakes, fire safety, GPS and battery tracking. It can collect everything from small waste to glass bottles, the statement said.

The water jetting machine has a 500-litre tank and can work for six to eight hours after one charge, covering up to 125 km. It also has GPS for monitoring, it added.

The chief minister said Delhi will get 460 sprinkler machines with anti-smog guns, 70 sweeping machines, 70 litter pickers, water tankers and garbage trucks.



A group of women waits to cross a busy city street in Kolkata, West Bengal, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

violence.

Moreover, the total number of people injured in road accidents has seen a gradual increase from 2,106 injured in the first five months of 2024 to 2,187 this year.

March stood out as the deadliest month this year, recording 137 fatal accidents and 139 deaths. Surprisingly, even as April saw fewer fatal crashes, with 91 such accidents, it reported the highest number of injuries -- 476 this year -- indicating a rise in high-impact collisions.

A total of 458 accidents, including 100 fatal ones resulting in 107 deaths and 458 injuries, were recorded in May 2025. The figures in May last year stood slightly higher with 447 total accidents, including 125 fatal resulting in 127 deaths.

of the day quote

Who was responsible for the Godhra incident and the bridge collapse that killed 140 people?

SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

We will eliminate irregularities and work. From cleanliness to tents and toilets, kanwar camps will be provided with everything

REKHA GUPTA | DELHI CM

Think about the accident that happened in Ahmedabad, no one has resigned till now. Think about what happened -- one moment they were alive, the next moment they were not. In so few seconds, people lost their lives. Where the aircraft fell, how many doctors died? How many people lost their family members?

AKHILESH YADAV | SP PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

SC extends interim bail of Vikas Yadav

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Tuesday extended by two weeks the interim bail of a convict undergoing a 25-year jail term in the 2002 Nitish Katara murder case to attend to his ailing mother. Vikas Yadav was granted interim bail April 24 which was extended May 8. On Tuesday, Justices Ujjal Bhuyan and Manmohan extended the relief by two more weeks to enable Yadav to attend to his mother, who had undergone surgery at AIIMS in New Delhi. The top court, however, clarified Yadav would not be allowed any more extensions as it posted the matter in July.

Campaigning ends for Ludhiana West bypoll

Ludhiana: Campaigning for the bypoll to the Ludhiana West assembly segment in Punjab came to an end Tuesday evening with the major parties - AAP, Congress, BJP and Shiromani Akali Dal - making last-ditch efforts to mobilise support for their respective candidates. Hours before the campaigning ended at 6 pm, political leaders intensified canvassing to woo voters of the urban constituency of Punjab's industrial hub. The Ludhiana West Assembly seat fell vacant following the death of AAP MLA Gurpreet Bassi Gogi in January.

Family of three found dead in Kolkata flat

Kolkata: The bodies of a man, his wife and their child was found hanging in their flat in south Kolkata's Kasba area Tuesday, police said. Acting on a call from neighbours stating that the flat inhabitants were not responding, police reached the spot and broke open the door and found the three persons hanging from the ceiling, a police officer said. "The matter is being investigated. Till we get the post-mortem" he added.

Bihar to get 6 new airports

Patna: Six more cities in Bihar will get air connectivity, with the state cabinet Tuesday giving its nod for the signing of an agreement in this regard with the Airports Authority of India (AAI), officials said. The new airports will be developed in Madhubani, Birpur in Supaul, Munger, Valmiki Nagar in Bettiah, Muzaffarpur and Saharsa under the Centre's regional connectivity scheme UDAN, they said.



NEP is not a policy of any government, and it allows our youth to fully exploit their talents and energy, and gives importance to all languages

JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | VICE PRESIDENT

TOP COURT TO HEAR MINOR'S MARRIAGE NULLITY PLEA TODAY

The Supreme Court would June 18 hear a plea of a minor seeking nullity of her marriage and protection from the threat to her life for protesting against child marriage. A bench of Justices Ujjal Bhuyan and Manmohan will be hearing the plea of the minor who has also sought a direction against her husband for coercing her to marry him



HONEYMOON MURDER

Crime scene recreated; SIT probes financial angle



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shillong, June 17: The Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Meghalaya Police probing into the murder of Indore businessman Raja Raghuvanshi, has gone to the Madhya Pradesh city to ascertain if there is any financial motive behind the killing, an officer said Tuesday.

The police also brought all the accused in the murder, including Raghuvanshi's wife Sonam, to Sohra, around 65 km from here, and recreated the crime scene amid heavy security.

The businessman and his wife were on their honeymoon when he was killed allegedly by three hitmen - Vishal, Anand and Akash - sent by her boyfriend Raj Kushwaha who is also one of the arrested people. "Our team is in Indore and questioning a few people. They are trying to find out if somebody has to gain from Raja's death," district Superintendent of Police Vivek Syiem told PTI. He said the team raided a flat in which Sonam stayed after fleeing Meghalaya but it was found empty. "The SIT will be camping in Indore. They will

ascertain the background and find out if there is any other angle other than the love triangle which the accused have already admitted," the SP said. Director General of Police I Nongrang who is monitoring the development of this case closely earlier said that the SIT is looking at other possible angles for the murder of Raghuvanshi.

According to Syiem, the SIT visited several places in Sohra during the day from one parking lot where the accused had parked their rented two-wheelers to Weisawdong where the murder was committed. Chilling details of the murder emerged after recreation of the crime scene in which one policeman acted as Raghuvanshi.

The hitmen also informed the SIT that they used two machetes, one of which was recovered. The police personnel are combing the forest below the gorge with a metal detector to find out the second machete.

The hitmen and Sonam wanted to commit the murder at Nongriat, where the couple had checked in at a homestay, but could not do it since they failed to find a suitable spot to dispose of the body.

Woman tied to tree, humiliated over loan dispute; 5 detained

Narayanapuram (Andhra Pradesh): A woman was allegedly tied to a tree and publicly humiliated by villagers in Narayanapuram of Chittoor district, following a dispute over unpaid loans, said police Monday. Sirisha (29), wife of Thimmarayappa had returned from Bangalore Monday to collect her children's Transfer Certificates (TC) from their school when locals confronted her about the money borrowed by her husband. Sirisha was allegedly tied to a tree by the locals and was asked to call her husband to repay the money and her daughter hit a local which escalated the situation. Kuppam DSP B Parthasarathi told PTI. According to police, the couple owed around Rs 80,000 to a villager named Munikannappa and also some unspecified amount to local organisations. A case was registered under BNS sections 115, 126, and 112 read with section 3 and police took five people into custody over the incident. irisha told the police that her husband allegedly abandoned her six months ago in Bangalore although investigators suspect that they may still be in touch regarding financial matters.

CASTE CENSUS

Cong questions govt's intention

Congress general secretary Sachin Pilot said the objective cannot just be to collect data on an individual's caste but to understand the living conditions of these families and create policies to substantially improve their livelihoods

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: The Congress Tuesday accused the Centre of delaying the caste census, saying its intention appears to be to "buy time, grab headlines and manage the narrative", and asked the government to be transparent about the exercise. Congress general secretary Sachin Pilot said the objective cannot just be to collect data on an individual's caste but to understand the living conditions of these families and create policies to substantially improve their livelihoods.

He said there are doubts about the government's intentions on the caste census and pointed out that the required funding for the census is Rs 10,000 crore whereas the government has allocated only Rs 574 crore. His remarks come a day after a Home Ministry spokesperson made it clear that the census will include caste enumeration, following the Congress' charge that the government notification is "silent" on the inclusion of caste in the exercise.

"The demand for a caste census was led by the Congress party, particularly by the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, who has been raising this issue for several years. "Due to the party's continuous and forceful demand, the Modi government has yielded and announced a caste census. However, the facts and figures tell a different story," Pilot said at a press conference at the Congress' Indra Bhawan headquarters here Tuesday.

The government plans to start the exercise in 2027,



but the required funding for the census is Rs 10,000 crore, whereas the government has allocated only Rs 574 crore, he pointed out. "The objective is not just to collect data on an individual's caste but to understand the living conditions of these families and create policies to substantially improve their livelihoods. Without tangible data, no state or central government can implement targeted interventions, which is what we aimed to achieve," he said.

Initially, the BJP labelled us as "urban naxals" and refused to accept these demands and now, sensing the country's mood, they have accepted the proposal in principle, he said. "However, there seems to be considerable confusion and dissatisfaction regarding it. Therefore, I urge the government to be clear and transparent, avoiding extended deadlines and inadequate budget allocations," Pilot said.

Pilot claimed that the Modi government is delaying the caste census just as it had done on the women's reservation issue.

163 victims identified, 124 bodies handed over

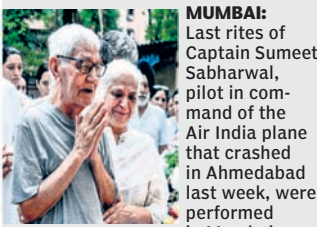
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, June 17: Five days after an Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad claimed 270 lives, 163 victims have so far been identified through DNA matching and 124 bodies handed over to their families, officials said Tuesday.

Authorities are carrying out DNA tests to establish the identity of the victims as many bodies were charred beyond recognition or damaged.

"So far, 163 DNA samples have been matched, and 124 bodies have been handed over to the respective families. Remaining mortal remains will be handed over soon," Medical Superintendent of Ahmedabad Civil Hospital Dr Rakesh Joshi told reporters. Of the 71 injured persons admitted to the hospital after the crash, nine are currently undergoing treatment while two died during treatment, said Joshi. He dismissed re-

Last rites of pilot Sabharwal, crew member Patil performed



MUMBAI: Last rites of Captain Sumeet Sabharwal, pilot in command of the Air India plane that crashed in Ahmedabad last week, were performed in Mumbai Tuesday with his grief-stricken father bidding a heart-wrenching, tearful farewell to his son before the cremation. In a related development, Maithili Patil, a crew member aboard the ill-fated Air India flight AI-171, was cremated in Raigad district amid outpouring of emotions as local residents, relatives and friends turned up in large numbers to pay tributes to her. Mortal remains of both Sabharwal and Patil were brought to Mumbai from Ahmedabad earlier in the day, nearly a week after the crash.

ports which claimed two more MBBS students of BJ Medical College, affiliated to the Civil Hospital, were killed in the crash.



Police use water cannons to disperse members of ABVP staging a protest demanding implementation of PM Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI) scheme in Kerala, in Thiruvananthapuram

PTI PHOTO

4 states account for half of India's low birth weight case: Study

HAVING A LOW BIRTH WEIGHT -- UNDER 2.5 KG -- CAN OFTEN SIGNAL A MOTHER'S UNDERLYING HEALTH ISSUES AND POOR NUTRITION, AND HAS BEEN LINKED WITH PROBLEMS IN THE CHILD'S COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT AND A VULNERABILITY TO CHRONIC CONDITIONS IN LATER LIFE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: Cases of a low weight at birth from four states -- Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, and West Bengal -- account for nearly half of India's cases, despite an overall progress in lowering rates over the last 30 years, an analysis of the National Family Health Survey shows.

The findings are published in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) Global Health. Having a low birth weight -- under 2.5 kg -- can often signal a mother's underlying health issues and poor nutrition, and has been linked with problems in the child's cognitive development

and a vulnerability to chronic conditions in later life.

Analysing data gathered from all five waves of the national survey, researchers from Duke and Harvard universities in the US and institutes in South Korea found that overall, the prevalence of low birth weight in India fell by eight percentage points -- from 26 in 1993 to 18 in 2021.

State-wise, the average prevalence was seen to decline across the five waves of the survey from 25 per cent in 1993 and 1999 to 20 per cent in 2006, and 16 per cent in 2021, when the last wave concluded.

Analysis of data from the fifth wave (2019-21) suggests



that 42 lakh babies were born with a low weight in a single year, almost half (47 per cent) of which came from only four states -- Uttar Pradesh, Bihar,

Maharashtra and West Bengal. Prevalence in 1993 was found to be the highest in Rajasthan (48 per cent), while in 2021, Punjab and Delhi saw the

highest prevalence at 22 per cent. States such as Mizoram and Nagaland had the lowest prevalence of low birth weight in 1993 and in 2021 as well. The authors wrote, "The overall prevalence of low birth weight in India declined from 26 per cent

to 18 per cent during the period. The 2019-21 survey revealed that four states, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, and West Bengal, accounted for almost half of all low-birth-weight births in India."

The data from the fifth wave also showed that babies having both a lower weight and a smaller-than-average size at birth were "considerably

more likely" to be born to women with little or no formal education and from the poorest households. The team also highlighted the need for continued efforts in addressing maternal and neonatal health disparities and called for improved data collection at healthcare facilities, which can provide quality data for decision-making across India. Recorded births were found to increase from 48,959 in 1993 to 2,32,920 in 2021. Proportion of babies weighed at birth increased over time, resulting in 7,992 being included in the analysis in 1993 (16 per cent) to 209,266 in 2021 (90 per cent), the authors said.

of the day

quote

In Maha-rashtra, the Congress has become a party of 'relatives'. We have to come out with a road map for development of the state. BJP workers are encouraged to do good work with enthusiasm and show team spirit. These features are missing in the Congress...the party has become directionless

ASHOK CHAVAN | BJP RS MEMBER

Replacing CISF with Assam Police (as the force securing the instal-lation) will save ₹8-9 crore, and we have issued instructions for the purpose. We are also in talks with a group to make the finished products here as it will strengthen the industry

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM

People have lost their trust in the chief minister, and that is why a large posse of police personnel had to be deployed during her visit

SUVENDU ADHIKARI | LOP IN WB ASSEMBLY

XPOST

OF THE DAY

Lot of Air India flight getting cancelled recently due to technical snags, after the 12th June accident.

Pilots hopefully have stopped accepting the aircraft's with so many MEL's each flight. It increases their workload immensely.

Everyone knows that the "Red" airline is being dispatched on minimum equipment's.

90+ MEL's every flight. DGCA should step in and stop this.

#AirIndiaCrash

@flyingbeast320

SHORT TAKES

SC to hear TN top cop's plea against arrest today

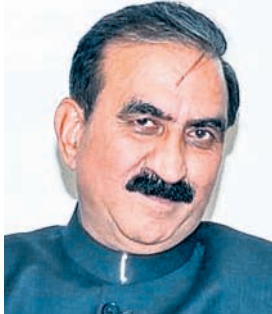
New Delhi: The Supreme Court would June 18 hear the plea of senior Tamil Nadu police officer H M Jayaram who was ordered to be arrested by the Madras High Court over a kidnapping case. A bench of Justices Ujjal Bhuyan and Manmohan agreed to hear the plea June 18 after the police officer's lawyer said the Madras High Court's order of arrest was "based on a confessional statement".

Rains wreak havoc in Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram: While the intensity of the rains gradually decreased in Kerala Tuesday, families hit by heavy inundation were shifted to relief camps and people staged a protest by blocking road using a country boat to press for a solution to waterlogging and sea incursion. People waded through hip-level water in Kannamaly and they had to tackle damage caused by high tidal waves. Kannamaly, a fishing hamlet in Ernakulam district, witnessed protests by locals Tuesday demanding a permanent solution to the long-standing issues of waterlogging and coastal erosion.

1 dead, six injured as hot water pipe bursts

Nagpur: A worker died and six others were injured, two of them critically, when a pipe used for mixing boiling water with chemicals burst at a pharma company's unit in Nagpur district Tuesday, police said. Initially, a senior police official had said that the explosion occurred in a glass line reactor of Ankit Pulp and Boards Pvt Ltd, located on the Kamptee-Nagpur Road.



The Himachal Pradesh government is making all-out efforts to establish new milestones in development, particularly in rural areas

SUKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU | HP CM

UNION HOME MINISTRY TO HANDLE 'PROGRESSION' OF EX-AGNIVEERS

The Union Home Ministry has been tasked to "coordinate activities for further progression" of ex-Agniveers after their term with the armed forces ends, according to a government notification



IRAN-ISRAEL CONFLICT

Indian students moved out of Tehran, says MEA



AGENCIES

Tehran, June 17: Amid escalating tensions between Israel and Iran, Indian students in Tehran have been moved out of the city, with 110 of them crossing the border into Armenia as part of arrangements made by the embassy.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement that the Indian Embassy remains in touch with the community with a view to extend all feasible assistance. At a press briefing here later in the evening, Israeli Ambassador Reuven Azar was asked if any request for the evacuation of Indian nationals in Israel has been received by his country.

"We are full coordinating with the MEA, and when it comes to request for Indians to evacuate, we are starting to organise now through our ministry of transport... commute for diplomats, foreign citizens who want to leave, there are few options, terrestrial and maritime, and we are coordinating," he said. So far, 24 people have been killed in Israel and hundreds injured, Azar said when asked about the casualties in his country in this military flare-up. Earlier in the day, the MEA said in its statement, "Indian students in Tehran have been moved out of the city for reasons of safety, through arrangements made by the Embassy."

Separately, some Indians have been facilitated to leave Iran through the border with Armenia, the MEA said, adding that further advisories may be issued given the fluid situation.

According to the Jammu and Kashmir Students Association, 110 Indian students from Urmia Medical University, 90 of them from the Kashmir Valley,

have safely crossed the border into Armenia. In a post on X, the Indian Embassy in Iran said, "All Indian Nationals and PIOs who can move out of Tehran using their own resources, are advised to move to a safe location outside the city."

In another statement, the MEA said a 24x7 control room has been established in the ministry in view of the ongoing developments in Iran and Israel. The contact details of the control room are: 1800118797 (toll-free) +91-11-23012113 +91-11-23014104 +91-11-23017905 +91-9968291988 (WhatsApp) situationroom@mea.gov.in.

The Embassy of India in Tehran has set up a 24X7 emergency helpline, the MEA said. "For calls only: +98 9128109115, +98 9128109109; For WhatsApp: +98 901044557, +98 9015993320, +91 8086871709; Bandar Abbas: +98 9177699036; Zahedan: +98 9396356649; cons.tehran@mea.gov.in (email)," it said.

The Indian Embassy in Israel also posted an advisory-cum-notice on its X handle and shared some important links. "In continuation of previous advisories, as the National Emergency in Israel continues to be in place, all Indian nationals are advised to stay vigilant and strictly adhere to safety advisories /protocols by the Israeli Home Front Command (https://www.oref.org.il/eng)," the advisory said.All Indian nationals intending to exit Israel may like to avail of the land border crossing options, it says. The Israeli military Saturday apologised for posting the map, which showed the range of Iranian missiles, depicting Jammu and Kashmir as part of Pakistan after objections from Indian social media users, clarifying that the image "fails to precisely depict borders".

Cong questions Modi's silence on US outreach to Pak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: The Congress Tuesday questioned the silence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on American outreach to Pakistan while referring to Pakistani Army chief Asim Munir's visit to the US.

In a post on X, Congress general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh said, "So now it can no longer be denied by the drumbeaters of the PM and the BJP's troll army. The man whose incendiary, inflammatory, and provocative remarks were directly linked to the Pahalgam terror attacks is now officially in Washington DC."

"The question we had asked earlier needs to be repeated: what is America up to by hosting Asim Munir in this manner? Why are the Prime Minister and the External Affairs Minister silent on this outrageous American outreach to Pakistan?" he said.



The Congress leader also took a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi after US President Donald Trump left the G7 Summit in Canada a day earlier, saying it is a "setback for self-styled Vishwaguru's huglomacy". "President Trump has left the G7 Summit a day before the G7 outreach with eight other countries that includes India begins. A setback for self-styled Vishwaguru's Huglomacy," Ramesh said in another post.

The Congress has been taking swipes at Modi for giving hugs to foreign heads of states during his meetings with them at international or bilateral engagements, using the term "huglomacy" for it. In a post on X, Congress leader Supriya Shrinat said, "Trump has returned to America from G7 meeting. Trump did not stay for outreach meeting to which Modi is invited. Trump talked about expanding the G7 to include Russia and China. Not India."



A view of the valley after rainfall in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

Top court criticises K'taka govt for stalling 'Thug Life'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: Coming down heavily on the Karnataka government after actor Kamal Haasan's film "Thug Life" was not screened in theatres in the state, the Supreme Court Tuesday said mob and vigilantes cannot be allowed to take over streets.

A bench of Justices Ujjal Bhuyan and Manmohan said the rule of law ought to be established and guns cannot be put to people's heads to stop them from watching the movie.

"We can't allow mobs and vigilantes to take over the streets. The rule of law must prevail. We can't allow this to happen. If somebody has made a statement, counter it with a statement. if somebody has written something, you can counter it by some writing," Justice Bhuyan told the Karnataka government's counsel and directed him to file a response on the matter by June 18. While people may not watch the movie if it is screened, they cannot be put to fear that theaters will be burnt down, the bench added. Advocate A Velam, appearing for petitioner M Mahesh Reddy, who challenged the film's non screening in Karnataka, said the state hadn't filed complaints against those issuing threats.

Justice Manmohan said, "Rule of law demands that any film which has a CBFC certificate



must be released and the State has to ensure its screening. You cannot put a gun on people's head and say don't watch the movie." The judge went on, "It can't be that at the fear of burning down the cinemas, that the film can't be shown. People may not watch the film. That is a different matter. We are not passing any order that people must watch the film. But the film must be released."

The counsel representing Karnataka said a plea filed by the film producer was scheduled to come up for hearing in the high court June 20. The bench then indicated to transfer the petition pending before the high court to the apex court.

It was also critical of the observations made by the high

court June 3, asking for an apology from Haasan for his remark suggesting that "Kannada was born out of Tamil".

"It is none of the business of the high court to seek an apology from him (actor)," Justice Manmohan said.

The judge continued, "This issue is concerning the rule of law and fundamental rights. Therefore, this court is intervening. That is what the Supreme Court is meant for to be a custodian of the rule of law and fundamental rights. It is not just about a film." The bench said if Haasan had uttered anything inconvenient it couldn't be taken as gospel truth and the enlightened people of Karnataka should have debated and said he was wrong.

Suspected boyfriend arrested for Haryana model's murder

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, June 17: Days after the body of a Haryana-based model was recovered from a canal in Sonipat, her male friend whom she knew for past few years has been arrested, police Tuesday said.

Sheetal, 24, was found with her throat slit and injuries in other parts of the body Sunday. A car was also recovered from the canal. Sunil, the suspect, has been arrested, Panipat Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Satish Kumar said

over the phone. He allegedly pushed the car into the canal, got himself admitted to a hospital. He also told police that he managed to swim to safety and allegedly tried to pass it off as an accident.

Sunil has been taken on police remand. Sheetal's body was recovered from the canal in Sonipat's Kharkhoda which was later identified by the family. The DSP said that Sheetal alias Simmi and Sunil allegedly had an altercation before she was killed. She had been missing since Saturday.

Aishwarya Gowda case: ED summons Shivakumar, brother

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, June 17: The Enforcement Directorate has summoned Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar and his brother D K Suresh, for questioning in an alleged cheating case linked to a money laundering probe against a local woman, official sources said on Tuesday.

The federal probe agency had arrested the local woman -- 33-year-old Aishwarya Gowda -- in April following searches against her and Congress MLA Vinay Kulkarni. The ED had then said in a statement that the woman claimed proximity



with various "high-profile" politicians and cheated people by promising them high returns against gold, cash and bank deposits. She is alleged to have used the name of Suresh and claimed to be his sister.

There are at least three cheating cases registered at Chandra Layout and Rajarajeshwari Nagar police stations in Ben-

galuru against Gowda, who is accused of borrowing gold and ₹10 crore and not returning them. Confirming that the ED officials served him a notice when he and his brother were not at home, Shivakumar said he instructed those at home to receive the notice.

He said his brother had lodged a police complaint alleging that someone was misusing his name.

Regarding the summons, the Deputy CM said, "My brother will cooperate with the ED whichever way possible. He will assist the ED by giving a statement. Some people who were cheated had come to me

and explained to me."

He said some people complained to him that they were cheated by a woman who introduced herself as his younger sister. "I have told police to investigate it. So, we are ready to cooperate with the ED, whichever way possible," Shivakumar said.

When asked whether he would appear for the investigation, he said, "We respect the law of the land and investigation. We are committed to cooperate in the fight against swindlers. We have to give justice to the society and the people of the state. This is our duty, which we will do."

Maha doubles honorarium for Emergency-era prisoners

During the cabinet meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, it was also decided that in case of the death of such individuals, their surviving spouse will be given half the amount of the monthly honorarium

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 17: The Maharashtra cabinet Tuesday doubled the amount of monthly honorarium to ₹20,000 to those individuals in the state who were imprisoned for more than a month during the Emergency period.

During the cabinet meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, it was also decided that in case of the

death of such individuals, their surviving spouse will be given half the amount of the monthly honorarium.

The decisions were taken a week ahead of the 50th anniversary of the Emergency, a 21-month period from June 25, 1975 to March 21, 1977 declared by the then prime minister Indira Gandhi. Many persons were jailed for participating in the democratic resistance during that period.



During Fadnavis' first term as the chief minister, the Ma-

harashtra government had introduced a policy called in 2018

to provide a monthly honorarium to such persons in recognition of their sacrifices under its "Gaurav Yojana".

At present, there are around 3,000 beneficiaries of the scheme in the state. As per the revised policy, individuals who were imprisoned for more than one month during the Emergency will now receive ₹20,000 per month, while their surviving spouse (in case of the death of the individual who was imprisoned) will be eligible for ₹10,000 per month.

Those who were jailed for less than a month will receive ₹10,000 per month, while their surviving spouse will get ₹5,000.

In order to claim the honorarium, the surviving spouses must submit a fresh application to the respective District Collector offices. If the Emergency-era detainees passed away before January 2, 2018, their surviving spouse can still apply by submitting an affidavit along with the application, the chief minister's office (CMO) said in a statement.

The application window will remain open for 90 days from the issuance of the government resolution, it said. The cabinet also scrapped the earlier condition that the applicant must have been at least 18 years old at the time of arrest during the Emergency, it added.



international

of the day quote

At the moment, we see an unwillingness on the part of Israel, at the very least, to engage in any kind of mediation or to enter the peace path at all. This is what we have observed

DMITRY PESKOV | KREMLIN SPOKESMAN

When our global community fails to bridge the gap between principle and action, when values are not practiced, they become performative, abstract and expendable. We are at another defining crossroad in our history, one that demands a choice, power or principle the rule of law or the rule of force, decline or renewal

KING ABDULLAH II | JORDAN'S KING

Russia not only rejects a ceasefire or a leaders' meeting to find solutions and end the war. It cynically strikes Ukraine's capital while pretending to seek diplomatic solutions

ANDRIY SYBIIHA | UKRAINE'S FOREIGN MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Russian attack on Ukraine kills 15

Kyiv: An overnight Russian missile and drone bombardment of Ukraine killed 15 people and injured 156, local officials said Tuesday, with the main barrage demolishing a nine-story Kyiv apartment building in the deadliest attack on the capital this year. At least 14 people were killed as explosions echoed across the Ukrainian capital for almost nine hours, Kyiv City Military Administration head Tymur Tkachenko said, destroying dozens of apartments. Russia fired more than 440 drones and 32 missiles, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

China to commission third aircraft carrier

Beijing: China plans to operationalise its third aircraft carrier 'Fujian' this year as it has completed nearly three years of sea trials, setting the stage for the Chinese navy for the first time to operate three carrier groups, official media reported on Tuesday. Fujian, stated to be China's most advanced aircraft carrier possessing the electromagnetic aircraft launch system (EMALS) similar to that of the American aircraft carrier USS Gerald R Ford, was launched in 2024 and since then completed multiple sea trials, accumulating more than 100 days of sea trials. The entry of the carrier with more than 80,000 tons carrying a wide variety of carrier-borne aircraft, including fighter jets, early warning aircraft, anti-submarine aircraft and drones will enable China to enter a new era of three aircraft carriers, state-run CCTV reported.

World's most trafficked mammal pangolin is endangered in US

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, June 17: US officials proposed Monday to protect the pangolin, a small, nocturnal mammal covered in scales, under the Endangered Species Act.

The pangolin is "the most trafficked mammal in the world" in large part for its scales, used in traditional Chinese medicine, and meat, according to the World Wildlife Fund. The US Fish and Wildlife Service is looking to add protections for four species of the pangolin native to Asia — including the Chinese, Indian, Sunda and Philippine pangolin — and three species native to Africa, including the white-bellied, black-bellied and giant pangolin. Seven species are in danger of extinction, according to the Center for Biological Diversity.

Khamenei sees his inner circle hollowed out by Israel

REUTERS

Dubai/London, June 17: Iran's 86-year-old Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei cuts an increasingly lonely figure.

Khamenei has seen his main military and security advisers killed by Israeli air strikes, leaving major holes in his inner circle and raising the risk of strategic errors, according to five people familiar with his decision-making process.

One of those sources, who regularly attends meetings with Khamenei, described the risk of miscalculation to Iran on issues of defence and internal stability as "extremely dangerous".

Several senior military commanders have been killed since Friday including Khamenei's main advisers from the Revolutionary Guards, Iran's elite military force: the Guards' overall commander Hossein Salami, its aerospace chief Amir Ali Hajizadeh who headed Iran's ballistic missile program and spymaster Mohammad Kazemi.

These men were part of the supreme leader's inner circle of roughly 15-20 advisers comprising Guards commanders, clerics, and politicians, according to the sources who include three people who attend or have attended meetings with the leader on major issues and two close to officials who regularly attend.

The loose group meets on an ad-hoc basis, when Khamenei's office reaches out to relevant advisers to gather at his compound in Tehran to discuss an important decision, all the people said. Members are characterised by unwavering loyalty to him and the ideology of the Islamic Republic, they added.

Khamenei, who was imprisoned before the 1979 revolution and maimed by a bomb attack before becoming leader in 1989, is profoundly committed to maintaining Iran's Islamic system of government and deeply

mistrustful of the West.

Under Iran's system of government he has supreme command of the armed forces, the power to declare war, and can appoint or dismiss senior figures including military commanders and judges.

Khamenei makes the final decision on important matters, though he values advice, listens attentively to diverse viewpoints, and often seeks additional information from his counsellors, according to one source who attends meetings.

"Two things you can say about Khamenei: he is extremely stubborn but also extremely cautious. He is very cautious. That is why he has been in power for as long as he has," said Alex Vatanka, director of the Iran Program at the Middle East Institute think-tank in Washington.

"Khamenei is pretty well placed to do the basic cost-benefit analysis which really fundamentally gets to one issue more important than anything else: regime survival."

Israeli tanks kill 59 trying to get aid in Gaza

REUTERS

Cairo/Gaza, June 17: Israeli tanks fired into a crowd trying to get aid from trucks in Gaza Tuesday, killing at least 59 people, according to medics, in one of the bloodiest incidents yet in mounting violence as desperate residents struggle for food.

Video shared on social media showed around a dozen mangled bodies lying in a street in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip. The Israeli military, at war with Hamas-led Palestinian militants in Gaza since October 2023, acknowledged firing in the area and said it was looking into the incident.

Witnesses interviewed by Reuters said Israeli tanks had launched at least two shells at a crowd of thousands who had gathered on the main eastern road through Khan Younis in the hope of obtaining food from aid trucks that use the route.



"All of a sudden, they let us move forward and made everyone gather, and then shells started falling, tank shells," said Alaa, an eyewitness, interviewed by Reuters at Nasser Hospital, where wounded victims lay sprawled on the floor and in corridors due to the lack of space.

"No one is looking at these people with mercy. The people are dying, they are being torn apart, to get food for their children. Look at these people, all these people are torn to get flour to feed their children."

It is illegal to trade them; the pangolin received certain commercial trade protections under the 2017 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. But tons of poached scales representing thousands of pangolin have been found by authorities around the world in recent years.

"I'm delighted the United States is doing its part to save these adorably odd creatures," Sarah Uhlemann, international program director at the Centre for Biological Diversity, said in a statement. "Pangolins are on the razor's edge of extinction, and we need to completely shut down any US market for their scales. There's no good reason for anybody to ingest any part of a pangolin."

The pangolin eats insects and rolls into a ball when threatened by predators. The Fish and Wildlife Service said pangolin popu-



lations have declined due to targeting by poachers and criminal activity, noting "proceeds from the illicit sale of pangolins and other imperiled species often fund serious crimes, including drug and arms trafficking."

While the act requires endangered species listing regardless of their origin, the designation could also assist in prosecuting

Palestinian medics said at least 59 people were killed and 221 wounded in the incident, at least 20 of them in critical condition. Casualties were being rushed into the hospital in civilian cars, rickshaws and donkey carts. It was the worst death toll in a single day since aid resumed in Gaza in May.

In a statement, the Israeli military said: "Earlier today, a gathering was identified adjacent to an aid distribution truck that got stuck in the area of Khan Younis, and in proximity to IDF troops operating in the area. The IDF is aware of reports regarding a number of injured individuals from IDF fire following the crowd's approach. The details of the incident are under review. The IDF regrets any harm to uninvolved individuals and operates to minimise harm as much as possible to them while maintaining the safety of our troops."

smugglers violating the protections. Advocates, including from the International Fund for Animal Welfare and other national and international groups, have for years petitioned to list the pangolin. In 2020, these organizations and the Fish and Wildlife Service signed an agreement to enforce listing deadlines.

MIT NAMES NEW PROVOST

Prof Anantha Chandrakasan has been named Massachusetts Institute of Technology's new provost, the first Indian-American to serve in this leadership role. Chennai-born Chandrakasan, who is MIT's chief innovation and strategy officer and Dean of Engineering, will begin his new role July 1.



Israeli strikes damage Iran's underground nuclear site: IAEA

Dubai: The International Atomic Energy Agency said Tuesday that it now believes Israeli airstrikes on Iran's Natanz enrichment site had "direct impacts" on the facility's underground centrifuge halls. This marks the first time the United Nations' nuclear watchdog has assessed damage from the strikes in the underground parts of Natanz, which is the main enrichment facility of Iran's nuclear programme. "Based on continued analysis of high-resolution satellite imagery collected after Friday's attacks, the IAEA has identified additional elements that indicate direct impacts on the underground enrichment halls at Natanz," the agency said. Already, an above-ground enrichment hall had been destroyed, as well as electrical equipment that powered the facility.

AIRPORTS CLOSE ACROSS MIDEAST

Beirut: After Israeli strikes landed near the hotel where he was staying in the Iranian province of Qom, Aimal Hussein desperately wanted to return home. But the 55-year-old Afghan businessman couldn't find a way, with Iranian airspace completely shut down. He fled to Tehran after the strike Sunday, but no taxi would take him to the border as the conflict between Iran and Israel intensified. "Flights, markets, everything is closed, and I am living in the basement of a small hotel," Hussein told The Associated Press by cellphone Monday. "I am trying to get to the border by taxi, but they are hard to find, and no one is taking us." Israel launched a major attack Friday with strikes in the Iranian capital of Tehran and elsewhere, killing senior military officials, nuclear scientists, and destroying critical infrastructure. Among the targets was a nuclear enrichment facility about 18 miles from Qom. Iran has retaliated with hundreds of drones and missiles. The dayslong attacks between the two bitter enemies have opened a new chapter in their turbulent recent history. Many in the region fear a wider conflict as they watch waves of attacks across their skies every night. The conflict has forced most countries in the Middle East to close their airspace. Dozens of airports have stopped all flights or severely reduced operations, leaving tens of thousands of passengers stranded and others unable to flee the conflict or travel home.



Now we are 6: G7 leaders after Trump's early exit

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kananaskis (Canada), June 17: Six of the Group of Seven leaders are trying on the final day of their summit Tuesday to show the wealthy nations' club still has the clout to shape world events despite the early departure of President Donald Trump.

Prime Minister Mark Carney and his counterparts from the UK, France, Germany, Italy and Japan will be joined by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and NATO chief Mark Rutte to discuss Russia's relentless war on its neighbour.

World leaders had gathered in Canada with the specific goal of helping to defuse a series of pressure points, only to be disrupted by a showdown over Iran's nuclear programme that could escalate in dangerous and uncontrollable ways. Israel launched an aerial bombardment campaign against Iran Friday, and Iran has hit back with missiles and drones.

Trump left the summit in the Canadian Rocky Mountain resort of Kananaskis a day early late Monday, saying: "I have to be back, very important." It came as conflict between Israel and Iran intensifies and the US leader declared that Tehran should be evacuated "immediately" — while also expressing optimism about a deal to stop the violence.

Before leaving, Trump joined the other leaders in issuing a statement saying Iran "can never have a nuclear weapon" and calling for a "de-escalation of hostilities in the Middle East, including a ceasefire in Gaza." Getting unanimity — even on a short and broadly worded statement — was a modest measure of success for the group.

At the summit, Trump warned that Tehran needs to curb its nuclear programme before it's "too late." He said

Trump quashes US spies' claim that Iran wasn't building nuclear weapon

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, June 17: Tuls Gabbard left no doubt when she testified to Congress about Iran's nuclear programme earlier this year. The country was not building a nuclear weapon, the national intelligence director told lawmakers, and its supreme leader had not reauthorised the dormant programme.

But President Donald Trump dismissed the assessment of US spy agencies during an overnight flight back to Washington as he cut short his trip to the Group of Seven (G7) summit to focus on the escalating conflict between Israel and Iran.

"I don't care what she said," Trump told reporters. In his view, Iran was "very close" to having a nuclear bomb.

Trump's statement aligned him with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has described a nuclear-armed Iran as an imminent threat, rather than with his own top intelligence adviser. The Republican president was expected to meet with national security officials in the Situation Room on Tuesday as he plans next steps.

Trump's contradiction of Gabbard echoed his feuds with US spy leaders during his first term, when he viewed them as part of a "deep state" that was undermining his agenda. Most notably, he sided with Russian President Vladimir Putin in 2018 when asked if Moscow had interfered in the 2016 election, saying Putin was "extremely strong and powerful in his denial."

The latest break over Iran was striking because Trump has staffed his second administration with loyalists rather than establishment figures Gabbard, a military veteran and former Democratic congresswoman from Hawaii, was narrowly confirmed by the Republican-controlled Senate because of her scant experience with intelligence or managing sprawling organisations.

Iranian leaders would "like to talk" but they had already had 60 days to reach an agreement on their nuclear ambitions and failed to do so before the Israeli aerial assault began. "They have to make a deal," he said.

Asked what it would take for the US to get involved in the conflict militarily, Trump said Monday morning, "I don't want to talk about that."

The sudden departure only heightened the drama of a world that seems on verge of several firestorms. Trump already has imposed severe tariffs on multiple nations that risk a global economic slowdown. There has been little progress on settling the wars in Ukraine and Gaza.

Trump's stance on Ukraine puts him fundamentally at odds with the other G7 leaders, who back Ukraine and are clear that Russia is the aggressor in the war.

The US president on Monday suggested there would have been no war if G7 members hadn't expelled Putin from the organisation in 2014 for annexing Crimea.

Trump on Monday demurred when asked if he supported Russia, saying "I only care about saving lives."

With talks on ending the war at an impasse, Starmer said Britain and other G7 members were slapping new tariffs on Russia in a bid to get it to the ceasefire negotiating table. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is due to attend the summit Tuesday at Carney's invitation, along with other leaders including Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and NATO chief Mark Rutte.

Trump declined to join in the sanctions on Russia, saying he would wait until Europe did so first. "When I sanction a country that costs the U.S. a lot of money, a tremendous amount of money," he said.



business

of the day quote

A landmark development was the regulatory approval from US Department of Energy for the transfer of SMR technology to India

SN SUBRAHMANYAN | CHAIRMAN, L&T

As Indian business- es across sectors accelerate their digital transformation, robust data security is a must

ARUNDHATI BHATTACHARYA | CEO, SALESFORCE

In the financial year 2023-24, Indian Railways transported approximately 720 crore passengers and 1,617 million tonnes of freight. This performance helped Indian Railways achieve the second-highest freight volume globally, marking 2023-24 as a historic year

ASHWINI VAISHNAV | RAILWAYS MINISTER

DEALS CORNER

Coralogix raises \$115mn

New Delhi: Israeli data security platform Coralogix has raised USD 115 million (about Rs 992 crore) in a series E funding round led by NewView Capital and plans to deploy a significant chunk of the capital in India. The company plans to increase its market share, especially in compliance-intensive and fast-scaling sectors like BFSI, IT & Telecom, Logistics, and EdTech, a company statement said. Coralogix's Indian portfolio includes customers such as Postman, Jupiter Money, Meesho, BookMyShow, BharatPe, CoinDCX, Razorpay and Delhivery.

CG bags ₹641 cr order

Chennai: CG Power and Industrial Solutions Ltd has secured an order for the supply and servicing of 765kV Transformer package 7TR-12 Bulk by the Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. The total value of supply of goods including services is around Rs 641 crore, becoming the first single largest order bagged by CG Power and Industrial Solutions Ltd. The supply of the goods is expected to be completed in 18 to 36 months, CG Power and Industrial Solutions, a group company of city-based diversified conglomerate Murugappa Group said in a BSE Filing.

Darwix AI raises \$1.5mn

New Delhi: Darwix AI has raised \$1.5 million (about Rs 13 crore) in funding from Rebalance, IPV, JITO Incubation and Innovation Foundation, Growth Sense, and angel investors. The Gurugram-headquartered firm looks to deploy the fresh funds towards product development, hiring, and market expansion, according to a company statement. Our goal is to offer a unified, generative AI stack that not only understands but also elevates every customer interaction with actionable intelligence and automation, Ajay Sethi, Co-founder of Darwix AI, said.

Saswat Finance raises \$2.6mn

New Delhi: Fintech platform Saswat Finance raised \$2.6 million (about Rs 22 crore) in a pre-series A funding round led by Ankur Capital. The Mumbai-headquartered firm will use the capital to expand its tech capabilities, add new financial products to the platform, and scale operations across Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Uttar Pradesh, according to a company statement. At Saswat, we're blending tech and trust to deliver credit, risk protection, and productivity advisory services directly to customers' doorsteps, Arun Tiwari, CEO & Co-Founder of Saswat Finance, said.



To address the issues of rare earth magnets, inter-ministerial effort will pave the way for India's self-reliance in strategic materials crucial for EVs, electronics, defence and other sectors

HD KUMARASWAMY | UNION MINISTER

Google unveils safety charter to combat online fraud

In India, Google is fine-tuning inclusive AI via Gemini Language Testing and IndicGenBench, optimising performance across 29 languages for cultural relevance and accessibility.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: Google Tuesday unveiled its Safety Charter for India as part of efforts to crack down on online frauds, curb synthetic and misleading content, and promote cybersecurity and responsible AI development.

According to Google, the charter is a blueprint for tackling the online world's new challenges collaboratively with the wider ecosystem. This entails keeping the end user safe from online frauds and scams; cybersecurity for government and enterprise infrastructure; and building AI responsibly.

The move assumes significance as reports indicate a significant surge in cyber frauds, as scammers leverage advanced techniques like AI-generated content, deepfake videos, and voice cloning to create highly convincing fraudulent schemes.

UPI-related frauds reportedly cost Indians over Rs 1,087 crore in 2024, and industry estimates project that Indian entities could lose up to Rs 20,000 crore to cyber-crime in 2025, if left unchecked,

Silver hits high, gold declines amid geopolitical tensions

AGENCIES

Mumbai, June 17: Silver futures on Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) touched a new all-time high of Rs 1,09,250 per kilogram Tuesday. July 2025 silver contract jumped 2.5 per cent, gaining Rs 2,686 compared to the previous close of Rs 1,06,564 per kilogram.

In the evening trade, silver futures were trading 2.23 per cent higher at Rs 1,08,945 per kilogram, according to official MCX data. The sharp rise in silver prices reflects growing uncertainty in the global financial markets, where investors tend to move away from high-risk assets like equities and instead put their money into relatively safer options such as gold, silver, and government bonds.

On the other side, the yellow metal prices declined by Rs 1,200 to Rs 1,00,170 per 10 grams in the national capital Tuesday due to continuous selling by jewellers and stockists in line with weak global trends, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 1,01,370 per 10 grams in the previous market session. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity dipped below the Rs 1 lakh mark, by falling Rs 1,100 to Rs 99,450 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes).



as per a Google blogpost.

"It is about building digital safety. As we accelerate India's economic growth, there is one essential connective tissue, and that is trust. While the digital landscape brings many possibilities, we are all aware of the many unique challenges it presents as well," Preeti Lobana, Vice President and Country Manager, Google India, said at 'Safer with Google India Summit'.

Lobana pointed out that while the power of internet is a force multiplier for good, elements like safety, security and trust cannot be an "after-thought". As AI increasingly

becomes part of people's digital lives, ensuring a safe and secure online environment becomes important, she added.

"Trust is the bedrock of our digital aspirations and the reason that India's digital economy has become a force multiplier and a growth engine," she noted.

Elaborating on the impact of its efforts, Google said under the 'Digikavach' programme, it has reached over 177 million Indians with AI-powered protections and awareness initiatives to combat financial fraud.

The tech giant further said that AI integration across its platforms is transforming

OLA ROLLS OUT ZERO PER CENT COMMISSION MODEL NATIONWIDE

Ride-hailing platform Ola Tuesday said it has implemented a zero per cent commission model nationwide, enabling over a million driver partners to fully retain their fare earnings with no ride or income limits. This rollout, now active pan-India, covers autos, bikes, and cabs, and offers unlimited earning potential for driver partners



SEBI bans Sanjiv Bhasin, 11 others from market



The regulator noted that Sanjiv Bhasin and others have been found to have violated provisions of PFUTP (Prohibition of Fraudulent and Unfair Trade Practice) norms and research analyst rules, collectively making illegal gains amounting to ₹11.37 crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: Security Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Tuesday barred Sanjiv Bhasin, a former director at IIFL Securities, and 11 others from the securities markets for indulging in share manipulation in a case pertaining to providing stock recommendations on media channels and other social media platforms, orders impounding of 11.37 crore.

In its 149-page interim order, the exchange noted that Bhasin was a well-known media guest expert with a huge following on social media. While associated with IIFL as a director or consultant, Bhasin provided stock recommendations through media channels, Telegram, and IIFL platforms.

Investigation revealed that prior to his appearances on media channels; Bhasin would take positions -- primarily buy

orders-- in the trading accounts of Gemini Portfolios, Venus Portfolios, and HB Stock Holdings Ltd through dealers of the trading member RRB Master Securities Delhi Ltd.

Given the significant viewership of these channels, his stock recommendations had a considerable impact on the price and volume of the recommended scrips. Capitalizing on this influence, Bhasin would then execute opposite trades (sell orders) in the same accounts, contrary to his public buy recommendations, to profit from the surge in prices of the recommended scrips.

A search and seizure operation conducted by Sebi on June 13-14, 2024, across multiple locations in NCR led to the discovery of critical evidence, including WhatsApp (social media platform) chats and audio recordings.

It was also revealed that Lalit Bhasin, cousin of Sanjiv Bhasin, aided him and, at times, assisted in placing the alleged fraudulent trades. Further, Ashish Kapur, MD, RRB Master Securities Ltd provided the necessary infrastructure and set-up to facilitate the scheme.

SEBI noted that Sanjiv Bhasin and others have been found to have violated provisions of PFUTP (Prohibition of Fraudulent and Unfair Trade Practice) norms and research analyst rules, collectively making illegal gains amounting to Rs 11.37 crore.

BIZ BUZZ

Tata Power launches budget friendly rooftop solar solutions

BHUBANESWAR: Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited (TPREL), a subsidiary of Tata Power and India's leading rooftop solar company, has launched its most affordable rooftop solar solutions in Odisha under 'Ghar Ghar Solar' campaign. With prices starting at Rs 2,499 for a 1 kW system, Rs 4,999 for 2 kW, and Rs 7,999 for 3 kW, the initiative aims to make solar energy accessible to a wider section of the population. Backed by attractive financing options, customers can install systems with just one-third of the total amount upfront. TPREL has partnered with the Odisha Renewable Energy Development Agency (OREDA) to accelerate solar adoption in the state, targeting 3 lakh rooftop installations in Odisha and 10 lakh across India over the next 5 years. Consumers will also benefit from subsidies under PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana up to Rs 78,000 for systems up to 3 kW. Additional state subsidies further reduce the cost, making clean energy an affordable reality for households.has also introduced lifestyle solar offerings like MySine, a solar-plus-battery backup system, and solar design spaces, a range of 25 aesthetic rooftop solutions. For more information, interested customers can call the helpline at 18002577777 to know more about the installation of solar rooftop under Tata Power's Ghar Ghar Solar initiative



Derivatives expiry day change for exchanges

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has received the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) approval to shift its expiry day to Tuesday for equity derivatives contracts, while BSE has been assigned Thursday as its expiry day, the exchanges announced.

This marks a swap from current schedule, where NSE conducts F&O (Futures & Options) expiry Thursdays and BSE Tuesdays.

The new schedule will apply to all new equity derivatives contracts that expire on or after September 1, 2025. Moreover, contracts expiring before this

SEBI has approved NSE's proposal to shift its weekly expiry day for equity derivatives from Thursday to Tuesday. To avoid simultaneous expiries, BSE Sensex expiry will move to Thursday, effective September 1, 2025

date will continue to follow the existing expiry schedule.

The exchanges said they would keep the expiry day of derivatives contracts unchanged for already introduced contracts - with the exception of long dated index options contracts for which equity exchanges would suitably realign expiry day.

To support a smooth transition, the exchanges are expect-

ed to issue detailed circulars soon, outlining the operational guidelines and implementation process. The move came after SEBI stated that expiries of all equity derivatives contracts across exchanges will be uniformly limited to Tuesdays or Thursdays. SEBI aims, to optimise the spacing between expiries and avoid designating, either the first or last day of the week as the expiry day. Addi-

tionally, the exchanges will seek its approval before launching or modifying any contract expiry or settlement day.

Earlier in March, Sebi came out with a consultation proposing that the expiries of all equity derivatives contracts across exchanges be uniformly limited to either Tuesdays or Thursdays. Following the consultation paper, the NSE deferred its plan to change the expiry day of all index and stock derivatives to Monday from Thursday until further notice.

The shift, which was scheduled to take effect April 4, 2025, would have seen all index and stock derivative contracts move from Thursday to Monday.

New housing supply slumps in Tier-II cities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: India's 15 major tier-II cities witnessed a 35 per cent fall in new supply of housing properties to 30,155 units during January-March, according to PropEquity.

Real estate data analytics firm PropEquity said the new supply stood at 45,901 units in the first quarter of 2024 calendar year.

Samir Jasuja, Founder and CEO of PropEquity, said, "The decline in supply is a result of cautious approach and shifting priorities by developers. Financially robust developers with strong balance sheet look to launch premium homes in order to increase their profit margin."

As per the data, new housing supply in Ahmedabad fell 35 per cent to 11,096 units during January-March 2025 from 17,108 units in the year-ago period.

Gandhinagar saw a decline of 10 per cent in housing supply to 4,356 units from 4,825



units during the period under review.

Fresh housing supply slipped 39 per cent in Surat to 3,309 units from 5,439 units. In Nashik, the new supply decreased 2 per cent to 2,466 units from 2,509 units.

Vadodara saw a 23 per cent fall to 2,149 units from 2,790 units, while Jaipur witnessed a 55 per cent decline to 1,348 units from 2,997 units. New supply in Lucknow fell to 1,026 units from

2,256 units.

In Nagpur, the supply of new homes went down 28 per cent to 1,036 units from 1,432 units. Bhubaneshwar saw a steep decline of 72 per cent to 772 units from 2,804 units.

In Goa, the fall was 24 per cent to 444 units from 587 units. New supply of residential properties in Bhopal decreased 51 per cent to 365 units from 738 units.

Mangalore saw a 64 per cent

The supply dip in tier-2 cities is largely a result of developers recalibrating their launch pipelines amid rising input costs, tighter funding, and selective demand in these markets

RAJAT KHANDELWAL | GROUP CEO, TRIBECA DEVELOPERS

reduction to 269 units from 753 units. In Kochi, the new supply diminished by 49 per cent to 225 units from 437 units. Trivandrum saw a 71 per cent drop to 217 units from 751 units.

However, new homes supply in Coimbatore jumped to 1,077 units in January-March this year from 475 units in the year-ago period.

"The supply dip in tier-2 cities is largely a result of developers recalibrating their launch pipelines amid rising input costs, tighter funding, and selective demand in these markets," Rajat Khandelwal, Group CEO of Tribeca Developers, said.

Kirthi Chilukuri, Founder & MD of Stonecraft Group, said, "The decline in housing supply across tier-2 cities in Q1 2025 marks a turning point, one that holds immense potential for forward-thinking developers. At Stonecraft Group, we view this as an opportunity to pioneer sustainable, biophilic design that not only meets the growing demand for high-quality housing but also fosters vibrant communities in harmony with nature."

Vijay Harsh Jha, founder of VS Realtors, said that tier-2 cities are moving towards premiumisation as homes priced at Rs 1-2 crore have shown greater demand.

"However, the decline in Rs 50 lakh homes points to growing concern in view of these cities attracting a lot of people for jobs. The real estate sector, however, remains strong in these cities and a slowdown in supply is a temporary phenomenon," he added.

Indices close at day's low

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 17: Benchmark Sensex dropped by 212 points Tuesday due to profit-taking in metal, oil & gas and pharma shares as investors turned cautious due to increased tensions in the Middle East.

30-share BSE Sensex declined 212.85 points or 0.26 per cent to settle at 81,583.30. The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 93.10 points or 0.37 per cent to 24,853.40.

Pharma shares also came under pressure after US President Donald Trump has warned that tariffs on pharmaceuticals and semiconductor products. Sun Pharma emerged as the biggest loser among Sensex shares, dropping by 2.18 per cent. Eternal, Tata Motors, Bajaj Finance, IndusInd Bank and Bajaj Finserv were also among the laggards.

In contrast, Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Asian Paints and Maruti were among the gainers. The BSE smallcap gauge dropped 0.67 per cent and mid-cap index declined 0.56 per cent.

Among BSE sectoral indices, metal went lower by 1.29 per cent, services (1.09 per cent), oil & gas (0.92 per cent), commodities (0.86 per cent), energy (0.73 per cent), consumer discretionary (0.64 per cent) and realty (0.64 per cent).

IT, tech and BSE Focused IT were the gainers. Among Nifty sectoral indices, Nifty Pharma dropped the most by 1.89 per cent. Granules India, Lupin, Natco Pharma, Laurus Labs and Aurobindo Pharma were major losers.

Market breadth was negative on BSE as 2,483 stocks declined while 1,496 advanced and 139 remained unchanged.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi and Japan's Nikkei 225 index settled positively. FIIs offloaded equities worth Rs 2,539.42 crore Monday.

'I ruled out Test captaincy'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Leeds, June 17: The peerless Jasprit Bumrah has revealed that he had ruled out Test captaincy during the IPL itself as part of his workload management, and had informed the BCCI of his desire to prioritise his bowling responsibilities over leadership duties.

During an interaction with former India wicketkeeper-batter Dinesh Karthik on Sky Sports Cricket, Bumrah explained the thought process behind his decision to turn down the Indian Test captaincy.

“There’s no fancy stories to it. There is no controversy or a headlining statement that I was sacked. Before Rohit and Virat retired, I had spoken o the BCCI during the IPL about my workload going forward in a five-match series,” Bumrah said.

“I’ve spoken to the people who have managed my back, I’ve spoken to the surgeon as well, who’s always spoken to me about how smart you have to be about the workloads.”

“And then we came to the conclusion that I have to be a little smarter. So then I called the BCCI and said I don’t want to be looked at in a leadership role, because I won’t be able to give all matches coming to a five-match Test series,” added Bumrah.

After Rohit’s retirement and with Bumrah ruling himself out, the BCCI appointed Shubman Gill as the skipper of the Test team with his first assignment being the five-match Test series against England, beginning in Leeds Friday.

During the interaction, Bumrah stressed on the need for continuity in leadership, particularly in a long series, something he would not be able to offer because of his heavy workload as the team’s premier bowler.

“The BCCI was looking at me at (a) leadership (role). But then I had to say no as it’s not fair for the team as well. It’s not fair to the team if in a five-Test series,



three matches somebody else is leading and two matches somebody else is leading.”

“I always wanted to put the team first, even if me being there as a player offers a lot more just not as a captain,” Bumrah said.

“Captaincy is a position. But you always have leaders in the team and I wanted to do. Obviously, if I’m not careful, I don’t know about the future, and I don’t want to be in a situation where I have to abruptly go away from this format.”

Bumrah acknowledged that leading the Indian Test team is a huge honour but added that he loves the game more than captaincy.

“Captaincy meant a lot. I had worked very hard for it. But, unfortunately, sometimes you have to look after the bigger picture. I love cricket more than captaincy so I want to contribute more as a cricketer and to the Indian team as a player.”

“Obviously ambitions are there but that’s how it is and I called the BCCI and said that I don’t want to be looked at in a leadership role,” said the magnificent fast bowler.

Plan to play three Tests in

Pataudi medal for series winning captain

New Delhi: The Pataudi name will remain a part of the India-England cricket rivalry with the winning captain of the upcoming five-Test series set to be presented with a medal named after the royal family that has a rich connect with the game in both countries. The decision to rename the Pataudi Trophy to Tendulkar-Anderson Trophy was taken by the England and Wales Cricket Board. A formal announcement was due on the sidelines of the WTC final at Lord’s last week but it was put off in light of the horrific Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad. Renaming the trophy drew criticism from the likes of former India captain Sunil Gavaskar. However, it has been learned that Tendulkar himself reached out to the ECB and expressed that the Pataudi name should remain a part of India-England cricket. ICC chairman Jay Shah also had a role to play. “When this happened Sachin reached out to ECB and conveyed that Pataudi name should remain a part of the India-England rivalry. Mr Jay Shah was involved in the discussions. ECB has agreed to the request and decided to present Pataudi Medal to the winning captain,” said a BCCI source. With the planned ceremony not going ahead in the UK, a formal announcement on the renaming of the trophy is scheduled for June 19, a day before the series-opener at Leeds. Tendulkar is the leading run getter in Test cricket while Anderson has the most wickets in the traditional format as a fast bowler. The Pataudis, on the other hand, have deep ties to the India-England cricketing landscape. Iftikhar Ali Khan Pataudi and his son Mansur both captained India and both played county cricket in England.

England As far as his participation in the England series in concerned, Bumrah is planning to play in at least three Test matches, including the opener at Headingley.

“Obviously, the number is not decided. First (Test) is definitely on, that is going to

happen. Rest, we will see how things are, what is the workload and scenario... but yes, 3 Tests is what I can manage at the moment.”

India head coach Gautam Gambhir had also said Bumrah could play three Tests in the coming weeks.

RUGBY PREMIER LEAGUE

Hyderabad register record win; Chennai stay unbeaten

Mumbai: Hyderabad Heroes produced the biggest win of the tournament so far, thrashing Bengaluru Bravehearts 43-7, while Chennai Bulls maintained their unbeaten run with a 21-7 victory over Delhi Redz in the GMR Rugby Premier League here Tuesday. In the opening match, Chennai Bulls dominated from start to finish. Vaafauese Maliko and Terry Kennedy scored early tries, while Joaquin Pellandini converted all three kicks to give them a 21-0 lead at half-time. The Redz managed a late consolation through Matias Osadczuk, but it wasn’t enough to stop the Bulls from notching their third straight win. Hyderabad Heroes were ruthless in the second game, racing to a 31-0 lead at half-time with tries from Joji Nasova, Kevin Wekesa, Sumit Roy and Javed Hussain. Terio Tamani converted three of the five first-half tries as the Heroes asserted total control. Liam Poulton pulled one back for Bengaluru in the third quarter, but Hyderabad closed the game in style with tries from Nasova and Wolfram Hacker in the final phase.

SMRITI MANDHANA RECLAIMS TOP SPOT

Dubai: India vice-captain Smriti Mandhana Tuesday moved up to the top spot in ICC ODI batting rankings for the first time since 2019 after South Africa skipper Laura Wolvaardt lost 19 rating points in the latest update. Mandhana has a total of 727 rating points followed by England captain Natalie Sciver-Brunt at 719. Wolvaardt is now third with 719 points. The next two Indian batters in the list after Mandhana are Jemimah Rodrigues and skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, who are placed 14th and 15th respectively. India and England are set to face off in five T20Is and three ODIs later this month. While Mandhana has sat inside the top 10 on the list for ODI batters in recent times, the left-hander hasn’t held the premier position since the start of 2019 as a drought of more than six years comes to an end.

Moosa-led U-23 team gear up for Tajikistan



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 17: India men’s football team will take on hosts Tajikistan in a friendly match Wednesday, kicking off a crucial two-match tour that serves as preparation for the AFC U-23 Asian Cup 2026 Qualifiers later this year.

The match will be played at the Hisor Central Stadium near Dushanbe, with the second fixture against Kyrgyz Republic scheduled for Saturday.

Drawn in Group E alongside Bahrain, Qatar and Brunei Darussalam, India will be aiming to qualify for the continental event for the first time when the qualifiers are held in September.

The ongoing tour is seen as a vital tune-up in terms of acclimatisation, team cohesion, and tactical fine-tuning.

The Naushad Moosa-coached 23-member squad had been in camp in Kolkata since June 1 before flying out to Dushanbe.

After arriving in the Tajik capital Monday evening, the team held a mobility session Tuesday morning and followed it up with a 90-minute evening training session at the venue, which is located around 25 kilometre from the city.

Tajikistan U23s were last in action in November 2024 when they lost two friendlies against United Arab Emirates, both by a 0-3 margin.

At the AFC U23 Asian Cup 2024, Tajikistan were knocked out in the group stage after defeats to Iraq and Saudi Arabia and a win over Thailand.

Moosa, however, is not reading too much into past results and is focused on the task at

hand. “We know Tajikistan are a strong team. They qualified for the U23 Asian Cup last year and also did well at the senior Asian Cup,” Moosa stated in AIFF website.

“The players will, of course, be different tomorrow. The coach has changed. We just have to go out there and do our job right,” added Moosa.

Despite Dushanbe being located 700 metre above sea level, the weather is hot at this time of the year, soaring to almost 40 degrees during the day.

What the Blue Colts mainly have to adjust to is the artificial turf surface of the Hisor Central Stadium, located 25 kilometre from the city of Dushanbe.

Moosa hoped for a good turnout at the 20,000-capacity venue.

“The weather is pretty warm. It’s normal for us. It’s always good to have supporters in the stands. We would love to have them cheer for us,” said Moosa.

“Most of our players are coming here for the first time, so it would be great motivation for them. I think the last time the Indian senior team played in Tajikistan, there were a lot of Indian fans in the stadium, so let’s hope for the same.”

This tour marks Moosa’s second assignment with the India U-23 side, having previously overseen their two friendlies against Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur last year.

The 53-year-old has been building momentum and instilling belief in the squad during this ongoing preparation phase.

“The boys are very eager for tomorrow. I’ve been talking to them about how important these games will be for us,” added Moosa.

SHORT TAKES

Indian Archery League set for October launch

Kolkata: The much-anticipated franchise-based ‘Indian Archery League’ is finally set to take off in October at the Yamuna Sports Complex in New Delhi with six city-based teams, Archery Association of India treasurer Joris Paulose Ummacheril confirmed Tuesday. Initially conceptualised in 2020, the league had to be shelved due to lack of sponsors. However, the AAI has now secured sponsors and is currently in discussions with broadcasters, including Sony Sports and JioHotstar, to roll out the league this year. This will be the world’s first franchise league in archery and the federation is hopeful of a strong response that will go a long way in developing Indian archers, who are still chasing their maiden Olympic medal.

Netherlands beat Nepal in third Super Over

Glasgow: The Netherlands beat Nepal after an incredible three super overs during a T20 International tri-series match here, the first time in the history of T20 or List A cricket. Michael Levitt struck a six in the third Super Over to eventually give the Netherlands victory here Monday night. Having posted 152 for 7 in their allotted 20 overs, the Dutch looked set for victory with Nepal needing 16 from the final over in the run chase. However, Nepal could only level the scores (152/8) with tailender Nandan Yadav hitting two boundaries, including one from the last ball.

FIFA lifts transfer ban on Mohun Bagan Super Giant

Kolkata: The transfer ban on Mohun Bagan Super Giant was Tuesday lifted by the FIFA Disciplinary Committee, clearing the way for the club to sign new players ahead of the upcoming season. The ban, imposed May 5 over non-payment of dues to Australian striker Jason Cummings’ former club Central Coast Mariners, was revoked following prompt action by the club. Mohun Bagan had submitted a 107-page document to FIFA and responded to two subsequent queries from the governing body. “Mohun Bagan submitted a 107-page document to FIFA and thereafter there were two queries, and finally the disciplinary committee has sent a mail lifting the ban,” a Mohun Bagan Super Giant official told PTI.

Junior compound archers storm into Asia Cup finals



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Singapore, June 17: India’s junior compound archers continued their dominant run at the Asian Cup Leg 2, reaching the finals in both the men’s and women’s individual events here Tuesday.

Top seed Kushal Dalal booked his place in the men’s individual compound final after a solid 147-143 win over Himu Bachhar of Bangladesh in the semifinals, confirming at least a silver medal.

Dalal had topped the qualification round with 714 points.

Meanwhile, India’s 10th seed Sachin Chechi lost his semifinal to Australia’s Joshua Machon and will face Bachhar in the bronze medal match.

In the women’s individual compound section, India is assured of a gold and silver as top-seeded Shanmukhi Naga Sai Budde and second seed Tejal Salve will clash in an all-Indian final.

Shanmukhi, who qualified with 706 points, defeated Indonesia’s Yurike Nina Bonita Pereira 145-139 in the semifinals.

Tejal, who shot 700 in qualification, overcame Malaysia’s Fatin Nurfatehah Mat Salleh 147-142 to set up the title clash.

Earlier in the tournament, Indian archers made headlines by setting two world records.

The women’s compound team of Shanmukhi, Tejal, and Tanishka Thokal scored 2101 points to set a new team qualification world record.

Europe tour ends with loss to Netherlands

Indian junior women’s hockey team loses shootout thriller against Netherlands in final match of Europe tour

AGENCIES

Utrecht (Netherlands), June 17: The Indian junior women’s hockey team concluded their successful Tour of Europe with a hard-fought match against hosts Netherlands, narrowly losing 2-3 in the shootout after a goalless draw in regulation time.

Coming into the match with four consecutive wins under their belt - three against Belgium and one against Australia - the Indian junior side displayed grit and composure against a technically strong Dutch outfit in what turned out to be a tightly contested encounter.

Despite both teams creating several scoring opportunities over the four quarters, neither side could break the deadlock, thanks to disciplined defending



and impressive goalkeeping at both ends. The match proceeded to a shootout, where Lalrinpuoi and Priyanka Yadav converted their chances for India. However, the Netherlands edged ahead with successful strikes from Imme de Leeuw, Roos Alkemade, and Lotte Rust to clinch the 3-2 win in the shootout.

While the tour ended with a narrow defeat, the Indian junior women’s hockey team can take immense pride in their

performances, finishing the European tour with four wins out of five matches and valuable international exposure ahead of future competitions, which includes all important FIH Hockey Women’s Junior World Cup 2025, set to take place from December 1 to 13 in the city of Santiago, Chile.

Previously, the team concluded a promising outing at the Four Nations Tournament in Rosario, Argentina.

In Argentina, the Indian side delivered strong performances against quality opposition. They registered a 2-1 win and a 2-2 (2-3 SO) loss against Chile, earned a 1-1 (2-0 SO) win and a 2-4 loss against hosts Argentina, and defeated Uruguay twice — 3-2 and 2-2 (3-1 SO). The tour served as an important step in the team’s preparations, offering valuable lessons in handling high-pressure scenarios and adapting to different playing styles.

My goal is to bring tennis back to life: Hitesh

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 17: The 17-year-old Hitesh Chauhan, who recently became the first Indian to reach the second round of the French Open Juniors since 2016, has set his sights on a goal much bigger than winning a Grand Slam - re-igniting the diminishing flame of tennis in the country.

In an exclusive conversation, the young talent opened up about his dream of representing India in Grand Slams and breaking into the top 30 of the ATP rankings. For Chauhan, it’s not just about personal glory — it’s about inspiring a generation and reviving interest in tennis nationwide.

“It’s going to be a long, tough journey. I don’t think I’m even halfway there, but through

it all, I just want to make my country, my parents, my coaches, Roundglass —everyone— proud. I want every Indian to see tennis. I want them to see an Indian playing Grand Slams, being in the top 50, and top 30 in the ATP rankings.”

“My goal is to bring tennis back to life in India—not at the level of cricket, of course—but to give it the recognition it deserves. I’m ready for the competition, ready for the hard work. And I’m sure I’ll be in the top 30—that’s my goal,” Hitesh told.

In the first round of the French Open Junior men’s singles, Hitesh defeated Sweden’s Ludvig Fredrik Hede 6-4, 6-3. This was the Indian’s first win at a Grand Slam tournament. In the doubles, Hitesh, alongside teammate Haydar Cem Gokpinar (Turkiye), brushed past



Ludvig Hede and Switzerland’s Flynn Thomas 7-5, 6-3.

“It was an awesome experience over there. Playing with the champs over there, with the ATP players, No 1 Jannik Sinner, (Carlos) Alcaraz, and all. Then playing where all the ATP players play, on the historic courts over there at

the French Open. And playing with an amazing crowd over there. I will never forget this experience in my whole life,” Hitesh said. In an almost poetic manner, Hitesh’s first win at a Grand Slam came during the tournament where his inspiration, Rafael Nadal, was honoured for his stellar career.

“Rafa is an inspiration, I always thought that one day I want to be like him. So I have to face these challenges in my life. That also motivated me a lot, thinking about him, thinking how he played with this much crowd. He also played the French Open when he was 17 years old,” he said.

Hitesh’s journey at the tournament came to an end when he was handed a 6-1, 6-4 defeat by American Benjamin Willworth. Despite the defeat, Hitesh showed incredible heart and fight by continuing and fighting for each point despite cramping up in the second set. He also revealed how Aditya Sachdeva, his coach at Roundglass Academy, was extremely proud of him and opened up on the heartwarming conversation they shared after the game.

“When I called him after I lost a match, he was like, in my mind, you have won. In my heart, you have won. The match you played today was just incredible. I’m so proud of you. The whole team, the whole academy, is so proud of you. This, I would not count as a loss. For me, it is a win that you played, even after you were injured. In the third set, you were 4-2 up, and then you got injured. You didn’t leave. You didn’t give up and you gave up every single, every single percentage of yours,” Hitesh revealed.

After a memorable French Open, Hitesh now turns his attention towards the pinnacle of Tennis - Wimbledon. The 17-year-old is currently adapting to the grass courts at the Chandigarh Club, as it will be his first time playing on the surface.