



## Trisha's bombshell

Actor Trisha Krishnan shares a cryptic post about love on social media, sparking fresh dating speculation

LEISURE | **P2**



## Japan's prep

Japan's army conducts a missile test for the first time on its territory, as the country accelerates its military buildup to deter China

INTERNATIONAL | **P10**



## India in global top 100

India secures a place among top 100 out of 193 countries ranked for their progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

BUSINESS | **P11**



## India crumble

England chase down 371-run target with five wickets to spare and go 1-0 up in the five-match Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy

SPORTS | **P12**



**TRAIL OF DEVASTATION:** Emergency personnel assist a resident at an impacted residential site, following a missile attack from Iran on Israel, amid the Israel-Iran conflict in Be'er Sheva, Israel, Tuesday

# Israel, Iran violate truce, leave Trump frustrated

*A few days after claiming that he managed to stop a potential nuclear war in Asia, US President Donald Trump Tuesday did an India-Pakistan on Israel-Iran, abruptly announcing a ceasefire between the two. Both the countries approached him for peace simultaneously and he agreed, the self-described peace-maker wrote in his post which had everyone wondering if the 'peace' would be lasting. Hours after the announcement, Trump lashed out at Iran and Israel as the two started violating the ceasefire firing missiles at each other though they earlier had agreed to Trump's proposal. However, despite the initial violations, there was a sense of relief in the wider Middle East that a path out of war had been charted*

REUTERS

**Washington/Tel Aviv/Istanbul, June 24:** US President Donald Trump accused both Israel and Iran of violating a ceasefire Tuesday hours after he announced it, expressing particular frustration with

## EXPLOSIONS RING OUT IN TEHRAN

**Tehran:** Explosions rang out in Tehran from Israeli airstrikes on Tuesday despite U.S. President Donald Trump saying Israel had called off strikes at his command to preserve an hours-old ceasefire. Two witnesses reached by telephone in the Iranian capital said they heard two loud explosions. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office acknowledged that Israel had struck a radar site near Tehran in what it said was retaliation for Iranian missiles fired three-and-a-half hours after the ceasefire had been due to begin.

Israel which had announced major new strikes on Tehran.

"Israel. Do not drop those bombs. If you do it, it is a major violation. Bring your pilots home, now!" Trump wrote on Truth Social shortly after he left the White House for a trip to a NATO summit in The Hague.

Before boarding, he told reporters he was 'not happy' with either side for violating the truce, particularly with Israel.

"I've got to get Israel to calm down now," Trump said as he left the White House. "Israel, as

soon as we made the deal, they came out and they dropped a load of bombs, the likes of which I've never seen before, the biggest load that we've seen."

Iran and Israel had been fighting "so long and so hard that they don't know what the fuck they're doing," he said before turning away from cameras and heading to his helicopter.

Earlier, Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz had said he had ordered the military to mount new strikes on targets in Tehran in response to what he said were Iranian missiles fired in a "blatant violation" of the ceasefire.

Iran denied launching any missiles and said Israel's attacks had continued for an hour and a half beyond the time the ceasefire was meant to start.

Despite the initial violations, in both countries, the wider Middle East and around the world there was palpable sense of relief that a path out of war had been charted, 12 days after Israel launched it with a surprise attack, and two days after Trump joined in with strikes on Iranian nuclear targets.

## Train fare to be hiked from July 1

**New Delhi:** The Railway Ministry is considering increasing fares of non-AC class in Mail/Express trains by 1 paisa and all AC classes by 2 paise per kilometre from July 1, 2025, officials said Tuesday. "As compared to the previous fare revisions in 2020 and 2013, the current increase will be the lowest," a railway official said. "So far as suburban train and monthly season tickets are concerned, it is being decided not to increase any fare in the interest of the daily commuters," he added. The official said that ordinary second class fare will not be increased for up to 500 kms and for distances beyond that, there might be an increase in the ticket prices by half paisa per km. According to the railway officials, before this, the train fare was increased on per km basis on January 1, 2020 when second class fare for ordinary and Mail/Express trains was increased by 1 paisa and 2 paise respectively.

## Shukla's Axiom-4 eyes June 25 launch

**New Delhi:** Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla's Axiom-4 mission to the International Space Station is now eyeing a launch June 25, NASA announced Tuesday. The Axiom-4 mission, which marks the return to space for India, Hungary, and Poland, was earlier scheduled for lift-off from NASA's Kennedy Space Centre in Florida June 25 onboard SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket at 12:01 pm IST Wednesday. "NASA, Axiom Space, and SpaceX are targeting 2:31 a.m., Wednesday, June 25, for launch of the fourth private astronaut mission to the International Space Station, Axiom Mission 4," a NASA statement said.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



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# 500% US tariff if India buys crude from Russia

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, June 24:** US senator Lindsey Graham, a long-time supporter of pro-Ukraine moves, has said that his sanctions bill against Russia will act as an "economic bunker buster" against, among other countries that do business with Moscow, India.

Graham was quoted as having said June 22 in a television interview that he has 84 co-sponsors for the bill, "that is an economic bunker buster against China, India, and Russia for Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine. I think that bill's going to pass...It's time to vote on that bill."

The Sanctioning Russia Act of 2025 was introduced to the US senate in April this year.

Politico's report on Graham's movements with the bill notes that the South Carolina Republican's proposal is to impose 500% tariffs on any country that buys Russian energy.

The bill's passage through

the US senate is complicated by US president Donald Trump's famous friendship with Russian president Vladimir Putin. Of late, however, this friendship has not been in the best for forms with Trump calling Putin "CRAZY" on social media.

Graham, according to Politico, plans to exempt countries that have aided Ukraine, indicating the European Union could perhaps escape the bill's ambit.

The move would naturally cut the US off key economies like India, which, along with China, buys rough-

ly 70% of Russian energy exports.

While the bill will take time to travel through US senate and congress, support for it has been described as bipartisan and widespread, in the fourth year of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

According to reports, Russia has in the last three years risen to become one of India's top three crude oil suppliers.

**While the bill will take time to travel through US senate and congress, support for it has been described as bipartisan and widespread, in the fourth year of Russia's invasion of Ukraine**

# 61% power from non-fossil sources by 2036: Singh Deo

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, June 24:** Asserting that Odisha has successfully transitioned from a "power-sufficient to a power-empowered" state, the government Tuesday sought the Centre's support to build itself as a model in the electricity sector as it plans to generate 61 per cent power from non-fossil sources by 2036.

Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo, who is also in charge of the power department, said this at a conference of the energy ministers and secretaries of the eastern region, chaired by Union Power Minister Manoharlal, in Patna.

"Odisha has successfully transitioned from a power-sufficient to a power-empowered state. The state's peak power demand of 6,242 MW has been fully met. By 2036, 61 per cent of Odisha's power portfolio is targeted to be from non-fossil sources," Singh Deo was quoted in a statement as saying.

Singh Deo informed the gathering that the state plans to add a total of 11,294 MW by 2036,



including solar, wind, hydro, distributed renewable energy (DRE), and pumped storage, out of which 3,904 MW has already been contracted.

He said that Odisha has achieved Grid Resilience through Islanding Schemes to ensure uninterrupted power supply during grid failures.

By 2030, Odisha will have 225 substations and 20,939 ckm (Circuit kilometer) of transmission lines with a total transformation capacity of 45,369 MVA (Mega-volt-amperes), Singh Deo said.

This apart, the minister said, the renewable power evacuation corridors are being developed. This included Hiraakud-Kolabira-Duburi, Indravati-Theruvalli-Gopalpur, Theruvalli-Jayanagar 400kV LILO at Jayanagar pooling

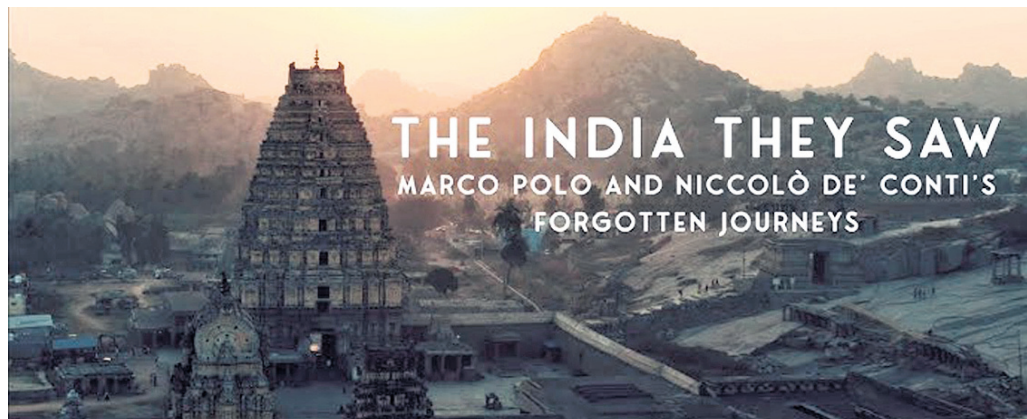
# An era when dark skin was highly esteemed in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, June 24:** Not many know that there was a time when people in an Indian region preferred darker skin. In fact, they applied something to make their skin darker. This is one of the things researchers learnt while making a documentary titled The India They Saw, revealed Alfonso Tagliaferri, Consul General of Italy in Bangalore.

The 30-minute film, which narrates the travels of two great Venetian explorers - Marco Polo and Niccolo de Conti during the 13th and 14th centuries - is a joint venture between India and Italy, he said. Apart from the Italian Consulate, the film is supported by Karnataka's Ministry of Tourism, Archaeological Survey of India, and Baldota Group.

Among the things that the film highlight are a few surpris-



ing facts including that people in those days applied some oil - some believe it is sesame - to make their skin look darker, said the director of the film, Ganesh Shankar Raj.

"In fact, we think the European-looking figure in one of the wall engravings in the Brihadeeswara Temple in Thanjavur (in Tamil Nadu) is Marco

Polo," added Raj. Raj said they zeroed in on Niccolo de Conti initially, as he had travelled through Hampi in the 1430s, and his detailed accounts of his travel, published as manuscripts, had a great influence on European understanding of India.

"But de Conti was not a popular figure. So, we decided to

include the journeys of Marco Polo as well, a more well-known Venetian, whose accounts of India could have possibly inspired de Conti to undertake his journey," said Raj.

"This documentary stands at the confluence of history, diplomacy, and imagination. At a time when cross-cultural understanding is more vital than

ever, the film hopes to foster goodwill between our nations and inspire a deeper appreciation of our shared legacies," shared Raj.

For Tagliaferri, the religious tolerance and the beauty standards of those days, which are so different from modern India, are a revelation that he was happy to have come across, just as he was completing his journey as Consul General here.

"But what hasn't changed is the sense of awe that one feels when one encounters India. Polo and de Conti were left in awe when they journeyed through India centuries ago. The same sense of marvel still fills the eyes of visitors today, as it did mine when I arrived three years ago," added Tagliaferri.

The film was released officially on June 23 at the Bangalore International Centre in Domlur.

## Govt to set up 9 new medical colleges: Min

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, June 24:** The government is going to set up nine new medical colleges in the state, informed Health and Family Welfare Minister Mukesh Mahaling said Tuesday.

Of the nine, four will be dental medical colleges and one Ayurvedic institute.

"We have decided to set up four MBBS colleges at Jagatsinghpur, Bhadrak, Dhenkanal and Nabarangpur districts, four dental colleges at Burla, Berhampur, Bolangir and Keonjhar, besides an Ayurvedic college in Mayurbhanj district," Mahaling told media persons.

Besides, the new medical colleges with 100 MBBS seats each at Phulbani in Kandhamal district and Talcher in Angul districts will start functioning from the current academic year, he said.

Mahaling was speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the maiden Healthcare Summit 2025 organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) here. **P3**

## French tourist raped in Udaipur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jaipur, June 24:** A man allegedly raped a French tourist in Udaipur after luring her from a party to his apartment, the police said Tuesday. The accused is currently absconding, and efforts are underway to trace him, the police added.

The incident occurred Monday in the Badgaon Police Station area. According to the police, the woman, who arrived in Udaipur from Delhi on June 22, was staying at a hotel in the Ambamata area.

The woman allegedly attended a party at Tiger Hill, where she met the accused Siddharth, SHO PS Rajpurohit said.

"The accused invited the woman to step outside on the pretext of showing her the nearby sights and later took her to his rented apartment in Sukher, where he raped her," he stated.

She further alleged that once at the apartment, Siddharth attempted to initiate physical contact. When she resisted, he allegedly assaulted her sexually.



# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
You are an imaginative and enterprising person, and to-day you may taste success. Ganesha says that you are ambitious but warns you not to take on more work than you can handle. You are positive about your capabilities, so work sincerely and have faith in God.

**TAURUS**  
Today, you are likely to be more reckless than ever in splurging your hard earned money. Ganesha strongly advises you to leave your credit card at home today. Using it for making purchases will only make matters worse. Money wise, be very careful in your business dealings, about the commitments you make.

**GEMINI**  
Your mind will be uneasy and anxious due to some reason today. You will be unable to express your anxieties. You will be able to secure the love of your partner by sharing your feelings. You need to let go of the past and strive to keep on moving forward with confidence, says Ganesha.

**CANCER**  
You will tend to try new recipes at home. Family members will take advantage and enjoy it. You will indulge in pastimes. Arrival of guests will bring in an air of festivity and happiness, says Ganesha.

**LEO**  
You will seek the opinion of others in a lot of matters today. You need to patiently listen to others and keep your lips sealed during the course of conversations today. Your self-confidence may take a beating today, hence do not take any important decisions. It is time for a major change in your work or field of work, says Ganesha.

**VIRGO**  
Today you may understand the utter uselessness of your dogged efforts and feel extremely anxious about success eluding you constantly. However, Ganesha advises you not to lose hope, but to re-energise your mind, give a boost to your curiosity and pay attention to long-term goals.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesha says you will showcase your ability and skills today in your work field and impress people. You will develop and express your inner love for art and artistic things and you will purchase a new work of art today. Ganesha showers you with all his blessings.

**SCORPIO**  
A series of events at work front may keep you busy throughout the day. You may be unable to manage the clutter and confusion created by too many things at the same time. However, you emerge a fighter because of your power of resilience. Ganesha advises to go slow, yet steady; take one problem at a time and sort it out.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Ganesha predicts a day full of romantic developments today. Mushy talks and whispering sweet nothings in your beloved's ears may give you little joys of life. However, brace yourselves as there are times when relationships do not workout, and you may experience this soon.

**CAPRICORN**  
You are busy as a beaver. It is extremely difficult for you to think for yourself as you are all tied up by the demands of your work. You want to be creative, but again, the workload will not let you have that freedom, says Ganesha. You have learnt the art of time management. So, you have properly lined up your priorities and success is waiting for you.

**AQUARIUS**  
You are armed with good communication skills, and like always, it will come to your aide today, too. There is one problem though. You are not clear about your emotions and it may make your arms blunt, foresees Ganesha. Make sure that you are able to identify your feelings and don't make any disastrous decisions based on that confusion.

**PISCES**  
For those looking for a promotion at the work-place, now is the time to ask for it. Freelancers could find interesting projects falling into their laps. Businesses are likely to see a surge in profits. No conflicts in personal life are indicated. Overall, a progressive and pleasant day awaits, says Ganesha.



## RACHEL ZEGLER ADDRESSES SNOW WHITE BACKLASH

Rachel Zegler, who was recently seen in Disney's live-action *Snow White*, opened up about receiving online backlash and media scrutiny in recent years. In a recent interview, the actor said she refuses to adopt a 'victim mindset' and instead chooses to maintain a positive outlook on life.

## JON BERNTHAL TO RETURN AS THE PUNISHER IN SPIDER-MAN 4

Hollywood star Jon Bernthal will reprise his fan-favourite Marvel character of The Punisher in Tom Holland-led *Spider-Man 4*. The actor, known for featuring in movies such as *Sicario*, *The Accountant* and *The Many Saints of Newark*, will feature alongside Holland, who is reprising his character of Peter Parker aka Spider-Man.



## Trisha's cryptic post on love

**Mumbai:** Is there someone special in Southern beauty Trisha Krishnan's life? Well, netizens certainly seem to think so.

The rumours mills suggest that Trisha is in a relationship with her *Ghilli* co-star Thalapaty Vijay. Adding fuel to the rumours, she recently dropped a cryptic post about love on social media.

Taking to the stories section of her Instagram account, Trisha penned, "When you are full of love it confuses people who are full of shit."

Before this, wishing Thalapaty on his 51st birthday, the *Leo* actress treated her Insta users with an unseen image with Thalapaty.

The photo featured Trisha sitting beside Thalapaty on a sofa. While he playfully interacted with her pet dog Izzy, Trisha looked at him with a warm look in her eyes.

Trisha wished him on his special day saying, "Happy Birthday, bestest."

Reacting to the post, one of the netizens shared, "How adorable you two cutieees."

While some adored their chemistry, others expressed their displeasure after seeing the two together.

"Why would you even post this? So unnecessary! It's been ages since we saw him with his wife Sangeetha and these kind of private meeting photos are so unneeded! Well, can't blame you alone unfortunately!", one of the comments read.



## Italian honour for Jacqueline

**Mumbai:** Actress Jacqueline Fernandez took to social media to share that she was recently recognised at the prestigious Italian Global Series Festival (IGSF) 2025 in Rimini.

In her post, the *Kick* actress said she received the honour on the opening night for her contribution to the world of cinema.

The event, which celebrates excellence in television and film on a global stage, saw Jacqueline among a distinguished group of awardees. Expressing her gratitude, Jacqueline shared that cinema, for her, goes beyond storytelling. She described it as a powerful medium that bridges people across time, language, and continents.

Being acknowledged for playing a part in that global exchange of art and culture, she said, was a deeply meaningful experience. Taking to Instagram, the actress posted a couple of her photos from the festival and wrote, "Cinema as an art for me is not just about storytelling but a way to connect people across time, language, and continents. To be acknowledged for helping share that with the world means more than words can express! Grazie di cuore #IGSF2025 #ItalianGlobalSeriesFestival #Openingnight #TVseries #In-EmiliaRomagna."

On the work front, Jacqueline was recently seen in the comedy *Housefull 5*, which also starred Akshay Kumar, Riteish Deshmukh, Abhishek Bachchan, Sonam Bajwa, Nargis Fakhri and others.

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## Kiara in talks for Meena Kumari biopic

**Mumbai:** A biopic on the legendary actress Meena Kumari is officially in the works, and recent buzz confirms that Kiara Advani has been approached to play the iconic role. The rights to the film were acquired by Sidharth P. Malhotra in collaboration with Saregama and the Amrohi family. While there was much speculation around who would portray Meena Kumari, insiders now reveal that Kiara has heard the script and is highly interested, though she has not yet signed on officially.

The film's creative team reportedly believes Kiara is the ideal fit for the role, citing her emotional depth and on-screen elegance—qualities essential to portraying the "Tragedy Queen" of Hindi cinema. If she commits to the project, it could mark her first film after welcoming her first child. Currently on a professional break, Kiara was last seen turning heads at the MET Gala, where she gracefully embraced maternity fashion in a Gaurav Gupta creation. She later vacationed with husband Sidharth Malhotra.

With *War 2*, *Toxic*, and now possibly the Meena Kumari biopic on her slate, Kiara's lineup looks exciting. Fans are equally eager to know who will play Kamal Amrohi, Meena Kumari's former husband, as their complex relationship will be central to the film's emotional arc.



## How Sri's rejection paved way for Madhuri's stardom

**Mumbai:** The role of Mohini in the 1988 blockbuster *Tezaab* is now synonymous with Madhuri Dixit, but few know it was first offered to Sridevi. At the time, Sridevi was Bollywood's reigning superstar, delivering back-to-back hits and enjoying unmatched stardom. However, she reportedly turned down the film—possibly due to scheduling conflicts or because the role didn't align with her career goals.

After Sridevi's exit, the part went to Madhuri, a relatively new

face in the industry still struggling to find her big break. *Tezaab* proved to be that opportunity. Madhuri's portrayal of Mohini struck a chord with audiences, and her performance in the song *Ek Do Teen* became a cultural sensation. Choreographed by Saroj Khan, the song showcased Madhuri's exceptional dancing skills and charisma, catapulting her to overnight fame.

The success of *Tezaab* turned Madhuri into a household name and marked the beginning



of her golden era in Bollywood. Throughout the late '80s and '90s, she delivered a string of hits and became one of the most admired and bankable actresses of her time. Her dance numbers, emo-

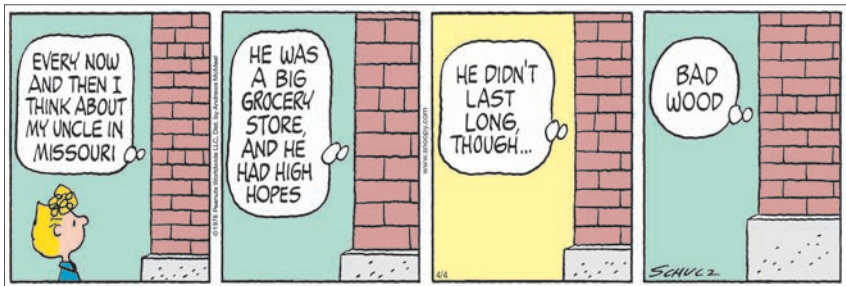
tional depth, and screen presence earned her comparisons with Sridevi herself.

Sridevi's decision to decline *Tezaab* remains one of Bollywood's most fascinating "what if"

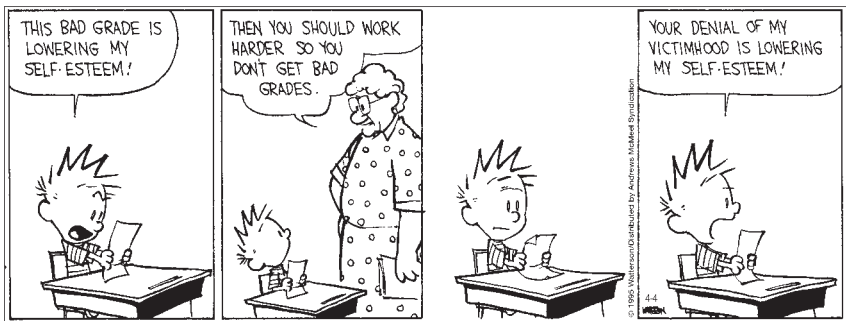
moments. Had she taken the role, Madhuri's journey to superstardom might have been delayed or altered entirely. Yet, fate had other plans. What seemed like a missed opportunity for one icon became a career-defining moment for another.

This casting choice didn't just shape Madhuri's future—it shifted the landscape of Bollywood itself, proving how a single role, in the right hands at the right time, can change everything.

## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBES

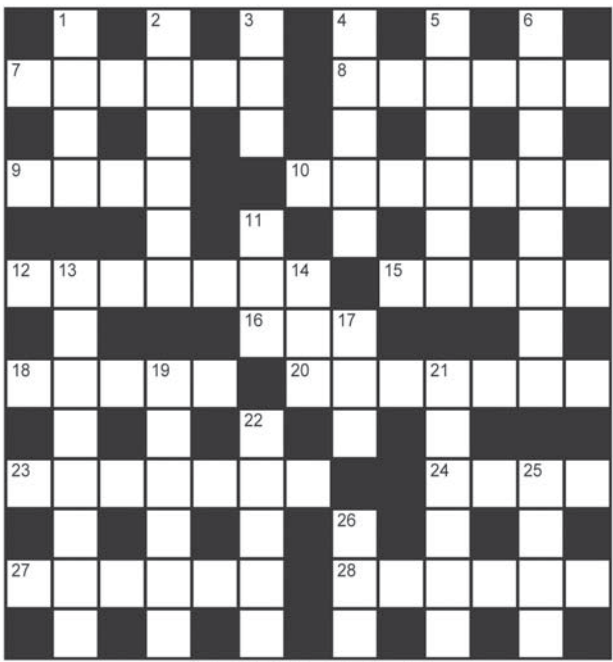


## BREVITY



## FUN post

## CROSSWORD



### Across

- 7 Spice rack item
- 8 Before clock or bomb
- 9 Small stream
- 10 Strange
- 12 Police weapon (4,3)
- 15 Turn sour
- 16 Pro's opposite
- 18 Kind of nerve
- 20 Australian parakeets

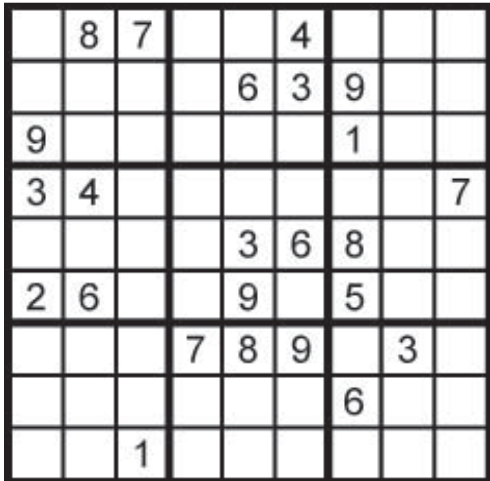
### Down

- 23 Troglodyte (4,3)
- 24 Spinning toys
- 27 Edward Teach's forte
- 28 Spotted wildcat
- 1 Himalayan legend
- 2 Fisherman
- 3 Like a fox
- 4 House coat
- 5 Chew the fat

- 6 Put the finishing touches on
- 11 Fluid container
- 13 Stress
- 14 Kind of story
- 17 Protein source
- 19 Medicinal syrup
- 21 Round up
- 22 Flower part
- 25 Billiards relative
- 26 Constrictor

## 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.

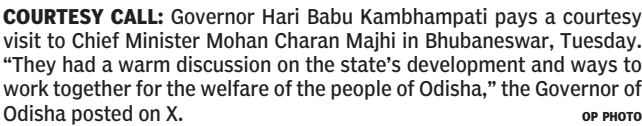


## SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW





## PNN & AGENCIES

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of 'Healthcare Summit 2025', organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) here, Mahaling said, "We have decided to set up MBBS colleges in Jagatsinghpur, Bhadrak, Dhenkanal and Nabarangpur districts, dental colleges at Burla, Berhampur, Bolangir and Keonjhar and an Ayurvedic college in Mayurbhanj district."

In his address at 'Health-care Summit 2025', the

Sunil Gupta, chairman of CII Odisha State Council, underscored Odisha's growing role in the national healthcare landscape and the importance of public-private partnerships in driving future growth.

**BHUBANESWAR:** The Crime Branch (CB) of Odisha Police has arrested three persons on charges of duping investors of over ₹7 crore in two separate cases of online fraud. In the first case, a complaint was lodged by a person alleging that he was defrauded by cyber fraudsters on pretext of higher returns on online trading. They persuaded him to trade in IPO and OTC, leading him to transfer ₹1,03,50,000. However, he later realised it was a scam and lodged an FIR. The CB arrested Ganesh K Setty from Chandra Layout in Bangalore in connection with the fraud. In the other case, another complaint was lodged by a man that he was defrauded by cyber fraudsters on pretext of higher returns on IPO and OTC trading. They persuaded him to trade in IPO and OTC, leading him to transfer ₹6,04,53,000. He realised it was a scam and lodged an FIR. The CB arrested Swapnil Goraksha Dhokale from Pune and Azaz Shafiq Shaikh from Mumbai in connection with the fraud.



## AGENCIES

Terming the Gopalpur gangrape incident very sad, Tripathy said the government took the case seriously and handed it over to the Crime Branch for proper investigation. All the accused were arrested within 24 hours, he added.

## POST NEWS NETWORK

A complaint was submitted to SJTA Chief Administrator Arabinda Padhee, demanding an

According to the complaint, the 313 'Amunia Modaks'—believed to have therapeutic and spiritual significance—were prepared specially for Anasara period, when the deities are believed to recuperate in seclusion.

CBC 09101/13/0005/2526



POST-GOPALPUR SHAME

Govt's security boost move at tourist points faces backlash

Opposition calls move reactive and inadequate, while students hail it as a step toward safer public spaces

MANOJ KUMAR JENA, OP

**Bhubaneswar, June 24:** In the wake of the Gopalpur incident, Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida recently announced that security will be stepped up at tourist destinations and 'lovers' points' across Odisha to curb crimes against women.

The announcement drew sharp criticism from the Opposition political parties, but the move was welcomed by student groups.

BJD spokesperson Lenin Mohanty remarked, "This is no real solution to such heinous crimes. Following the US travel advisory, the Deputy CM's statement seems more like a panic response. The government must accept that the law-and-order situation is slipping out of control."

Mohanty further said, "Crimes against women have risen by eight per cent, which is significant. Simply boosting security at 'lovers' points'



won't help. The government must ensure safety across the entire state to truly strengthen the tourism sector."

Congress state spokesperson Prashant Satpathy said, "The Deputy CM must first clarify whose security she plans to enhance and where. If the government is now thinking of securing 'lovers' points' and tourist spots, what was it doing for the past year?"

He added, "This government has no vision for women's safety. It reacts only after crimes occur, instead of preventing them. Recent incidents clearly show its crime control mechanism has completely failed."

Similarly, AAP state president Nishikanta Mohapatra said, "The Deputy CM's move to enhance security at 'lovers' points' reflects the grim state of law and order. Innocent people are falling victim to crimes

every day. Instead of focusing narrowly, the government must assess the overall situation and strengthen security statewide. Swift action against culprits is essential to improve the state's condition."

However, students have welcomed the move. "Couples often feel unsafe at public places. Police presence at 'lovers' points' can offer security, but it must be handled sensitively, as it can also create fear," said Dharitri Das, a master's student at Rama Devi Women's University.

Lapita Jena, a journalism student from Ravenshaw University, said, "It's a welcome step. Students often seek privacy in isolated areas and end up vulnerable to miscreants. This move will help young couples feel safer and reduce instances of eve-teasing and moral policing."

Two-day training on energy conservation

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 24:** In a significant step towards promoting energy-efficient infrastructure, the Building Cell, operating under the Office of the EIC (Electricity)-cum-PCEI(O), functioning as the state designated agency (SDA), conducted a two-day training programme on Energy Conservation and Sustainable Building Code (ECSBC) compliance procedures and simulation here recently. The training was specifically designed for officials from the Works department and the Odisha Bridge Construction Corporation (OBCC).

The programme was inaugurated by Works department deputy chief architect Namita Mohapatra, who delivered the keynote address. She highlighted the urgency of adopting sustainable practices in the building sector. "Energy conservation is no longer optional. It is integral to responsible urban development, and compliance with building codes ensures we move towards a more sustainable future," she said.

Speaking on the occasion, EIC (Electricity)-cum-PCEI (O) Pyarimohan Mishra emphasised the importance of compliance with energy codes and collaborative implementation across departments. "The ECSBC is not just a technical guideline. It's a shared responsibility to secure our energy future. Inter-departmental cooperation is crucial for making sustainable building practices the norm in Odisha," he remarked.

Guv stresses community role in TB fight

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 24:** Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati Tuesday stressed the vital role of community participation and social responsibility in eradicating tuberculosis (TB) and achieving the national target under the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyan.

Chairing a high-level review meeting on the campaign's progress in Odisha at Raj Bhavan, the Governor urged citizens to adopt TB patients and support their nutritional needs financially.

To encourage public participation, he announced that Raj Bhavan will provide POSHAN kits to 100 TB patients.

"To spread awareness and lead by example, Raj Bhavan will begin by offering POSHAN kits to 100 patients," Kambhampati said.

To broaden support for the cause, the Governor said he would write to all MLAs and MPs in Odisha, urging them to adopt TB patients, sponsor nu-



tritional kits, and raise awareness in their constituencies. He also plans to reach out to university vice-chancellors, faculty members, social organisations, and philanthropists with a similar appeal. Emphasising the need for collective action, the Governor noted that eliminating TB requires a unified societal movement—beyond government efforts—engaging individuals, institutions, and civil society at every level.

Health and Family Welfare

Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Aswathy S, presented a detailed report on the state's progress in TB detection, treatment outreach, and public engagement strategies under the Abhiyan.

Among others, the Principal Secretary to the Governor, NBS Rajput, National Health Mission (NHM), Odisha Mission Director Brunda D and senior officials of the Health department were present at the meeting.

MSME Agro Int'l Summit 2025 held in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 24:** The third edition of the MSME Agro International Summit 2025, themed Empowering Agro MSMEs, was inaugurated at a city hotel here Tuesday.

Organised by the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) with support from the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, the summit convened key stakeholders from government, industry, academia, and



international bodies to outline a forward-looking roadmap for agro-based MSMEs in Odisha and beyond.

Gracing the occasion as chief guest, Food Supplies & Consumer Welfare Minister Krushna Chandra Patra highlighted the urgent need for more rice mills in Odisha. "The state has only 1,400 rice mills, compared to 2,600 in Chhattis-

garh. We need at least 400 to 500 more. The government is ready to offer up to 50 per cent subsidy to entrepreneurs," he said, adding that surplus rice production will be supported through upcoming warehousing and export policies.

MSME, Fisheries & Animal Resources Development Minister Gokulananda Mallik highlighted the sector's resurgence

in Odisha. "Due to targeted schemes, many challenges faced by the MSME sector have been addressed. MSMEs now play a crucial role in driving the state's development," he said.

Speaking at the event, Mercy Epao, Joint Secretary, Ministry of MSME, outlined the government's international cooperation schemes. "We are committed to helping MSMEs expand globally through support for trade fairs, marketing, and tech collaboration," she said.

ICC Odisha vice chairman Dharmaditya Patnaik welcomed participants, calling the summit "a step toward realising the Prime Minister's Vision@2047." Industries, Skill Development and Technical Education Minister Sampad Chandra Swain also attended.

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 24:** To ensure the smooth and disciplined conduct of the Rath Yatra scheduled for June 27, a high-level review meeting was held Tuesday at the Town Hall in Puri, chaired by DGP Yogesh Bahadur Khurania.

DGP Khurania said the police administration is fully prepared and alert, with lakhs of devotees expected this year. Ensuring their safety and smooth movement will be a top priority.

Special arrangements have been made for darshan and crowd management. Senior officers have been deployed, and separate security plans are in place for Srimandir, Shree Gundicha Temple, and the three chariots. Emphasis has been placed on preventing untoward incidents during the chariot pulling.

This year, security has been enhanced with the introduc-

tion of an Integrated Control Room at the Town Police Station. AI-enabled cameras will be installed at key locations, including Uttara Chhak, the Puri-Konark road, and major intersections, to aid traffic and crowd control.

Director of Intelligence RP Koche urged officers to stay vigilant and report any suspicious activity immediately. With Srimandir marked as a high-security zone, Bomb Disposal Squads, Anti-Terrorist Squads, and Special Tactical Units have been deployed at major entry points.

Additional DGP (Modernisation) Soumendra Priyadarshi said strong crowd control measures are in place due to the expected turnout.

Additional DGP (Law and Order) Sanjay Kumar stressed coordinated efforts among police personnel and urged them to ensure a safe, seamless experience for all devotees.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

I, Chinmayee Sahoo (45), W/o- Narayan Chandra Behera, Vill- Salandi Colony, Bypass, P.O./ P.S./Dist.- Bhadrak, PIN- 756100. In my daughter's Birth and Educational Certificate mistakenly my name is mentioned as Chinmayee Behera. By this affidavit No.- 6346, dtd. 24.06.2025 declare that my original name is Chinmayee Sahoo.

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Bargarh, I, Gopal Chandra Agrawal, S/o. Kedarnath Agrawal, R/o. Ward No.- 10, Joshi Complex, P.O./P.S./Dist.: Bargarh, declare by this affidavit that my actual and correct name is Gopal Chandra Agrawal which is mentioned in my Aadhaar Card (xxxx xxxx 0026). But in my HSC Certificate my surname has been wrongly mentioned Agrawalla instead of Agrawal. Hence both the names are one and same person for all purposes.

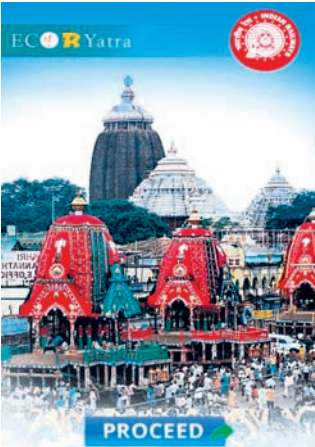
POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 24:** In a significant step towards enhancing passenger convenience during the upcoming Rath Yatra 2025, the East Coast Railway (ECoR) has launched a dedicated mobile application 'ECoR Yatra'. This Android-based app, now available on the Google Play Store, aims to provide pilgrims and passengers with real-time, accurate, and easily accessible railway-related information during the grand annual festival in Puri.

Designed as a one-stop digital solution, the ECoR Yatra app offers a range of services including journey planning, real-time train updates, accommodation availability, and booking assistance, all in a user-friendly format. With the expected surge in pilgrim traffic during the festival, the app enables users to access updated information without the need to queue up at station counters.

The app includes the full schedule of special trains running exclusively for Rath Yatra, from June 25 to July 7, listing train numbers, departure times, halts, and routes to help pilgrims plan their travel in advance.

In addition to special trains, the app also features updated



timetables for regular long-distance and intercity services to and from Puri. Real-time data on train running status, arrival and departure timings, and platform allocations at Puri Station are available to reduce reliance on manual announcements.

Integration with IRCTC allows passengers to check for availability in retiring rooms, tourist huts, and temporary accommodations arranged for the festival crowd. Information about special ticket counters at Puri and other key stations is also provided, supporting both reserved and unreserved ticketing, along with UTS on mobile features.

BS Rajkumar assumes charge as ECoR AGM

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar:** B. Srikrishna Rajkumar assumed charge as the Additional General Manager (AGM) of East Coast Railway (ECoR) Tuesday. An officer of the Indian Railway Service of Engineers (IRSE), 1989 batch, Rajkumar brings over three decades of extensive experience in railway engineering and infrastructure development. Prior to this role, he served as the Principal Chief Engineer of ECoR, where he played a key role in steering major infrastructure projects in the zone. An alumnus of Andhra University with a degree in Civil Engineering, Rajkumar also holds a diploma in Industrial Engineering (Management) from the Indian Institute of Management, Mumbai. Rajkumar has held several senior management positions, including Chief Engineer of North Eastern Railway and Chief Project Manager at Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL). He has successfully managed large-scale railway infrastructure projects, handling all phases from planning and design to land acquisition, tendering, and final delivery.



For ease of use, the app supports multiple Indian languages and offers instructional videos to help users understand how to use 'Automatic Ticket Vending Machines' and to book tickets via mobile apps.

The ECoR Yatra app also highlights essential amenities available at Puri and major stations, such as drinking water points, e-catering services, sanitation facilities, medical aid booths, wheelchair access for differently-abled passengers, battery-operated carts for senior citizens, public toilets, misting fans, and free Wi-Fi.

Furthermore, the app offers click-to-dial emergency helplines for Railway Police, medical emergencies, lost luggage, missing persons, and

grievance redressal. Emergency notifications will also be pushed in real-time to alert users promptly.

To ensure public safety, the app provides guidelines on crowd control, staying hydrated, avoiding congested zones, and instructions specifically for senior citizens and children.

ECoR has encouraged all pilgrims and travelers heading to Puri for Rath Yatra to download and use the ECoR Yatra app to make their journey smoother, safer, and more informed.

The initiative is part of ECoR's broader commitment to promoting digital services and enhancing passenger experience through technology.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	86.05 <span>▲</span> 0.74	SENSEX	82055.11 <span>▲</span> 158.32	GOLD	₹96,910 <span>▲</span> ₹2478
EURO	99.94 <span>▲</span> 0.38	NIFTY	25044.35 <span>▲</span> 72.45	SILVER	₹104,711 <span>▲</span> ₹2,048

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	32.6°	33.4°	Generally cloudy sky with possibility of rain or thunderstorm
Min Temp	25.8°	24.2°	
Humidity	82%	84%	
Rainfall	0.1 mm	2.4 mm	

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☐ ☒



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Evolution of consciousness is the central motive of terrestrial existence.

SRI AUROBINDO



## Let Them Be

A 17-year-old girl was beaten to death by her father for not getting good score in a mock test for the pre-medical National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) in Sangli, Maharashtra, recently. The bright girl who had scored 95 per cent in Plus II lost her life at the altar of parental and societal expectation. These kinds of incidents have become all too common in India where becoming a doctor or an engineer is perceived as one of life’s biggest achievement. This societal mentality that takes the form of unrealistic parental expectations has cut many young lives short. Kota in Rajasthan which is known for its NEET coaching centres has acquired the dark title of the suicide capital for NEET students. The pressure to qualify NEET is so high that most students struggle with mental health issues and many give up on life altogether. Media spotlight on Kota and the pressures students face has hardly helped change anything. Once a student cracks the examination, the family gloats and preens and the student is thrown into another long period of medical studies under intense pressure. It is no wonder many students are forced to tolerate ragging, bullying, even torture and opt to end their lives but never think of quitting medicine after getting through a good medical college. Their path, dictated by parents and society is carved in stone and they are helpless in deciding their own career of choice and future life path. Such is the case with countless students in India whose parents are obsessed with making them a doctor or an engineer.

The endless cycle of pressure doesn’t stop even when medical students graduate. In many government hospitals, they often find themselves at the receiving end of mob fury. And in corporate hospitals, they are asked to chase targets in the form of patient admissions, tests and other forms of treatment. The principle of service, which is supposed to be at the core of the medical profession, dies a slow death in this phase. Doctors become sales agents with the primary objective of profit maximisation. Treatment of patients becomes secondary in a country where an average Indian family is just one disease away from bankruptcy. A commercialised healthcare sector attracts more students into the profession. This is evident in the ever-growing demand for medical colleges in the country even with the opening up of various sectors and professions in the post digital era.

The obsession of Indians with medical and engineering comes from a lack of entrepreneurial spirit where starting your own business initiative is frowned upon. From a young age, children are groomed to study hard and aspire to become a doctor, engineer or an IAS officer. Rest of the professions, however fulfilling or financially rewarding, are considered second best while entrepreneurship is considered the last option. That is also why while we rue the lack of successful medal winning sportspersons, artists who can wow at the global stage and business leaders to look up to, we would not allow our children to walk a different path at the time when it truly matters, when we have to choose between prioritising studies or passion. The age of internet and social media has opened up vast avenues for youngsters to prove their worth and make money. But schools are still stuck in a rut. In the Indian schooling system, only the students performing well in academics are appreciated and other creative abilities and passions are categorised as ‘Extra’ Curricular, be it sports, quizzing, music, art or anything else. This dangerous obsession with academics and especially with the medical profession is literally snuffing out young lives and ruining careers of many bright students who could have otherwise shone in careers of their own choosing. It is time for society and family to loosen the death grip and let young people find joy in whatever profession they choose to follow and shine in it.

### WISDOM CORNER

“We should consider every day lost on which we have not danced at least once. And we should call every truth false which was not accompanied by at least one laugh.”

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

“Usually, people have a tendency to be caught in the worries concerning the future or in the regret concerning the past. There is some kind of energy that is pushing them to run, and they are not able to establish themselves in the present moment.”

THICH NHAT HANH

“Half the world is composed of people who have something to say and can’t, and the other half who have nothing to say and keep on saying it.”

ROBERT FROST


### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- **1910:** Igor Stravinsky's ballet “The Firebird” is premiered. The work was performed by Sergei Diaghilev's legendary ballet company “Ballets Russes”. It was a huge success, catapulting Stravinsky to stardom.
- **1943:** The Smith-Connally Anti-Strike Act was enacted by the U.S. Congress, giving the president power to seize and operate privately owned war plants when a strike or threat of a strike interfered with war production.
- **1947:** Anne Frank's The Diary of a Young Girl was first published, appearing in the Netherlands under the title Het Achterhuis (“The Secret Annex”); it became a classic of war literature.
- **1950:** Korean War begins. On this day in 1950, North Korea unleashed an attack southward across the 38th parallel, after which the UN Security Council (minus the Soviet delegate) passed a resolution calling on UN members to assist South Korea.
- **1978:** The first version of the rainbow flag, which represents LGBTQ pride, was flown during the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day parade.
- **2009:** American singer and dancer Michael Jackson, who was renowned worldwide as the “King of Pop,” died at age 50 from a lethal combination of sedatives and propofol, an anesthetic.

### LOL

#### ROOKIE ON THE JOB

A rookie police officer was out for his first ride in a cruiser with an experienced partner. A call came in telling them to disperse some people who were loitering. The officers drove to the street and observed a small crowd standing on a corner. The rookie rolled down his window and said, "Let's get off the corner people." A few glances, but no one moved, so he barked again, "Let's get off that



corner... NOW!"

Intimidated, group of people began to leave, casting puzzled stares in his direction. Proud of his first official act, the young policeman turned to his partner and asked, "Well, how did I do?" Pretty good," chuckled the vet, "especially since this is a bus stop."

# power post

## FOCUS ECONOMY

# SHAREHOLDER CAPITALISM

In 2019, the Business Roundtable, an association of the United States’ most powerful CEOs, won widespread praise by announcing its commitment to “stakeholder capitalism,” which delivers value not only to shareholders, but also to other affected actors, such as employees and communities. Now, however, the Business Roundtable has changed its tune: its April report, “The Need for Bold Proxy Process Reforms,” reads almost like a manifesto against stakeholder capitalism.

The reason for this volte-face is obvious. The Roundtable’s 2019 “commitment” was a clear attempt to get on the right side of popular sentiment: engagement with social and environmental issues was up, and so were demands that powerful institutions get on board. But the political mood has changed. At a time when Americans are preoccupied with intensifying pressures on their own pocketbooks, US President Donald Trump’s second administration is actively rejecting environmental and social issues. For many CEOs, this looks like a golden opportunity.

So, the Business Roundtable is calling on the US Congress to “enact legislation precluding the inclusion of shareholder proposals relating to environmental, social and political issues in a company’s proxy statement.” With this, CEOs want to scrap one of the few formal mechanisms through which a diverse range of stakeholders – including workers, pension funds, faith-based organizations, civil-rights groups, and long-term investors – can influence corporate behavior on issues like climate risk, inequality, worker safety, and political transparency.

There is plenty of precedent for this. While the Business Roundtable’s CEOs like to pay lip service to voluntary corporate-responsibility initiatives, they have strenuously objected to public policies that would require them to follow through. For example, they opposed former President Joe Biden’s Inflation Reduction Act, which directs significant funds to clean energy and emissions reduc-



**A growing body of research shows that failure to account for social and environmental imperatives poses clear, material risks to firm operations and performance – not at some point in the distant future, but now**

tion, and channeled millions of dollars toward derailing the Biden administration’s broader environmental agenda. They also resisted a proposal by the US Securities and Exchange Commission requiring companies to disclose greenhouse-gas emissions in their supply chains, arguing that such measures were excessively burdensome.

Not surprisingly, in 2021, Harvard researchers found that the “commitment” to stakeholders that had been made two years earlier had not been followed by meaningful action, and thus had been “mostly for show.” Similar conclusions were drawn by researchers at Yale and Columbia, and in an analysis by The Guardian.

The fact is that delivering real value to workers and the environment would cost money, which would reduce shareholder dividends and executive pay – the real priorities of the Business Roundtable’s members. In fact, the compensation of CEOs who signed the stakeholder-capitalism “commitment” has continued to reflect their success in delivering shareholder value. When the COVID-19 pandemic emerged in 2020, Marriott International almost immediately began furloughing most of its US workers – while paying out more than \$160 million in quarterly dividends and seeking a raise for its CEO, a signatory of the 2019 statement.

The same logic has driven the Business Roundtable’s ad-

vocacy of tax reductions. In 2017, the group threw its support behind the first Trump administration’s \$1.5 trillion tax-cut legislation, which overwhelmingly benefited corporations and the wealthy. Last year, it announced that it would spend “eight figures” lobbying to protect and extend the legislation’s business-friendly tax breaks. As for Biden’s 2022 Build Back Better initiative – which proposed modest tax increases on high earners to fund public services like education, health care, and infrastructure – the Business Roundtable voiced clear opposition.

So, as many critics warned from the start, the Business Roundtable never meant what it said in 2019. Whatever its claims about environmental or social responsibility, it has always been motivated by three interconnected objectives: avoiding accountability, maximizing short-term profits, and enriching executives.

To be sure, even from a commercial perspective, this approach is fundamentally flawed. A growing body of research shows that failure to account for social and environmental imperatives poses clear, material risks to firm operations and performance – not at some point in the distant future, but now. For example, companies with poor climate-risk management routinely face supply-chain instability,

greater exposure to extreme weather events, and higher capital costs. In other words, the Business Roundtable’s opposition to environmentally-focused policies and proposals is not just hypocritical; from their own short-sighted shareholder-capitalist perspective, it is economically irrational.

But there is no reason to expect the Business Roundtable’s CEOs – or corporations more broadly – to change voluntarily. On the contrary, their April statement lays bare the transactional, opportunistic, and utterly dishonest nature of their moral posturing, which in reality, serves just one purpose: to get consumers and regulators off their backs. This should serve as a wake-up call to Democratic lawmakers, who have long coziered up to billionaires and large corporations, placing their hopes, against all evidence, in self-regulation.

Americans are fed up with the status quo. In one 2024 survey, only 34% of respondents agreed that capitalism is working for the average American. Moreover, majorities of respondents agreed that CEOs of large companies have a role to play in addressing issues like income inequality (78%), climate change (67%), and protecting voting rights (56%). With US Republicans doing everything in their power to bolster corporations, at the expense of ordinary Americans, it is up to Democrats to act.

The only way to rein in corporate power is to confront it head-on. That means mandating corporate commitments to structural change, imposing tougher punishments for corporate abuses, cracking down on dark money, strengthening antitrust enforcement, and expanding regulatory oversight, including of corporate influence over climate, labor, and economic policy. Anything less will sustain the corporate capture of America’s political and economic system. The Democrats must decide whether they will be complicit in the inequality and authoritarianism they claim to oppose.

*The writer is a Professor at the University of Cambridge.*

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### IN JEST THIS

# Driving wisdom from my decades of experience



Melvin Durai

**THERE ARE TOO MANY IDIOTS ON THE ROAD, WHETHER YOU'RE DRIVING IN NEW YORK CITY, MUMBAI OR BUENOS AIRES**

I’ve been a driver for more than 40 years, so I consider myself somewhat of an expert on driving. I’ve learned many important lessons while driving, so I’d like to share some of my driving wisdom by answering a few frequently asked questions (FAQs).

#### 1. What do you need to begin driving?

The most important thing you need to begin driving is a vehicle. In general, you cannot drive without a vehicle. There are some exceptions, of course, such as driving a ball with a golf club, driving a nail into a plank, and driving your parents up the wall.

#### 2. What about a license? Don't you need one to drive a vehicle?

You do not need one, unless it’s important for you to stay out of jail. I highly recommend getting a license, as required by law, but I have to admit that I started driving without

a license at age 15. I grew up in Zambia, where you had to be 18 to get a license (just like in India). I couldn’t wait that long, especially since my widowed mother was willing to allow me to drive her car when she wasn’t using it. This made me very popular among my friends. This popularity lasted several months, until we found ourselves in a police station. A police officer had stopped me for the offense of “overcrowding a car with rowdy boys.” Luckily, one of my friends was related to a judge and we suffered no consequences.

#### 3. What is the best way to learn to drive?

Enroll in a driving school or ask a family member to teach you. Do not ask a friend, unless the friend possesses the patience and demeanor of the Dalai Lama. It is important to learn to drive from someone who doesn’t easily scream or use bad language.

#### 4. What is the hardest part about driving?

The hardest part about driving is getting a license. You have to pass a driving test, proving to a driving examiner that you are a competent driver. This isn’t easy, especially since you may have to drive around with the examiner for 20 minutes or more, during which time you may have to do the following: (1) show proficiency in parallel parking; (2) drive under the speed limit but not under the influence of anything; and (3) refrain from looking at your phone, even if your mother keeps texting you, asking if you passed.

#### 5. If you have to prove that you are a competent driver to get a license, why are there so many incompetent drivers on the road?

This is a good question. I would not use the word “incompetent” to describe these drivers. I would use another

‘I’ word: idiots. There are too many idiots on the road, whether you’re driving in New York City, Mumbai or Buenos Aires. Almost all these idiots passed the driving exam, but subsequently decided that some of the rules do not apply to them. Normal drivers break rules occasionally, but idiots break them compulsively.

#### 6. What is the best way to avoid accidents?

The best way to avoid accidents is to do more walking. Walkers rarely crash into each other. Another option is to leave your car parked and take the bus or train. But if you insist on driving, the best thing you can do is drive defensively. This means that if you come across an idiot on the road, do not try to out-idiot the idiot. If he wants to overtake you, let him overtake you. Just remember: an overtaker is more likely to end up with an undertaker.

## Letters TO THE EDITOR

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

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### Shifting alignment

Sir, This refers to “Tharoor praises PM again,” **Orissa POST**, June 24. Shashi Tharoor’s recent praise for Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reignited speculation about his shifting political alignment. A four-time Congress MP from Thiruvananthapuram and a former UN under-secretary-general, Tharoor commands global respect and intellectual gravitas. However, despite his stature, the Congress leadership has consistently marginalized him, favouring a closed circle of loyalists over merit. Tharoor’s talent, diplomacy, and mass appeal remain underutilized within a party that appears increasingly directionless and insular. In contrast, the BJP under Modi has shown a distinct appetite for inducting capable and high-profile leaders, appreciating administrative acumen over blind loyalty. Should Tharoor formally switch sides, it would represent more than just personal repositioning—it would starkly expose the Congress party’s failure to retain and respect talent. Tharoor’s possible departure would be a symbolic loss for the Congress and a strategic gain for the BJP, underscoring a broader narrative: in today’s political landscape, intellect and merit gravitate where they are recognized, not rejected.

**N Sadhasiva Reddy**, BANGALORE

### Dismal picture

Sir, The World Economic Forum (WEF) Gender Gap Report-2025 has created an index of 148 countries, with India rated 131st. Clearly, this score has produced a very negative picture of India. The status of women in the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) was a crucial consideration when developing the index. According to the survey, 76.4% of men and 35.1% of women of working age in India are employed. The fact that women of working age group are underrepresented in the overall workforce in India has been consistently attempted to be covered up. Even the definition of what constitutes working was altered for this purpose. To demonstrate that women’s contributions to domestic labor are included in the labor force, a new class of unpaid self-employment was added to the program. Consequently, efforts were made to increase the representation of working women in the government’s data on the LFPR. However, the truth always comes out if a detailed study is conducted.

**Abhijit Roy**, JAMSHEDPUR





# HC bats for sewer line through aiims

In an order dated June 18, the court noted the submissions of the Delhi Jal Board (DJB), which said the proposed sewer line would not be more than 200-metre long and only require about 130 metre of land within the AIIMS premises

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 24:** The Delhi High Court has outlined the need for a sewer line across the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) premises to prevent waterlogging in the Green Park Extension and surrounding areas.

A bench of Justices Prathibha M Singh and Manmeet Pritam Singh Arora was hearing a petition on the issue of waterlogging in the area.

In an order dated June 18, the court noted the submissions of the Delhi Jal Board (DJB), which said the proposed sewer line would not be more than 200-metre long and only require about 130 metre of land within the AIIMS premises.

“Court does not doubt the necessity of laying a sewer line across the AIIMS premises to prevent waterlogging in the areas concerned. Further considering the required extent of land and the overarching public interest involved, the court is clear that the new sewer line is required to be laid across the AIIMS residential complex.”

The bench issued other directions, including to the DJB and



Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to ensure regular de-silting and cleaning of the existing sewer line and the stormwater drain.

Further, the DJB’s chief engineer was ordered to conduct a meeting with the authorities of AIIMS, MCD, public works department (PWD), New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) and forest department July 8.

“The chief engineer, DJB and commissioner, MCD, shall then put up a report on the plan for laying of the sewer line and storm water drain, in consultation with the above authorities and specifically to the satisfaction of AIIMS (nodal officer),” the court said.

The report would include the proposal for the design of the sewer line and how it would be connected from Green Park Extension to the Aurobindo Marg along the AIIMS premises, it added.

The report, the bench said, would also include the aspects

## PWD to install new stormwater management system

The PWD is planning to install a new stormwater management system featuring real-time monitoring and a facility to issue immediate alerts in a bid to address the perpetual issue of waterlogging at the Minto Bridge underpass, officials said. This underpass in the central Delhi area connects Connaught Place to Deen Dyal Upadhyaya Marg and is infamous for heavy flooding almost every monsoon season. Despite several efforts in the past, waterlogging remains a major concern at this location. According to an official, the department is planning a technical intervention that will feature a facility for issuing an immediate alert to officials in case of any fault or breakdown at the pump house, among other aspects. “We plan to install the SCADA software for online monitoring of the pump house at the site so that real-time information about activities inside the pump house can be sent to the control room and even recorded. Every year Public Works Department (PWD) sets up a special flood control room at the headquarters from where the situation is monitored by officials,” said a senior PWD official.

of the sewerline’s timeline, budget and maintenance.

“The court emphasises upon the fact that the above report shall be prepared in close coordination with the AIIMS so that the least disturbance is caused to the residents within the AIIMS residential campus during the laying of the sewer line,” the order said.

The DJB was asked to further inform the bench on the issue of waterlogging in the areas

concerned during the current monsoon season.

The matter would be heard July 28.

AIIMS had opposed the proposal of laying a sewer line across its premises to control the problem May 29, saying waterlogging in the area was primarily due to the ineffective functioning of the rainwater drainage system and not owing to inadequacies in the existing sewer infrastructure.

## CALL FOR SMOKE-FREE SANCTITY

# Activist urges tobacco ban at Kedarnath

In a letter to the Uttarakhand chief secretary, activist Amit Gupta said that despite various rules in place, only 24 people have been fined of ₹2,200 for the tobacco-related offences till June 15 this year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dehradun, June 24:** A Noida-based environment activist Monday demanded a complete ban on the sale and use of cigarettes, gutkha and other tobacco products at the Kedarnath temple and the yatra route from Sonprayag to the shrine.

In a letter to the Uttarakhand chief secretary, activist Amit Gupta said that despite various rules in place, only 24 people have been fined of ₹2,200 for the tobacco-related offences till June 15 this year.

He stressed on the need for a strict ban on the sale and consumption of tobacco products near the temple, claiming that such items are being sold openly along the route.

“As a concerned citizen and nature volunteer I bring to your kind attention the urgent need for a strict ban on the sale, consumption, and littering of cigarettes, gutkha, and other tobacco products in and around Kedarnath Dham, including the entire yatra route from Sonprayag to the shrine,” Gupta said in the letter. “Kedarnath ji is not only one of the most revered Jyotirlingas of Lord Shiva, but also situated in an ecologically sensitive Himalayan zone that demands the highest levels of cleanliness and spiritual sanctity,” he said.

He said despite various rules in place, his latest RTI query has revealed that cigarettes, gutkha and other tobacco products are openly being sold



at key points along the route to Kedarnath.

“Plastic pouches and cigarette butts are being littered, damaging the fragile environment and polluting the sacred surroundings,” he said, adding such substances violate the devotional atmosphere and often lead to health and fire safety risks in high-altitude conditions.

“I respectfully urge the Uttarakhand government to impose a total ban on the sale, possession, and use of gutkha, cigarettes, and tobacco products in the Kedarnath region (Sonprayag, Gaurikund, Kedarnath base, and yatra route),” he wrote in the letter. Gupta also demanded deployment of strict enforcement teams on the route and introduction of heavy penalties or fines for defaulters.

An awareness campaign should also be launched for pilgrims and local stakeholders regarding tobacco hazards and environmental responsibility, the activist said.

“A sacred place like Kedarnath Dham should be preserved with the highest degree of reverence, ensuring it remains a smoke-free and gutkha-free pilgrimage zone for current and future generations,” he said.

Citing information provided by Kotwali Sonprayag in response to an RTI query filed by him, Gupta said 174 people were fined a total of ₹19,850 under the COTPA Act, or the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, in Kedarnath in 2024.

## U’khand HC stays panchayat polls over flawed quota formula



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Nainital, June 24:** In a setback to the Uttarakhand government, the Nainital High Court Monday stayed the two-phase gram panchayats elections next month, directing implementation of a new reservation rotation formula.

Voting for the three-tier rural bodies was scheduled to be held July 10 and July 15, and counting of votes was scheduled for July 19.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice G. Narendar and Justice Alok Mehra put the brakes on the elections at a time when the process had reached an advanced stage. The elections were to be notified on Monday, ahead of the filing of nominations between June 25 and 28 for the first phase.

The High Court bench was hearing a petition filed by Bageshwar resident Ganesh Dutt Kandpal and others who

alleged that reserved seats had remained the same over the past three tenures and the government had followed the same formula for the current elections as well. One of the petitioners claimed that since the same reservation formula had been adopted by the State Election Commission, he was denied an opportunity to contest from a seat of his choice.

Following the High Court’s intervention Monday, the schedule for the elections to pick 74,499 Gram Pradhans, 55,600 Gram Panchayat members, 2,974 Kshetra Panchayat members and 358 Zila Panchayat members will have to be reworked now.

As per the now-stayed plans of the State Election Commission, District Election Officers were supposed to issue a detailed notification Monday, paving the way for the filing of nomination papers from June 25 to June 28.

The candidates were supposed to be allotted election symbols July 3 for balloting July 10.

The petitioner’s advocate claimed that he had also challenged in court the reservation rules issued June 9.

## UTTARAKHAND LANDSLIDE

# Search for victims continues



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Uttarkashi, June 24:** The search for two missing landslide victims on the Yamunotri trek route continued Tuesday as the daylong operation yielded no results.

The landslide occurred Monday afternoon at a point known as 9, Kainchi Bhairav Mandir, hitting a group of five pilgrims returning from Yamunotri. Two of them died on the spot.

The yatra to the Bahirav temple through the trek route remained suspended during the day with the road and railing near the Himalayan temple, the spot of the landslide, damaged by debris.

“We have kept the yatra on

hold during the day as you can see the spot is sensitive. Once the rubble is cleared, we hope to open the yatra Wednesday. Search by the SDRF (State Disaster Response Force), NDRF (National Disaster Response Force) and the police personnel for the two missing pilgrims continues,” Uttarkashi District Magistrate (DM) Prashant Arya said.

The pilgrims fell into a gorge after being hit by boulders tumbling from the hillside.

The two pilgrims still missing are Bhavika Sharma (11) from Delhi and Kamlesh Jethwa (35) from Mumbai.

A pilgrim from Mumbai was rescued in an injured condition and two mutilated bodies were

recovered from the rubble of the landslide Monday night.

The injured pilgrim, identified as Rasik, is undergoing treatment at a public health centre in Jankichatti and his condition is stated to be stable. The two mutilated bodies were identified as Harishankar (47) from Jaunpur in Uttar Pradesh and his daughter Khyati (8), the officials added.

The DM has directed officials to provide all possible assistance to the families of those killed and injured. With the yatra through the trek route kept on hold temporarily due to rescue work and road repairs, the administration has stopped the pilgrims going to the Yamunotri Dham at various places from Damta to Jankichatti, including Nugaon, Barkot, Dobata, Gangani, Kharadi, Paligad, Syalna and Rana Chatti, for their safety.

Apart from this, the work of cleaning and arranging an alternative route to the temple is also in progress which is likely to be completed by Tuesday night.

The Yamunotri pedestrian route will be made operational on Wednesday for safe travel and the pilgrims will be sent from Janki Chatti to Shri Yamunotri Dham, the DM said.

# How JNU students outsmarted Emergency raids

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 24:** In an extraordinary act of resistance during the Emergency, students at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) devised a plan to escape arrest by secretly locking themselves inside hostel rooms.

The move proved vital during a massive police crackdown that saw paramilitary forces rounding up the entire campus.

Historian Sohail Hashmi, who was then secretary of the Students’ Federation of India (SFI) at the JNU, in an interview with PTI recalled the dramatic night of July 8, 1975.

“We knew the raid was coming. Some students, who were actually intelligence agents, had tipped us off. It could happen any time between July 6 and 8,” he said.

Ahead of the raid, student leaders developed an internal network.

“We kept rotating rooms. Those likely to be arrested were locked. The person who locked them would go to another room



and be locked in too. The keys were passed quietly among a few of us,” Hashmi explained.

“Only the person doing the locking knew where anyone actually was,” he said.

When the raid began just after midnight, the JNU turned into a garrison.

“There were about 30 to 40

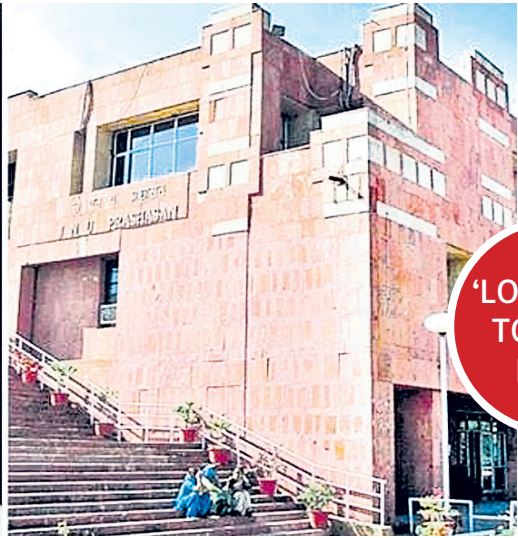
trucks of police and paramilitary forces. Some say 500 of officers, others say up to 1,500. Each of the three hostels was surrounded by gun-toting forces. On top of that, a second ring sealed off the entire campus.”

Hashmi said the elaborate locking plan saved many.

“They couldn’t find most of

people they had come to arrest,” he said. But he was among the few detained. “The friend who was supposed to lock me in couldn’t reach the campus that night. I had to sleep in an unlocked room. When they knocked, I had no option but to open the door.”

Hashmi, along with about a



‘LOCKED IN TO STAY FREE’

dozen others, was arrested under the Defence of India Rules (DIR), 1969, which allowed preventive detention without trial.

“They took us to Tihar Jail. A few days later, we were produced in the court,” he said. The detainees were granted bail after the university’s faculty came forward to testify. “My research guide, Prof Munish Raza, and registrar NVK Murthy stood by us. They told the magistrate that there had been no conspiracy or public meeting,” Hashmi said.

The Emergency declared June 25, 1975 by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi lasted until March 21, 1977. It was marked by widespread press censorship, arrests without trial and the stifling of dissent in academia, politics and civil society.

“JNU was the first institution in the country to face this level of crackdown,” Hashmi said. “We were students, but they treated us like insurgents.”

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is to inform that our Residential Building Project over Plot no- 156, 157, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167 &170, Mouza- Baramunda, Bhubaneswar has been accorded Environmental Clearance. The copies of clearance letters are available with State Pollution Control Board and may also be seen on the website of the Parivesh portal of Ministry of Enironment, Forest and Climate Change, Gol ([www.parivesh.nic.in](http://www.parivesh.nic.in))

**Our Address**  
**DN Homes Pvt Ltd.,**  
N-6/440, IRC Village -Bhubaneswar-751015

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is to inform that our Residential Building Project over Plot no- 143(P), Mouza- Satya Nagar, Bhubaneswar has been accorded Environmental Clearance. The copies of clearance letters are available with Odisha State Pollution Control Board and may also be seen on the website of the Parivesh Portal of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Gol ([www.parivesh.nic.in](http://www.parivesh.nic.in))

**Our Address**  
**Paramitra Smartinfra SNA Pvt Ltd.,**  
Plot No-15, VIP Colony, IRC Village-Bhubaneswar-751015

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**Our Address**  
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N-6/440, IRC Village-Bhubaneswar-751015

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**Our Address**  
**Vipul Lavanya Developers Ltd.,**  
Plot No: 15, VIP Colony, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015

**WATCO**  
**OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER,**  
**WATCO DIVISION-I, BHUBANESWAR,**  
Vanivihar Square, Bhubaneswar-751022, Odisha, India  
Telefax : +91-674-2542821 E-mail - [gmdivonewatco@gmail.com](mailto:gmdivonewatco@gmail.com)  
**NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-PROCUREMENT**  
Invitation For Bids (IFB)  
**GMWATCO-I/29/ 2025-26 Dt.21.06.2025**

01 Name of the work	: 13 Nos. (Thirteen nos works)
02 Estimate cost	: Rs.11.61 Lakhs to 44.81 Lakhs
03 Period of completion	: 12 (Twelve Months)
04 Class of contractor	: D, C, Class
05 Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	: From 11.00 A.M. of Dt.02.07.2025 to 5.00 P.M. of 16.07.2025
06 Last date / time of receipt of bids in the portal	: 5.00 P.M. of 16.07.2025
07 Date & Time of opening of bids	: AT 12.30 P.M. of 17.07.2025
08 Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid	: General Manager WATCO Division-I, BBSR

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal "<https://www.tendersorissa.gov.in>"

**Sd./- GENERAL MANAGER,**  
**OIPR-13083/11/0016/2526 WATCO DIVISION-I, BHUBANESWAR**



of the day

quote

Is it a crime to speak in Bangla, the language of Rabindranath Tagore and Swami Vivekananda among other luminaries. I think Prime Minister Narendra Modi is not aware of this development. I will draw his attention

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

We have to stop these people from this business of throwing beef, else others will start placing pork at different places

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM

I have not said like that, who said there is no money? I have defended the government, saying that we have presented a record budget...as someone said things jokingly during the speech, I reacted in a similar fashion, that's all

G PARAMESHWARA | K'TAKA HOME MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Actor Srikanth sent to judicial custody

**Chennai:** Popular actor Srikanth, who was interrogated by the police for nearly eight hours in connection with a drug case, has been remanded to judicial custody till July 7, police said Tuesday. The actor was questioned at the Nungambakkam police station here Monday following the detention of former AIADMK functionary T Prasad, whom the police suspect has supplied cocaine to Srikanth, 46, and another actor. Srikanth's blood samples were collected for medical examination at the Kilpauk Medical College Hospital here, and the tests confirmed the presence of a narcotic substance in his body, police said.

CM Siddaramaiah meets Sitharaman

**New Delhi:** Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah Tuesday met Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to seek the Centre's support for a pro-growth approach in tax devolution among states by the 16th Finance Commission. During the meeting, Siddaramaiah briefed Sitharaman on Karnataka's significant losses under the 15th Finance Commission award, an official statement said.

Ex CM Shibu Soren admitted to hospital

**New Delhi:** Former Jharkhand Chief Minister Shibu Soren has been hospitalised in a private hospital in the national capital for the past three days, sources said Tuesday. Soren, 81, is receiving treatment at the Ganga Ram Hospital, a source told PTI, adding that it is not just a routine check-up, as he has been admitted for the past three days. He is currently stable, the source added. Speaking about his father's health condition, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren said, "He has been receiving regular treatment at this hospital for a long time. He was admitted here recently, so we came to see him. "

Man dies in building fire

**Kolkata:** A man died in a fire that broke out on the ground floor of a residential building in Kestopur area on the eastern fringes of Kolkata Tuesday, police said. Locals said the fire was first spotted around 3:30 am when the blaze engulfed the ground floor of the house in the area under the Baguihati Police Station limits, a senior officer said.

The BJP government has failed on every front. As many as 17 welfare schemes functional in the state during the previous Congress government were discontinued by the BJP so that the former would not get credit for it

SACHIN PILOT | CONG LEADER

INDIA, NEPAL HOLD PRODUCTIVE TALKS

Top officials of India and Nepal held "productive discussions" on a wide range of issues relating to security and defence cooperation, such as joint military exercises, disaster relief operations and military exchanges, officials said Tuesday

DGCA audit finds flight safety lapses

From a faded centre line marking of a runway at an airport to non-updation of obstruction limitation data for three years to a scheduled carrier's domestic flight being held up due to worn tyres, the watchdog came across multiple defects in the aviation ecosystem

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 24:** Aviation watchdog DGCA has detected multiple violations related to airlines, airports, aircraft maintenance works, and repeated defects in multiple cases during its surveillance at major airports, an exercise carried out in less than two weeks after the Air India plane crash.

Without disclosing names of the airlines, airports and other entities in relation to the defects, the regulator Tuesday said surveillance covered multiple critical areas such as flight operations, airworthiness, ramp safety, Air Traffic Control (ATC), Communication, Navigation and Surveillance (CNS) systems, and pre-flight medical evaluations. From a faded centre line marking of a runway at an airport to non-updation of obstruction limitation data for three years to a scheduled carrier's domestic flight being held up due to worn tyres, the watchdog came across multiple defects in the aviation ecosystem.

Noting that the comprehensive surveillance will continue in future to detect hazards in the aviation ecosystem, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said the findings have been communicated to the entities concerned for taking corrective actions within seven days. Two teams led by the Joint Director General

carried out the surveillance during night and early morning hours at major airports, including Delhi and Mumbai airports.

In a detailed statement about the surveillance findings, DGCA listed multiple cases wherein the reported defects reappeared many times on the aircraft indicating ineffective monitoring and inadequate rectification.

During maintenance of aircraft, the work order was not followed, DGCA said and added that the unserviceable thrust reverser system and flap slat lever were not locked.

"During maintenance, safety precautions found not (to have been) taken by AME (Aircraft Maintenance Engineer) as per AMM (Aircraft Maintenance Manual); at places, AME was

not attending to the snag rectification; defect reports generated by the aircraft system, were not found recorded in the technical logbook," the statement said.

Also, DGCA found that several life vests were not properly secured beneath their designated seats in aircraft and the corrosion-resistant tape on the right-hand side winglet's lower blade was found to be damaged.

At an airport, centre line marking of a runway was observed faded and the rapid exit taxiway, green centre light were not unidirectional. The obstruction limitation data was found to have not been updated for last three years and no survey has been performed despite many new con-

K'taka CM seeks Prez's nod for seven key Bills

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 24:** Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah Tuesday called on President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan, seeking her approval for seven key Bills passed by the state legislature.

The Bills awaiting presidential assent include significant legislative measures spanning education, mining taxation, public procurement transparency, and administrative reforms.

"Seven bills have not yet been approved. I requested the President to clear them at the earliest," Siddaramaiah told reporters after the meeting.

Among the prominent bills presented to the President is The Right of Children to Free

and Compulsory Education (Karnataka Amendment) Bill 2025, which seeks to modify the existing RTE framework in the state.

The Karnataka (Mineral Rights and Mineral Bearing Land) Tax Bill 2024 aims to enhance the state's revenue from its mineral resources, while the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement (Amendment) Act 2025 is designed to bring greater accountability in government purchases.

The legislative package also includes The Registration (Karnataka Amendment) Bill 2024 and its 2025 counterpart, along with The Notaries (Karnataka Amendment) Bill 2025, which focus on streamlining administrative processes.

The Karnataka Hindi Religious Institutions and Charitable Endowment (Amendment) 2024 are the list of Bills seeking presidential approval. These Bills require the President's assent as they fall under provisions that mandate central government approval before implementation in the state.

India enters top 100 in global SDG rankings for first time

According to the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network's 10th and latest Sustainable Development Report (SDR), India ranks 99th on the 2025 SDG Index with a score of 67, while China ranks 49th with 74.4 and the US 44th with 75.2 points

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, June 24:** India has for the first time secured a place among the top 100 out of 167 countries ranked for their progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), according to a report published Tuesday.

According to the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network's 10th and latest Sustainable Development Report (SDR), India ranks 99th on the 2025 SDG Index with a score of 67, while China ranks 49th with 74.4 and the US 44th with 75.2 points. India ranked 109th in 2024, 112th in 2023, 121st in 2022, 120th in 2021, 117th in 2020, 115th in 2019, 112th in 2018 and 116th in 2017. Among India's neighbours, Bhutan takes 74th place with 70.5 points, Nepal ranks 85th with 68.6, Bangla-

desh 114th with 63.9 and Pakistan 140th with 57 points.

India's maritime neighbours, Maldives and Sri Lanka, stood at 53rd and 93rd places, respectively.

The SDGs were adopted in 2015 with the idea that to save the planet, no one should be left behind in the overall development matrix by 2030.

The score measures progress on a scale of 0 to 100 where 100 indicates a country has achieved all 17 goals and 0 means no progress has been made. The report's authors flagged that SDG progress has stalled at the global level, with only 17 per cent of the 17 targets projected to be achieved by 2030.

"Conflicts, structural vulnerabilities and limited fiscal space impede SDG progress in many parts of the world," said the report, with world-renowned economist Jeffrey Sachs as its lead author.

European countries, especially the Nordic nations, continue to top the SDG Index, with Finland ranking first, Sweden second and Denmark third. A total of 19 out of the top 20 countries are in Europe.

Yet even these countries face significant challenges in achieving at least two goals, including those related to climate and biodiversity, largely due to unsustainable consumption, the authors said.

East and South Asia have outperformed all other global regions in terms of SDG progress since 2015 largely due to rapid socioeconomic

IAF to get at least 6 Tejas jets by March: HAL chief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 24:** The Indian Air Force will get at least half-a-dozen Tejas Light Combat Aircraft by March 2026, Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd CMD D K Sunil has said, weeks after the IAF chief flagged serious concerns over delays in the delivery of the jets.

Sunil, chairperson and managing director of the aviation behemoth, attributed the delivery delays to US defence major GE Aerospace missing the deadline for supply of its engines to power the fighter jets. The slip-page in the delivery schedule for the LCA Mk-1A variant of the jet had become a major issue with Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal A P Singh raising the matter publicly.

Sunil said the delay was caused only due to the US firm's inability to supply the F404 engines on time. In an exclusive interview with PTI Videos, the HAL chief said GE Aerospace is expected to supply 12 engines in the current fiscal. This will facilitate delivery of the jets to the IAF. "Every company goes through its fair share of criticisms. It does happen. Unfortunately, in the case of LCA Mark 1A, we have built the aircraft. As of today, we have six aircraft lined up," he said.

The delay from GE side was initially due to production timelines falling behind during the Covid pandemic, and the subsequent departure of many senior engineers from the company, causing cascading supply chain bottlenecks.

CDS get powers to give joint orders for armed forces

**NEW DELHI:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has authorised Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan to issue orders to the three services to ensure greater synergy. This marks a shift from the earlier system under which instructions and orders pertaining to two or more services were issued by each service separately. The move comes amid the government's efforts to roll out the theatisation model for greater synergy and jointness among the Army, Navy and the Air Force. In a statement, the defence ministry said the first joint order on "approval, promulgation and numbering" of joint instructions and joint orders" was released Tuesday.

According to Sunil, the technical issues with GE Aerospace have been sorted out and HAL is set to receive 12 jet engines by March 2026. "I can assure you that as of today, six aircraft are ready. There is no let up from our side. We are building those aircraft and getting them ready and we will be in a position to deliver (by this fiscal)," he said.

In February 2021, the defence ministry sealed a Rs 48,000 crore deal with HAL for the procurement of 83 Tejas Mk-1A jets for the IAF. The ministry is also in the process of procuring 97 more LCA Mk-1As at a cost around Rs 67,000 crore.

Suspend operation of AI Boeing fleet pending safety audit: Plea in SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 24:** A plea in the Supreme Court has sought suspending Air India Boeing aircraft operations pending a safety audit within two weeks in wake of the recent Ahmedabad air tragedy that claimed lives of 241 passengers and crew on board.

The London-bound Air India flight, Boeing Dreamliner 787-8, with 242 passengers and crew on board, crashed moments after taking off from the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport in Ahmedabad on the afternoon of June 12. The plea sought directions to the authorities, particularly the DGCA, to conduct unannounced audits of entire fleet of Air India and other air carriers operating in India, with public disclosure of findings and imposition of immediate corrective measures or penalties for non-compliance.

The plea filed by petitioner and advocate Ajay Bansal has made the Centre, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Air India Limited and Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) as parties. In the interim, the plea sought to "suspend operation of Boeing aircraft of Air India, pending a safety audit within two weeks, in view of the recent crash and reported maintenance backlogs".

5 die from suspected poisonous gas in well

**GUNA (MP):** Five persons died due to suspected inhalation of poisonous gas after they descended into a well to rescue a calf in Guna district of Madhya Pradesh Tuesday, officials said. District Collector Kishore Kanyal said the incident occurred around 11 am. "As per the preliminary information, six people descended into the well to rescue a calf. Of them, three died (on the spot) while two others were rescued in critical condition and shifted to the Guna district hospital, where they succumbed," the collector said. Only one of the six men managed to come out safely, he said. Prima facie, all of them died of suspected inhalation of carbon monoxide gas, the collector said, adding that the investigation is underway. He said the well has around 12 feet of water which hindered the rescue operation by the CISF unit of GAIL, SDERF, and teams of various agencies.





Nobody has surrendered before anyone, neither Iran nor America. But out of humanity, they said that this should be stopped. This would have impacted their economy, and the economy of the rest of the world

FAROOQ ABDULLAH | NC PRESIDENT

## ARMY TROOPS OPEN FIRE

Army troops opened fire after noticing suspicious movement in a forward area near the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district, while security forces conducted searches at more than a dozen places in Poonch, Samba, and Kathua districts of Jammu and Kashmir Tuesday, officials said



## of the day quote

The BRS is dead in Telangana. That dead snake is now trying to stir sentiments using the Godavari water issue. I challenge former Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao—write a letter to the Speaker. We will convene an Assembly session to discuss the Godavari and Krishna water issues

A REVANTH REDDY | TELANGANA CM

In the intervening period, this district had to go through an identity crisis, but today, the Purvanchal Expressway and Maharishi Vishwamitra Medical College have become its identity

YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CM

AAP is a national party. We have won in Gujarat and Ludhiana (bypolls). We have MLAs in Goa. Till now, AAP does not have a (party) office in Chandigarh. We fulfil all conditions to have an office in Chandigarh

BHAGWANT MANN | PUNJAB CM

## POST OF THE DAY

President Trump on Israel and Iran: "We have two countries that have been fighting so hard that they don't know what the fuck they're doing."

@bennyjohnson

## SHORT TAKES

### Man paraded with garland of shoes

**Jammu:** A dramatic incident unfolded in the heart of Jammu Tuesday as a suspected thief, linked to a busted gang, was publicly humiliated with a garland of shoes and made to sit on a moving police vehicle's bonnet, prompting an official inquiry. A video of the incident, purportedly showing several onlookers cheering the act, surfaced online, sparking a debate among social media users, with many questioning the legality and ethics of the police action and some even terming it "jungle raj". Condemning the incident, Jammu's Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Joginder Singh ordered a departmental inquiry into the matter.

### Shah chairs Central Zonal Council meet

**Varanasi (UP):** A meeting of the Central Zonal Council, chaired by the Union Home Minister Amit Shah, discussed regional law and order, border security, disaster response and environmental protection with chief ministers and senior officials of four states Tuesday. The CMs of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Uttarakhand attended the 25th edition of the high-level meeting held in Varanasi. The aim of the meeting, held at Hotel Taj, was to strengthen inter-state coordination and cooperative federalism, as per a statement.

### Punjab cabinet expansion soon

**Chandigarh:** Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann Tuesday said a cabinet expansion would take place in two to four days and Ludhiana West assembly bypoll winner Sanjeev Arora would be inducted as a minister. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) retained the Ludhiana West seat in the recent bypoll, with Arora registering a victory against his nearest rival and Congress candidate Bharat Bhushan Ashu by a margin of 10,637 votes.

# Why no FIR against Justice Varma: Panel



CASH ROW

The MPs also demanded a code of conduct for judges, and justices in the higher judiciary should not take up government assignments till a period of five years post-retirement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 24:** Several MPs at a Parliamentary panel meeting Tuesday asked why no FIR has been lodged over the recovery of unaccounted cash from a high court judge's residence here and told the Department of Justice to prepare a detailed note on the matter, sources said.

The MPs also demanded a code of conduct for judges, and justices in the higher judiciary should not take up government assignments till a period of five years post-retirement, they said.

During a meeting of the Parliamentary Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law

and Justice, MPs of various parties raised the issue and posed several queries to the Ministry of Law and Justice on what it was doing on matters raised concerning the judiciary and questioned its silence on them, the sources said.

They said the secretary in the Department of Justice, who made a presentation on 'Judicial processes and their reform' concerning issues of Code of Conduct for the judges of higher judiciary and taking up post-retirement assignments by judges, was asked to prepare a comprehensive report on the issues raised and told to present it at the next panel meeting.

The sources add that at the request of some members, the Department of Justice was told to prepare a comprehensive bill addressing various issues and concerns on ethics and code of conduct of judges raised by them during the meeting.

The MPs sought to know why no action had been taken on the matter concerning the recovery of unaccounted cash from the residence of Justice Yashwant Varma and demanded that a code of conduct should be in

place. Some MPs also asked why no motion to remove Justice Varma has been moved so far. They also pointed out the Veeraswami versus Union of India judgement of 1991. Sources said some demanded that justice should be equitable since a government employee may lose his/her job over a small corruption issue but no action has been initiated against a senior member of the judiciary even after the recovery of unaccounted cash.

MPs of several parties also demanded that the government should have brought a motion by now to remove the judge concerned, especially after a Supreme Court-appointed committee of judges found the recovery of cash to be true. After the cash recovery, Justice Varma was repatriated to his parent court -- the Allahabad High Court. He has denied the charges against him.

Law Ministry officials later pointed out that a Supreme Court judgment had ruled that prior sanction would be required to prosecute top court and high court judges.

The K Veeraswami vs Union of India case of 1991 is a landmark judgment by the Supreme Court that addresses the applicability of anti-corruption laws to judges of the higher judiciary and underscores the importance of judicial independence.

The top court had underlined that judges were indeed "public servants" under the Prevention of Corruption Act but noted that prior sanction would be required to prosecute a judge.

# Signature row hits bid to oust HC judge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 24:** The Rajya Sabha secretariat has verified the signatures of 45 of the 55 MPs who had signed a notice to bring a motion for the removal of Allahabad High Court Judge Shekhar Yadav over his "hate speech" even as Kapil Sibal and eight others were yet to verify their signatures.

Sibal, who has been vocal for early action on the notice, has claimed that he has not received any email from the Rajya Sabha secretariat, which confirmed having sent the



same to his official email thrice during the past six months.

He has questioned the need for the verification of signatures and the delay in initiating the process in March when the notice was submitted December 13, 2024. While 55 MPs have signed the notice for the removal of Justice Yadav, the signature of one of the MPs, Sarfaraz Ahmed, appears twice on the notice. The Rajya Sabha Secretariat is verifying how his signature appeared twice on the notice and whether they are forged. Ahmed, a JMM MP from Jharkhand, has already met Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep

Dhankhar on the issue and confirmed having signed only once and not twice, sources said.

Rajya Sabha sources said the possibility of a criminal investigation by the Ethics Committee and the Privileges Committee into the notice seeking the removal of Justice Shekhar Yadav in the House cannot be ruled out as the document bears "forged" signatures of an MP.

They also said the notice for removal of Justice Yadav, which was submitted by 55 opposition MPs, is undated and not addressed to anyone.

## Mamata alleges 300 migrants held in Rajasthan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, June 24:** Claiming that Bengali-speaking people from the state were being branded as Bangladeshis in some BJP-ruled states, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Tuesday said this cannot be allowed.

Banerjee told reporters in her Assembly chamber that she has information that 300-400 Bengali-speaking migrant labourers were confined in a building in Rajasthan during the day despite showing valid documents. "Is it a crime to speak in Bangla, the language of Rabindranath Tagore and

Swami Vivekananda, among other luminaries? I think Prime Minister Narendra Modi is not aware of this development. I will draw his attention," she said.

She claimed that apart from Rajasthan, such incidents also took place in BJP-ruled Delhi and Madhya Pradesh in the past. To a question, Banerjee said the chief secretary is taking up the latest such issue with his counterpart in Rajasthan. According to Nabanna sources, the incident allegedly took place at Bhiwadi, a planned city in Rajasthan's Khairthal-Tijara district and a part of the National Capital Region of Delhi.

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# international

## of the day quote

Today, NATO's military edge is being aggressively challenged by a rapidly rearming Russia, backed by Chinese technology and armed with Iranian and North Korean weapon

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

China's consistent financial and economic support has 'stabilised Pakistan's economy' and Islamabad was committed to work with Beijing for the completion of various projects under the CPEC

SHEHBAZ SHARIF | PRIME MINISTER, PAKISTAN

40 years ago, Canada faced the deadliest terrorist attack in its history. Today, we mourn the 268 Canadian victims of the Air India bombing and all who have been killed in acts of terrorism – a sombre reminder of our commitment to fight violent extremism and keep Canadians safe

MARK CARNEY | PRIME MINISTER, CANADA

## SHORT TAKES

### No confidence vote against Thai PM

**Bangkok:** Thailand's Bhumjaithai party, which left the ruling coalition last week, said Tuesday it would seek a parliamentary no confidence vote against Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra and her cabinet, in another blow to the embattled premier. Next week's planned motion will be the first parliamentary test for Paetongtarn, 38, since coming under intense public pressure over her handling of an escalating border row with neighbouring Cambodia, which left the ruling alliance led by her Pheu Thai party hanging on to power by a thread. Paetongtarn is also facing judicial scrutiny after a group of senators petitioned the Constitutional Court and a national anti-graft body with a wide remit to investigate her conduct. Decisions from either bodies could lead to her removal.

### Firefighters battle wildfires on Chios island

**Chios, Greece:** Hundreds of firefighters battled for a third day to contain wildfires on the Greek island of Chios Tuesday that have torn through swathes of forest and farmland and forced hundreds of villagers to evacuate, after it declared a state of emergency. More than 400 firefighters assisted by 14 helicopters and four aircraft have been deployed to several locations on the island, in the northeastern Aegean Sea. Chios is in the midst of the tourist season and authorities also want to prevent the fires reaching areas famous for producing masticha, a natural resin harvested from mastic trees. Firefighters, residents and volunteers were struggling to prevent the fire from spreading into the village of Agios Giorgios Sikousis.

### Fresh arrest warrant for South Korea's Yoon

**Seoul:** South Korea's special prosecutor asked a court Tuesday to issue an arrest warrant for former President Yoon Suk Yeol, an investigator said, as a probe intensified over the ousted leader's botched bid to impose martial law. Yoon, who is already facing a criminal trial on insurrection charges for leading the martial law declaration, was arrested in January after resisting authorities trying to take him into custody, but was released after 52 days on technical grounds. The new warrant is on a charge of obstruction, a senior member of the special prosecutor's team of investigators said.

# Chaos at Doha, Dubai airports

REUTERS

**Dubai/Doha, June 24:** Operations at two of the world's busiest airports in Doha and Dubai slowed to a crawl on Tuesday as thousands of travellers queued for hours, facing long delays and flight cancellations after the temporary closure of airspace a day earlier.

Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait shut their airspace late on Monday after Iran's strike on a U.S. military base in Qatar's capital Doha, forcing airlines to cancel or reroute hundreds of flights and creating a backlog of stranded passengers.

Airports across Dubai in the United Arab Emirates briefly halted operations.

U.S. President Donald Trump said a ceasefire between Israel and Iran was in place and asked both sides not to violate it, raising hopes of an end to the 12-day war, but hostilities continued, with deadly attacks reported in both countries.

"I haven't slept for 19 hours. And I've been in this line over nine hours," said Lily Rogers, 21, who was in an around 200 metres (656 feet) queue in Doha's Hamad International airport.

The psychology student, en route to an holiday in Southeast Asia, said those in line were only given water during the wait.

Virgin Australia estimated that over 25,000 passengers



were stranded at Doha airport.

Lines were so long that arguments broke out as some passengers jumped queues, according to a Reuters witness.

Around 250 flights were cancelled at Hamad airport, while another 238 were delayed, according to flight tracking website FlightRadar24.

Long queues formed also at Dubai International, the busiest airport in the world, where about 145 flights were cancelled and over 450 delayed, FlightRadar24 data showed.

Qatar Airways said it was "making progress in restoring its schedule" with possible disruptions until June 26.

Dubai Airports and the Dubai government media office were not immediately available

for comment.

### BUSY HUB

Airports in the Middle East are some of the busiest in the world, covering an area stretching from Iran and Iraq to the Mediterranean and serving as a connecting hub for flights between Europe and Asia.

The region has also taken on a more important role since the start of the war between Russia and Ukraine, which has forced airlines to avoid airspace over both countries.

Dubai transported 92.3 million passengers last year, with a daily average of over 250,000.

Israel's strikes against Iran on June 13 already prompted airlines from British Airways to Lufthansa to halt flights to some Middle East destinations

due to air space closures and safety concerns.

Following the U.S. attacks on Iran on Sunday, many have also cut flights to typically resilient hubs such as Dubai.

The restrictions and closures have created ripple effects beyond the region, as most passenger traffic transits through Hamad airport to other destinations, said Asia-based independent aviation analyst Brendan Sobie.

Only 22% of passengers travelling through the airport had Qatar as their final destination in 2024, airport data shows.

On Monday, Air India suspended flights to and from the U.S. East Coast, Canada and Europe, which involve a tight corridor between those destinations and the Indian subcontinent.

That poses a challenge for Indian carriers because they do not have access to Pakistani airspace, analysts say. The two neighbours blocked access to each other's airspace in April after a brief military conflict.

Air India said on Tuesday it would resume those flights as soon as airspaces reopen, while other carriers such as flydubai warned that delays would persist due to airspace congestion.

"It's very frustrating," said Julien Moutte, a Paris-bound passenger who had been stuck at Doha's airport for around 15 hours.

## PAK COURT REJECTS KHAN'S BAIL PLEA

A Pakistani court Tuesday rejected former prime minister Imran Khan's petitions seeking post-arrest bail in eight terrorism cases related to the May 9 riots. Khan, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder, is booked in several cases in Lahore in connection with the May 9, 2023, violence, including for allegedly inciting his supporters to attack government and military buildings



# Israel kills 40 in Gaza after truce with Iran



REUTERS

**Cairo, June 24:** Israeli forces killed at least 40 Palestinians in Gaza and ordered new evacuations Tuesday, local medics and residents said, in further bloodshed shortly after Israel and Iran agreed to a ceasefire in their air war.

The Israel-Iran deal announced by U.S. President Donald Trump raised hopes among Palestinians of an end to over 20 months of war in Gaza that has widely demolished the territory and displaced most residents, with malnutrition widespread.

"Enough! The whole universe has let us down. (Iran-backed Lebanese group) Hezbollah reached a deal without Gaza, and now Iran has done the same," said Adel Farouk, 62, from Gaza City.

We hope Gaza is next, he told Reuters via a chat app, speaking before two explosions rang out in Tehran, with Trump accusing both sides of violating the deal, though voicing particular unhappiness with Israel, rebuking it with an obscenity in an extraordinary outburst of frustration.

In Gaza, deadly violence continued with little respite.

Marwan Abu Naser, of the Al-Awda Hospital in Nuseirat in central Gaza, said it had received 19 dead and 146 injured from crowds who tried to reach a nearby aid distribution centre of the U.S.-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation. Abu Naser told Reuters the casualties resulted from gunfire.

Israel's military said that a gathering overnight was identified adjacent to forces operating in Gaza's central Netzarim Corridor, and it was reviewing reports of casualties. Responding to a Reuters request for comment, the GHF said in an e-mail that there has been no incident near their aid site, which it added was located several kilometres south of the Netzarim Corridor.

U.N. aid trucks entering Gaza also use area roads and Palestinians have in the past few days reported killings of people by Israeli fire as they waited at

roadsides to grab bags of flour from the trucks.

Israel has been channelling much of the aid it lets into Gaza through the GHF, which operates a handful of distribution sites in areas guarded by Israeli forces.

The United Nations rejects the GHF delivery system as inadequate, dangerous, and a violation of humanitarian impartiality rules. Israel says it is needed to prevent the Hamas militants it is fighting from diverting aid deliveries. The Palestinian Islamist group denies doing so.

Philippe Lazzarini, head of the United Nations' Palestinian aid agency UNRWA, told reporters in Berlin on Tuesday that the new mechanism was an abomination and a death trap.

Separately, 10 other people were killed by an Israeli airstrike on a house in the Sabra neighbourhood of Gaza City, while 11 were killed by Israeli gunfire in the southern city of Khan Younis, medics said, raising the day's toll to at least 40.

Israel says militants use built-up residential areas for operating cover. Hamas denies this.

### GAZA TRUCE NEXT

Palestinians said they wished the Israel-Iran ceasefire announced by Trump had applied to Gaza.

Adding to their frustration, the Israeli military dropped leaflets over several areas in north Gaza ordering residents to leave their homes and head towards the south, in what appeared to herald renewed Israeli military strikes against Hamas.

Coming back to combat areas represents a risk to your lives, the army statement said.

Sources close to Hamas told Reuters there had been some new efforts to resume ceasefire talks with Israel. They said Hamas was open to discussing any offers that would end the war and secure Israel's withdrawal from Gaza. But these echoed longstanding Hamas conditions that Israel has always rejected.

# Japan conducts first missile test

The test-firing of the Type 88 surface-to-ship short-range missile was conducted Tuesday at the Shizunai Anti-Air Firing Range on Japan's northernmost main island of Hokkaido

ASSOCIATED PRESS



metres off the southern coast of Hokkaido, officials said.

Officials were still examining the results of the test, the GSDF said. Due to space limitations and safety concerns, Japan has previously conducted missile tests in the territories of the United States, a treaty ally, and Australia, a top Japanese defence partner where vast training grounds are available.

Tuesday's first domestic missile test underscores Japan's push toward a more self-sufficient military and its acquisition of strike-back capabilities as a deterrence to China's increasingly assertive naval activity in regional seas.

Japan is also concerned about growing joint military exercises around Japanese coasts between China and Russia.

# Fearing war with Russia, Finland hardens NATO's northern frontier

RUTERS

**Lappeenranta, Finland, June 24:** At a shooting range 10 miles from the Russian border, Finnish army reservist Janne Latto opened the trunk of his car and unpacked a small surveillance drone and controller, equipment he sees as vital for any future conflict with Finland's neighbour.

Since the invasion of Ukraine prompted Helsinki to join NATO two years ago, tensions reminiscent of the Cold War have resurfaced along the forested 1,340-km (833 mile) frontier, Europe's longest with Russia.

The Nordic nation is beefing up an already-sizeable reservist force and will host a new command for NATO, whose members meet in the Hague on June 24 for an annual summit.

Still under construction, an imposing barbed-wire-topped fence now dominates a once-bustling section of the border, closed by Finland after it accused Russia of weaponising migration. Shopping malls and restaurants that buzzed with Russian visitors have fallen quiet.

For this story, Reuters spoke

to a dozen people in Finland's border region, where the emerging divisions have left some unable to visit relatives and caused economic losses. Others supported the measures, citing a need to prepare for and deter future conflict.

At the shooting range, near the lakeside town of Lappeenranta, some 100 miles from Russia's second city, St Petersburg, Latto, 47, said the Lauritsala Reservists were training with three drones including the Parrot Anafi surveillance vehicle, used by the professional armies of several NATO members, including Finland.

A grant from Finland's association of reservist groups meant ten more were on order, he said. The 2022 assault on Ukraine hardened 47-year-old Latto's perception of Russia.

"What if they decide to come and change the border, just like they went to Ukraine," said Latto, who runs a small business assembling neon signs and billboards.

He recalled Soviet attempts to invade during World War Two, and how Finland was forced to cede approximately 10% percent of its territory to



Russia, including Ayrappa, a nearby municipality that his grandfather died defending in 1944.

The countries each insist they pose no threat to the other. Finnish President Alexander Stubb has said some level

of Russian buildup is a normal response to Helsinki's accession to NATO, which more than doubled the length of Russia's border with the alliance.

However, a Finnish government defence report late last year described "a heightened

risk of an armed conflict," citing the development of Russia's military capabilities since the start for the war in Ukraine, and saying Moscow had ambitions to create a "buffer zone" from the Arctic to southern Europe.

Finland has since announced plans to stockpile landmines. It banned Finnish-Russian dual nationals from flying drones and Russians from buying property, and this week warned that mobile signals were disrupted in regions near Russia.

"Finland is responsible for over half of the entire land border between NATO countries and Russia," Foreign Minister Elina Valtonen posted on X on Thursday, saying the country's defence posture was to ensure the border "remains inviolable."

Finland's presidency declined to comment for this story. Russia's foreign ministry did not respond to a comment request. President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday denied any plans to attack NATO. He said he did not see NATO rearmament as a threat. After Finland joined the alliance, Moscow announced plans to strengthen

military capacity in Russia's west and northwest.

The activities of the Finnish reservists, who also use firearms in target practice, are voluntary, although most have completed Finland's long-standing mandatory male conscription.

More than 50,000 Finns take part in such clubs, up by about a third since before the Ukraine war, according to the Finnish Reservists' Association, with a similar increase in the number of reservists called up by the military for refresher training.

Even older members of Latto's band of volunteers could see service in a crisis, as Finland raises the reserve's upper age limit to 65 to add 125,000 troops to a wartime army, and to take the number of reservists to one million by 2031.

He welcomed the extended military service, saying older reservists could be drone or radar operators.

"You don't have to run with the infantry to be a part of the modern battlefield," said Latto, a skilled hobbyist who has made his own first-person-view goggles to control a homemade drone.



of the day

QUOTE

India operates at 5 per cent of the world's cost. This is the democratisation of technology. We used to be charged 16 rupees a minute (for a call). Ten years ago we were charged 50 paise a minute. Today we are charged 0.03 paise a minute. I can't even convert that into cents

JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA | UNION TELECOM MINISTER

Upfront affordability has remained one of the biggest hurdles for rooftop solar adoption, especially among middle-income households in smaller cities

AKSHAY MEHROTRA | CEO, FIBE

Total exports of goods and services reached a record high of USD 825 billion in FY25, achieving 6 per cent growth over previous year. This is a significant leap from USD 466 billion in 2013-14

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

M&HCV industry to grow in single digit

**New Delhi:** The medium and heavy commercial vehicles segment in India is expected to grow in the single digit this fiscal, recovering from a decline of 3 per cent in FY25, a top official of Ashok Leyland said Tuesday. The Chennai-based firm is planning to grow ahead of the industry this year and is focusing on expanding its presence in North India, the largest market for commercial vehicles (CVs), Sanjeev Kumar, President (M&HCV) at Ashok Leyland Ltd, told.

CCI clears Manipal Group's stake purchase in Aakash

**New Delhi:** Competition watchdog CCI Tuesday said it has approved Ranjan Pai-led Manipal Group's proposal to acquire a stake in Aakash Educational Services from its founder JC Chaudhry. Manipal Group through its affiliates -- Manipal Health Systems and Manipal Education and Medical Group India (MEMGI) -- will acquire stakes in New Delhi-based Aakash Educational Services.

EPFO likely to allow instant withdrawal

**New Delhi:** Retirement fund body EPFO subscribers may soon be able to withdraw their employees' provident fund (EPF) directly from their accounts through ATMs or other modes like UPI after linking their bank accounts with EPF. A highly placed source said the labour ministry is working on a project where a certain proportion of the EPF will be frozen and a large chunk will be available for withdrawal through their bank account using various modes like UPI or ATM debit cards. Under the auto-settlement mode, the withdrawal claims are settled electronically without manual intervention within three days of filing the application form. The limit of this auto-settlement mode has been raised to Rs 5 lakh Tuesday from existing Rs 1 lakh.

DRI seizes foreign origin cigarettes

**New Delhi:** Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) officials have seized 92.1 lakh sticks of foreign-origin cigarettes valued at about Rs 18.2 crore, the finance ministry said Tuesday. Acting on a specific intelligence that cigarettes of foreign origin are being smuggled into India from Dubai under the guise of "bathroom and sanitary fittings", the officers of DRI, Chennai Zonal Unit, held a container bound to J-Matadee FTWZ (Foreign Trade Warehouse Zone).



THE USDINR rose to almost 86.00 levels and opened at 86.07 after the ceasefire announcement by Trump. The markets now await FED Chief Powell's testimony Tuesday and Wednesday in which he may indicate about cutting of rates to the Senate and House

ANIL KUMAR BHANSALI | TREASURY HEAD, FINREX TREASURY ADVISORS LLP

INDIA, UK LIKELY TO SIGN TRADE PACT BY JULY END

The process of legal scrubbing of the India-UK free trade agreement (FTA) text is progressing at a faster pace, and the pact is expected to be signed by the end of July, an official said Tuesday. To give an impetus to the process, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal is in London with his official team. The two countries announced the conclusion of the negotiations in May.



India enters SDG global top 100

India has achieved a spot in the top 100 countries for Sustainable Development Goal progress. The UN report ranks India at 99th. India ranked 109th in 2024, 112th in 2023, 121st in 2022, 120th in 2021, 117th in 2020

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 24:** India has for the first time secured a place among the top 100 out of 193 countries ranked for their progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), according to a report published Tuesday.

According to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Solutions Network's 10th and latest Sustainable Development Report (SDR), India ranks 99th on the 2025 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Index with a score of 67, while China ranks 49th with 74.4 and the US 44th with 75.2 points.

Among India's neighbours, Bhutan takes 74th place with 70.5 points, Nepal ranks 85th with 68.6, Bangladesh 114th with 63.9 and Pakistan 140th with 57 points.

India's maritime neighbours, Maldives and Sri Lanka, stood at 53rd and 93rd places, respectively.

The report's authors said that SDG progress has stalled at the global level, with only 17 per cent of the 17 targets adopted by the UN member countries in 2015 projected to be achieved by 2030.

"Conflicts, structural vulnerabilities and limited fiscal space impede SDG progress in many parts of the world," the report, with world-renowned economist Jeffrey Sachs as its lead author, said.

European countries, especial-



ly the Nordic nations, continue to top the SDG Index, with Finland ranking first, Sweden second and Denmark third.

A total of 19 out of the top 20 countries are in Europe. Yet even these countries face significant challenges in achieving at least two goals, including those related to climate and biodiversity, largely due to unsustainable consumption, the authors said.

East and South Asia have outperformed all other global regions in terms of SDG progress since 2015 largely due to rapid socioeconomic development.

The countries in East and South Asia that have demonstrated the fastest progress

since 2015 (in points) include Nepal (+11.1), Cambodia (+10), the Philippines (+8.6), Bangladesh (+8.3) and Mongolia (+7.7).

The other countries showing rapid progress among their peers include Benin (+14.5), Peru (+8.7), the United Arab Emirates (+9.9), Uzbekistan (+12.1), Costa Rica (+7) and Saudi Arabia (+8.1).

Though only 17 per cent of the targets are on track to be achieved worldwide, most UN member states have made strong progress on targets related to access to basic services and infrastructure, including mobile broadband use (SDG 9), access to electricity (SDG 7), internet use (SDG 9), under-five mortality rate (SDG 3) and neo-

natal mortality (SDG 3).

Five targets show significant reversals in progress since 2015. These are obesity rate (SDG 2), press freedom (SDG 16), sustainable nitrogen management (SDG 2), the Red List Index (SDG 15) and the Corruption Perceptions Index (SDG 16).

The report said the top three countries most committed to the UN multilateralism are Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. Among G20 nations, Brazil (25) ranks highest, while Chile (7) leads among OECD countries.

The United States, which recently withdrew from the Paris Climate Agreement and the World Health Organization (WHO) and formally declared its opposition to the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda, ranks last (193rd) for the second year in a row.

The report, which comes ahead of the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) in Seville, Spain, (June 30-July 3) noted the global financial architecture (GFA) is broken.

"Money flows readily to rich countries and not to the emerging and developing economies (EMDEs) that offer higher growth potential and rates of return. At the top of the agenda at the Fourth International Conference for Financing Development (FfD4) is the need to reform the GFA so that capital flows in far larger sums to the EMDEs," it said.

UCO Bank, Bhubaneswar Zone organises MSME Agriculture & Resources carnival

**BHUBANESWAR:** To align with Government of India's directions, UCO Bank, Bhubaneswar Zone organised MSME Agriculture & Resources carnival 23rd June. A vibrant MSME, Agriculture & Resources Carnival was successfully organised yesterday, reaffirming its commitment to inclusive growth and financial empowerment across Odisha. The event brought together entrepreneurs, farmers, self help groups, and key stakeholders from the MSME and agriculture sectors. With a focus on credit facilitation, digital banking awareness, and resource mobilization, the carnival featured product exhibitions, financial literacy sessions, and on the spot loan sanctioning. Ankit Rana, Generral Manager, Recovery & Law, UCO Bank, Head Office, Kolkata, Bhagwat Singh Bhakuni, DGM & Zonal Head, UCO Bank, Bhubaneswar Zone & Varsha, DGM & Zonal Head, Cuttack Zone graced the occasion. Sanction letters were distributed to beneficiaries under various government aided schemes, and several Bank Schemes displayed through PPT on MSME, Agriculture & Resources to support Women, Rural Entrepreneurship and Sustainable farming. The carnival also showcased success stories from UCO Bank's MSMEs and SHGs, highlighting the transformative impact of accessible finance and capacity building programs.



BIZ BUZZ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 24:** Global electric vehicle (EV) giants can now apply for the scheme to promote manufacturing of electric passenger cars in India, which offers significantly lower import tax for automakers that pledge to invest in domestic electric vehicle production.

Union Heavy Industries Minister HD Kumaraswamy inaugurated the portal for accepting applications under the scheme, which will remain open till October 21. He reiterated that EV giant Tesla is only interested in opening showrooms in India to sell its cars, and not inclined towards setting up manufactur-

ing facilities in the country.

Officials explained that under the scheme, eligible investment must be capitalised in the books of account of the applicant "after the date of approval", therefore, equipment and machinery "must be put to use after becoming an approved applicant".

The minister shared that four to five auto firms have shown preliminary interest in the scheme, however, it remains to be seen how many companies actually apply for it, as the portal has been opened from Tuesday.

Further, the Ministry of Heavy Industries shall have the right to open the application



window, as and when required till March 15, 2026.

Secretary in the Heavy Industries Ministry Kamran Rizvi said original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) applying under the scheme and availing lower import tax will have to roll out a car with at least 25

rental yield is 1.7 per cent.

National Housing Bank (NHB) data shows that even top five per cent of urban families buying a home in Bhubaneswar would take more than 50 years. Real estate has taken a jump for quite some time. Middle class families are struggling to get good space in city.

Ishan Kanungo, resident stated, "I am a working professional. It's been more than 5 years that I am planning to buy a property in Bhubaneswar, but somehow I am not convinced with the investment and output."

It is challenging to buy a decent space in the city, he added.

Another resident, Ankita Das said, "I had been thinking of getting a 3BHK in city, but the rates are extremely high. My all savings and salary seems short. I am curious to know the rea-



son of price hike in real estate, since there is no massive development happening in city."

Despite high incomes, urban families are struggling to fetch a land for themselves. A standard 1,184 sq ft house in Bhu-

S&P raises India's FY26 GDP growth to 6.5%



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 24:** S&P Global Ratings Tuesday upped India's GDP growth forecast for the current fiscal to 6.5 per cent, citing lower crude prices, monetary easing and normal monsoon, and said the ongoing geopolitical tensions are unlikely to put a "significant pressure" on the rupee or inflation.

In its Asia Pacific Economic Outlook, S&P flagged rising risks to the global economy due to the turbulence in the Middle East, saying long-lasting major increase in oil prices could have significant economic impact in Asia-Pacific, notably via slower global growth and pressure on the current accounts of net energy importers, prices and costs.

S&P Global Ratings Economist Vishrut Rana told a key mitigating factor of India is that energy prices are still lower than last year. Brent crude oil traded at roughly \$85/barrel a year ago and current prices are still lower.

"This will help contain both current account outflows and domestic energy price pressures -- while energy prices may rise moderately, the path of food prices will have a higher impact on inflation. Overall, we do not expect significant pressure on the Indian rupee or inflation," Rana said.

India imports more than 85 per cent of its crude oil and roughly half of its natural gas requirement. More than 40 per cent of the oil imports and half of gas imports come from the Middle East.

Rates of the benchmark Brent crude futures fell to around \$69 a barrel Tuesday morning after US President Donald Trump announced that

Israel and Iran have agreed to a "complete and total ceasefire".

Israel and Iran have been at war over the past 12 days with Israeli military strikes, followed by counterstrikes by Iran. US, too, joined the war with military strikes on Iran's three most critical nuclear facilities.

S&P in its quarterly report on Asia Pacific economies said current conditions on global energy markets--which are well-supplied make long-term impact on oil prices leading to price rise unlikely.

US-based rating agency said domestic demand resilience would limit the economic slowdown in economies, like India, which are less exposed to goods exports. In May, it had cut India's FY26 growth estimates by 20 basis points to 6.3 per cent citing global uncertainties and US tariff shocks.

"We see India's GDP growth holding up at 6.5 per cent in fiscal 2026 (year ending March 31, 2026). That forecast assumes a normal monsoon, lower crude oil prices, income-tax concessions and monetary easing," S&P said. For fiscal 2027, GDP growth is projected at 6.7 per cent.

In the FY25 fiscal, Indian economy grew 6.5 per cent. S&P's FY26 growth estimates for India is in line with the projections made by central bank RBI earlier this month at 6.5 per cent.

S&P estimates inflation in India to average 4 per cent in 2025, down from 4.6 per cent in 2024.

It forecasts rupee to weaken to 87.5 a dollar by the end of 2025, from 86.6 at 2024-end. The Indian rupee opened at Rs 86.13 against US dollar in morning trade Tuesday, up 65 paise over its previous close.

Markets end higher

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, June 24:** Equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty Tuesday gave up most of their sharp intra-day gains as investors turned cautious.

30-share Sensex trimmed most of its gains as reports surfaced of the ceasefire plan faltering. But, the benchmark still managed to settle in the green, climbing 158.32 points or 0.19 per cent to 82,055.11. On the contrary, 50-share Nifty rose 72.45 points or 0.29 per cent to end at 25,044.35. The index fell from an intra-day high of 25,317.70.

From the Sensex constituents, Adani Ports, Tata Steel, Kotak Mahindra Bank, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finserv and Titan were among the biggest gainers. In contrast, Power Grid, Trent, NTPC, Maruti, HCL Tech and Bharat Electronics were among the laggards.

Rupee recovers from record low

**MUMBAI:** The rupee recovered from record low level and closed with a steep gain of 75 paise at 86.03 (provisional) against US dollar as global crude oil prices went down following hopes of deescalation in Middle East tensions. A weak greenback and positive sentiments in the domestic equity markets further boosted the local unit, according to forex traders. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, plummeted 3.19 per cent to \$69.20 per barrel in futures trade as US President Donald Trump announced that Iran and Israel agreed to a ceasefire. At the interbank foreign exchange, the local unit opened at 86.07 against the US dollar and traded in the range of 85.91-86.27 before closing at 86.03 (provisional), up 75 paise from its previous close. The rupee had plunged 23 paise to close at a five-month low of 86.78 against the US dollar Monday. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.48 per cent lower at 97.94.



# Duckett powers win for England

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Leeds, June 24:** Opener Ben Duckett hit the most defining century of his career, exposing an out-of-depth Indian attack as England comfortably chased down a tricky target of 371 to win the opening Test by five wickets after an intriguing five days of play here Tuesday.

Duckett's 149 off 170 balls with 21 fours and an audacious reverse-swept six off Ravindra Jadeja, along with Zak Crawley's 65 in an opening stand of 188, followed by Joe Root's composed 53 and Jamie Smith's cheeky 44 made the chase look much easier than it actually was.

Having chased down 378 at Birmingham courtesy Jonny Bairstow in 2022, England once again did the same with elan on Tuesday, leaving India head coach Gautam Gambhir with an even bigger frown on his face.England lead the five-match series 1-0.

It will be difficult to recall when was the last time that India had five centurions in a single Test and yet lost a game so comprehensively.

Shoddy fielding effort and no support for the peerless Jasprit Bumrah made matters worse for India. Indian bowlers in second innings alone conceded 44 boundaries and three sixes. Add to that the 54 boundaries and five sixes in the first innings. There will certainly be bowling changes in the next Test but whether that will result in 20 wickets is a million dollar question.

In the final session, Ravindra Jadeja, who enjoys a favourable match-up against Ben Stokes, got the important breakthrough with the England skipper trying to reverse-sweep from the rough and his opposite number Shubman Gill taking an



easy catch. While this was one of India's worst fielding efforts with Yashasvi Jaiswal alone dropping four catches, skipper Gill's relative inexperience in strategizing and taking on-your-feet decisions also became visitor's undoing.

At one point, it seemed the team's most experienced batter KL Rahul was captaining the side, and Gambhir's record as a coach in traditional format got a tad worse.

Shardul Thakur got a couple of wickets with two rank bad balls and with only 16 overs to show in an entire match, the Mumbai man's Test career could feature an indefinite break. But then Nitish Kumar Reddy as a bowler is even worse. The manner in which Jadeja's deliveries gripped and turned, Indian think-tank must be ruing about missing Kuldeep Yadav, who would have been far more effective than a medi-

ocre Thakur.

Prasidh Krishna took five wickets in the match but the amount of boundary balls that he bowled because of his natural back-of-length stuff, he can't be considered a reliable option.

More than the tour of Australia, Mohammed Shami and Ishant Sharma, two outstanding practitioners of swing and seam bowling, were finally missed.

Left-handed Duckett did survive a quality morning spell from Bumrah but stuck to his strengths with amazing conviction, laying the foundation for victory with a dogged Crawley.

The rain break in the post-lunch session did help India as Prasidh Krishna got a couple of wickets, but despite the twin blows, Duckett continued his offensive batting style to keep India at bay.

For India, Bumrah bowled a probing first spell but there was no support from the other end. Siraj and Shardul bowled enough boundary balls to let England off the hook.

Duckett's game is based on simple hand-eye coordination as there was hardly any foot-work. The 30-year-old mostly remained rooted to his crease and tried playing forward or square of the wicket depending upon the length. He played late and that gave him time to punish Bumrah as well during the subsequent spells.

Duckett was dropped by Jaiswal off Siraj on 97, much to the frustration of the bowler.

When Jadeja bowled, Duckett would reverse-sweep him for good measure as there was not much help off the surface.

Not playing a spinner of Kuldeep Yadav's calibre came back to haunt India and they would certainly make corrective measures in Birmingham Test that starts July 2.

## NATIONAL U20 ATHLETICS

# Murad Sirman, Anushka Yadav clinch gold with meet records



Punjab's Rimpal competes in women's high jump event at the 23rd National Junior (U20) Federation Athletics Championships

PFI PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Prayagraj, June 24:** Gujarat's Murad Sirman broke the meet record while winning the gold in the men's 400m hurdles on the final day of the 23rd National Junior (U20) Federation Athletics Championships here Tuesday.

Sirman clocked 50.75 seconds to better the earlier meet record of 51.26 seconds set by Durgesh Kumar Pal in 2012. The three-day competition concluded Tuesday at the Madan Mohan Malaviya Sports Complex.

Uttar Pradesh's promising hammer thrower Anushka Yadav also improved the meet record of 57.09m set by Tanya Chaudhary in 2022. Anushka's gold winning throw was 60.46m.

She also holds the junior national record of 62.89m set in February at the Uttarakhand National Games.

Results:

**Men: 200m:** J Pandiyan (Tamil Nadu) 21.33 seconds, Rushiraj S (Gujarat) 21.42 seconds, Pratik Maharana (Odisha) 21.44 seconds.

**800m:** Mogali Venkatram (NCOE Bengaluru) 1:49.94 seconds, Prince (Haryana) 1:50.09 seconds, Vinod Kumar (Telangana) 1:50.26 seconds.

**5,000m:** Rahul Kumar Verma (Chhattisgarh) 14:20.11 sec-

onds, Indrajeet Bharat (Uttar Pradesh) 14:22.82, Vivek Chand (Gujarat) 14:24.89.

**400m hurdles:** Murad Sirman (Gujarat) 50.75 seconds (meet record, previous record 51.26 seconds set by Durgesh Kumar Pal in 2012), Bhushan Sunil Patil (Karnataka) 52.21 seconds, Amit Kumar (NCOE Patiala) 52.37 seconds.

**3,000m steeplechase:** Navratan (Haryana) 9:05.75 seconds, Tanish Kumar (Delhi) 9:10.26, Aryan (Haryana) 9:17.95.

**Shot put:** Anurag Singh (Uttar Pradesh) 18.99m, Omkar Prasad Nand (Odisha) 18.46m, Sai Kiran A (NCOE Patiala) 18.13m.

**Javelin throw:** Dipesh Choudhary (Rajasthan) 72.98m, Rohan Yadav (Uttar Pradesh) 70.52m, Himanshu (JSW) 69.30m.

**Triple jump:** S Ravi (Tamil Nadu) 15.44m, Yuvaraj K (NCOE Trivandrum) 15.34m, Shekh Zeeshan (Uttar Pradesh) 15.27m.

**High jump:** Basant (Rajasthan) 2.11m, Shiv Bhagwan (Haryana) 2.08m, Parthiv Vinod (Kerala) 2.04m.

**Women:**

**200m:** Dhesikha V (Tamil Nadu) 24.44 seconds, Nipam (Uttar Pradesh) 24.68 seconds, Sanjana (Delhi) 24.80 seconds.

**800m:** Prateeksha Yadav (Uttar Pradesh) 2:07.89 sec-

onds, Heena (Haryana) 2:08.84 seconds, Geetika Dahiya (Haryana) 2:10.24 seconds.

**5,000m:** Priyanka Oksa (NCOE Bengaluru) 17:07.09 seconds, Shilpa Dihora (Gujarat) 17:07.71, Sonam Parmar (Madhya Pradesh) 17:11.60.

**400m hurdles:** Tanu Chaudhary (NCOE Patiala) 1:01.09 seconds, Apurva Anand Naik (Karnataka) 1:01.92, Harshita Goswami (Delhi) 1:02.59.

**3,000m steeplechase:** Sakshi Borhade (Maharashtra) 10:50.39 seconds, Garima Yadav (Madhya Pradesh) 10:52.64, Priya Chhetri (Sikkim) 11:08.59.

**Javelin throw:** Bhavya P. lania (JSW) 47.65m, Poonam (JSW) 46.15m, Janvi Shekhawat (Rajasthan) 43.05m.

**Hammer throw:** Anushka Yadav (Uttar Pradesh) 60.46m (meet record, previous mark 57.09m set by Tanya Chaudhary in 2022), Haqiqat Grewal (Punjab) 53.05m, Ankita Mohapatra (Odisha) 47.40m.

**Triple jump:** Sadhana Ravi (Tamil Nadu) 12.75m, Paveena Rajesh (Tamil Nadu) 12.55m, Jasleen Kaur (Punjab) 12.42m.

**Heptathlon:** Sriteja Tholem (Telangana) 4735 points, Harshita Goswami (Delhi) 4414 points, Jasmine Mathachan (Kerala) 3907 points.

**Long jump:** Pavana Nagaraj (Karnataka) 6.29m, Mubassina Mohammed (NCOE Trivandrum) 6.15m, Pariksha (Haryana) 5.87m.

## Neeraj Chopra wins Golden Spike meet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ostrava (Czech Republic), June 24:** Indian javelin throw superstar Neeraj Chopra Tuesday clinched the title at the Golden Spike meet in his maiden appearance here, his back-to-back win in a top-class competition.

Fresh from his Paris Diamond League win June 20, Chopra emerged on top in a nine-man field here though with a modest effort of 85.29m in the World Athletics Continental Tour Gold event.

He had skipped the last two editions of Golden Spike -- an event that his coach Jan Zelezny won nine times in a storied career -- due to fitness issues.

The 27-year-old Chopra has had an impressive season so far, having won his first Diamond League title in two years in Paris after also breaching the elusive 90m mark during his second place finish in Doha DL in May.

## Kalinga Black Tigers, Hyderabad Heroes take lead at RPL

**Mumbai:** The Kaligna Black Tigers and the Hyderabad Heroes produced a couple of clinical performances during Season 1 of the Rugby Premier League at the Shahaji Raje Bhosale Sports Complex (Andheri Sports Complex) here Tuesday evening. Whilst the Tigers saw off the challenge of the Mumbai Dreamers, the Hyderabad Heroes defeated the Chennai Bulls. Interestingly, the Heroes and the Bulls had both secured qualification for the knockouts Monday. In the first game of the day, the Kalinga Black Tigers produced a clinical and dominant display against the Mumbai Dreamers, defeating them 33-5. The Kalinga Black Tigers started well as they kept the Mumbai Dreamers at bay, and just before the end of the first quarter, Perry Baker scored a well-worked try, after which Maurice Longbottom converted easily. A little later, the Tigers doubled their lead when Baker scored yet another try, and Ethan Turner converted his kick with aplomb. At half-time, the Kalinga Black Tigers led 14-0. After the break, the Tigers continued their dominant display as Ethan Turner now had a try to his name. At the other end, though, the Dreamers finally managed to get on the scoresheet as Elias Hancock went over the line.

## Sports min felicitates Pranati, Sattwik

**Bhubaneswar:** Sports Minister Suryabanshi Suraj felicitated gymnast Pranati Nayak, and chess player Sattwik Swain here Tuesday for their recent achievements. Nayak, who recently won a bronze medal at the Asian Artistic Gymnastics Championship 2025, was awarded a cash prize of Rs 75,000, while Swain, who achieved success at the 38th National Under-9 Chess Championship received a cash prize of Rs 30,000. Suraj congratulated both and encouraged them to continue their winning journey in the coming years. Sports and Youth Services department director Deepankar Mahapatra, additional chief secretary Bijay Kumar Swain, additional chief secretary Ashok Kumar Panda, joint secretary Bijayananda Swain among others were present at the felicitation ceremony.



# Feisty competitor who deserved more respect

**I**t was in the late 1960s, Dilip Doshi used to be a terror for batters in the Indian university circuit when his Calcutta University and later Bengal Ranji teammate late Gopal Bose had asked him, "It's fine you get university batters out but can you get Garry Sobers out?"

Doshi apparently was nonchalant as ever and said matter-of-factly, "Yeah, I can."

In fact, he did dismiss Sobers in a World XI match few years later but more importantly played alongside the West Indian legend in English County in Nottinghamshire for a number of seasons.

And in 1991 when Doshi's autobiography 'Spin Punch' was published, it was Sir Gary Sobers who wrote the foreword: "Dilip Doshi has an immeasurable knowledge to pass on to those who want to follow his path into professional cricket. He has played at all levels over the world and there can be no one more qualified to talk about the art of spin bowling."

It was quite a heartwarming tribute from the greatest of them all but like many mysteries in Indian cricket, one can never really decode why Doshi's expertise was never sought by the BCCI.

Impossible wasn't a word in Doshi's dictionary or else in those days of late 70s, he couldn't have eclipsed Padmakar Shivalkar and Rajinder Goel to make his Test debut at 32 and still get more than 100 Test wickets, playing mostly on flat and dead tracks.

Doshi had great success on Indian tracks but it was the tour of Australia in 1980-81 where he picked up 11 wickets (6 in Adelaide and 5 in Melbourne) in more than 150-plus overs on non-responsive pitches. His scalps included Greg Chappell, Doug Walters, Rod Marsh, Kim Hughes, among others.

## DILIP DOSHI (1947-2025)



His bowling was not a poetry in motion like the great Bishan Singh Bedi, neither was it dart like accuracy that was Padmakar Shivalkar's forte. Doshi was somewhere in between the two.

He could flight the ball, had a lovely loop and even when he wasn't turning the ball square, he could pitch it on same length ball after ball, creating doubts in batter's mind about how much it would turn or straighten or go in with the angle.

'Dilip Da', as he was known in Bengal cricket circles, believed in continuity -- whether pitching countless deliveries on

same length or listening to Rolling Stones for 50 years and being one of Mick Jagger's closest buddies for nearly five decades. What became his impediment was batting, as he could easily have been No 11 in a squad of 'No. 11 batters'. And, his fielding was an apology.

Hence, when there's a slight dip in form, the cricket establishment at that time knew whom to get rid of.

It was the 1982-83 tour of Pakistan where Javed Miandad really took his mickey. Sunil Gavaskar often recollected how Miandad, in his slurry Hindi-Urdu, would sledge Doshi.

## Indian cricket fraternity mourns

*A "heartbroken" Indian cricket fraternity came together in grief and reverence to pay tribute to former left-arm spinner Dilip Doshi, who died following a cardiac arrest in London. He died at the age of 77 Monday.*

**I met Dilip bhai for the first time in the UK in 1990, and he bowled to me in the nets on that tour. He was really fond of me, and I reciprocated his feelings. A warm-hearted soul like Dilip bhai will be deeply missed. I will miss those cricketing conversations which we invariably had. May his soul rest in peace. Om Shanti,**

SACHIN TENDULKAR | FORMER CRICKETER

**Really sad to hear about the passing of Dilip Doshi. Always immaculate, a gentleman to the core and a fine, fine bowler. Heartfelt condolences to his family. May his soul rest in peace**

RAVI SHASTRI | FORMER HEAD COACH

**I couldn't believe it when I first heard. He was a dear friend. When he first came to England he stayed with me for a while. Extremely sad news. Our sincerest condolences to Kalindhi (Doshi's wife) and his family. RIP my dear friend**

FAROKH ENGINEER | FORMER WICKETKEEPER-BATTER

**Still can't believe it,We spoke just last Wednesday,& he sounded well.Heartbroken by the passing of Dilip Doshi Sir a legend on the field,a true gentleman off it,he meant a lot to me,& this loss is deeply personal,My heartfelt condolences to Nayan & the Doshi family.**

SUNIL JOSHI | FORMER CRICKETER & SELECTOR

**Heartbreaking to hear about Dilip bhai's passing. May God give strength to his family and friends to bear this loss. Nayan, thinking of you buddy.**

ANIL KUMBLE | FORMER CAPTAIN

**It is with deep sadness that we learn of the passing of Dilip Doshi. He was a true artist of spin bowling, a gentleman both on and off the field, and a dedicated servant of Indian cricket. His impact on the game was immense, and he inspired a generation of cricketers with his skill and dedication. His contribution to Indian cricket will always be remembered. We extend our deepest sympathies to his family, friends, and the entire cricketing fraternity during this difficult time.**

ROGER BINNY | BCCI PRESIDENT

**Dilip Doshi was a remarkable cricketer and a great human being. His passion for the game was evident in every ball he bowled. He had a calm demeanour and a fiercely competitive spirit.**

DEVAJIT SAIKIA | BCCI SECRETARY

**I'm heartbroken and still in shock about Dilip uncle...he was truly special. Nayan (Doshi's son), thinking of you all with love and strength.**

PARTHIV PATEL | FORMER KEEPER-BATTER

**Saddened to hear about the passing of Dilip Doshi sir, a distinguished left-arm spinner who served Indian cricket with grace and grit. My heartfelt condolences to his family and friends. May his soul rest in peace**

PRAGYAN OJHA | FORMER CRICKETER

**RIP Dilip Doshi sir. Condolences to family**

HARBHAJAN SINGH | FORMER CRICKETER

"Ae Dilip, tela loom number kya hai (Dilip what's your room number)," Miandad would play a forward defence and ask.

When Doshi asked, "why?", he said: "Teleko wahi six ma-

roonga." (I would hit you for a six there).

Doshi's exit was pretty bitter as he played his last Test in 1983, also against Pakistan in a drawn Test in Bengaluru and

he got Wasim Raja's wicket in a rain-affected match.

Doshi believed he could have played at least a couple of years more and that angst was there with him.