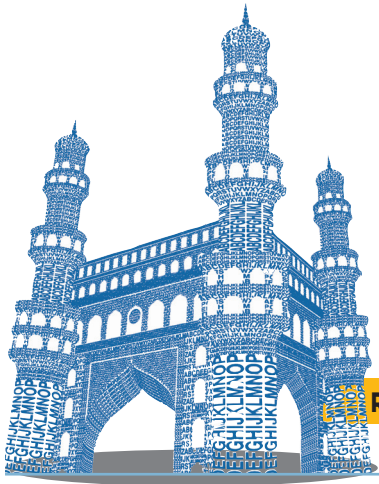




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BEYOND
THE SKY

OPINION

06

MRUNAL
BEWITCHES FANS
WITH ETHNIC STYLE



BOX-OFFICE

12

CM Launches ₹ 35.5 Cr Eco-Park

HYDERABAD, JUNE 18

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy inaugurated development works worth Rs 35.50 crore at the Eco Park in Rangareddy district on Thursday. The Chief Minister launched development works undertaken at the Gurranguda Reserve Forest at a cost of Rs 17.84 crore.

Revanth Reddy also virtually inaugurated development projects worth Rs 17.66 crore across the state, spanning Nizamabad, Kothagudem, Hanumakonda, Medak, Mahabubnagar, Mulugu, Narayanpet, Bhupalpally, Sangareddy, Rangareddy, and Warangal districts, covering urban parks, eco-parks, wildlife conservation, zoo modernisation, residential buildings, and environmental infrastructure.

Telangana to Launch Rythu Bharosa on June 30

Bonus for Seven Fine Rice Varieties Continues

Cabinet Decides to Hold Massive Farmers' meet at Madhira

State to Press Centre on Fertilizer Allocations, Crop Procurement to the fullest sought

Metro Expansion approvals demanded

HYDERABAD, JUNE 18

The Telangana Cabinet on Wednesday took several key decisions relating to agriculture, farmer welfare, fertilizer supply, crop procurement, Hyderabad Metro expansion and administrative reforms during an informal meeting chaired by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy.

Addressing the media at Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Telangana Secretariat, Ministers N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, Tummala Nageswara Rao and Danasari Anasuya (Seethak-



ka) announced that the State Government will formally launch the Rythu Bharosa investment support scheme for the Kharif season at a massive Rythu Sammelanam to be held at Madhira in Khammam district on June 30.

The financial assistance under

the scheme will be credited directly into farmers' bank accounts from the public meeting venue.

Bonus for Fine Rice Varieties

The Cabinet approved the continuation of the bonus for seven popular fine rice varieties—BPT-

5204, RNR-15048, HMT Sona, Jai Sriram, KNM-1638, WGL-44 and KNM-7715. Officials said these varieties account for nearly 83 percent of the fine rice cultivated in Telangana and enjoy strong market demand

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

PM-VBRY EVENT TO BE ORGANISED TELANGANA ON JUNE 19

PM to Disburse Rs. 2,400 Crore to Beneficiaries Nationwide

HYDERABAD, JUNE 18

As part of the nationwide celebrations marking the successful implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana (PM-VBRY), the Ministry of Labour & Employment will organise special programmes across Telangana on 19 June 2026, coinciding with the national event to be held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, in the august presence of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.

During the national event, the Hon'ble Prime Minister will disburse incentives amounting to approximately ₹2,400 crore through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) to eligible beneficiaries under the PM-VBRY scheme. The disbursement is expected to support additional employment for over 15 lakh persons across the country.

In Telangana, regional programmes will be organised at multiple locations including *Hyderabad, Sangareddy, Karimnagar, Nizamabad and Hanamkonda*. The events will witness the participation of Members of Parliament, Members of the Legislative Assembly, senior government officials, industry representatives, employers and employees. The live proceedings from Vigyan Bhawan will be broadcast

at all venues, enabling beneficiaries and stakeholders to participate in the national programme.

Under the second tranche of PM-VBRY benefits being released on June 19, Telangana is set to receive substantial support. A total of 57,544 beneficiary employees will receive benefits amounting to ₹30.72 crore under Part A of the scheme, while 3,674 employers will receive incentives amounting to ₹105.61 crore under Part B.

PM-VBRY is a flagship Employment-Linked Incentive Scheme of the Government of India aimed at promoting formal employment, supporting first-time entrants into the organised workforce and encouraging employers to create additional jobs. Under the scheme, eligible first-time employees receive an incentive of up to ₹15,000, while employers are incentivised for generating additional employment.

With a total outlay of ₹99,446 crore, PM-VBRY aims to facilitate the creation of more than 3.5 crore jobs across the country over a period of two years. The scheme is expected to play a pivotal role in expanding social security coverage, promoting quality employment and contributing to the vision of Viksit Bharat.

“Era Driven by Aspirations”

PM Modi Hails Indian Diaspora as Pillar of India-France Ties

“When historians look back

50 or 100 years from now, one fact will stand out: this era was driven by the aspirations of the people of India. This is a new age of Indian aspirations.”

— Narendra Modi —
Prime Minister

02

SET AMBITIOUS GOALS, EMULATE PV: KTR

HYDERABAD, JUNE 18

During an event at Swami Ramananda Tirtha Memorial School in Begumpet on Thursday, BRS working president KT Rama Rao encouraged students to draw inspiration from the life and accomplishments of former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao, whom he described as an enduring role model.

KT Rama Rao distributed notebooks and school bags to students and inaugurated a mid-day meal programme being run by the Talasani Trust.



He subsequently engaged with the students and shared lunch with them.

Speaking on the occasion, he highlighted PV Narasim-

ha Rao's academic prowess, noting that the former Prime Minister, fluent in 16 languages, left a significant

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

Workers Say No to Outsourcing

HYDERABAD, JUNE 18

The Telangana State Electricity Employees' Joint Action Committee (TGPEJAC) has demanded the immediate cancellation of a tender proposing outsourcing of operations and maintenance of the Ash Handling Plant (AHP) and Coal Handling Plant (CHP) at the Yadadri Thermal Power Station. The employees' body argued that critical O&M activities should remain under TSGENCO's supervision and be managed through recruitment and optimal deployment of existing staff. It warned that outsourcing could compromise operational efficiency, safety standards and equipment health while increasing financial burden on the utility.

A representation seeking withdrawal of the tender was submitted to TSGENCO's Director (HR) by TGPEJAC leaders who included its Chairman G. Saibabu, Convener P. Ratnakar Rao, General Secretary E. Sridhar and others.

RTC UNION POLLS TO BE NOTIFIED SOON; 11% FITMENT FROM JULY 1

Hyderabad, June 18: Telangana Transport Minister Ponnampal Prabhakar has directed the concerned officials to initiate the election process for TGSRTC's recognized unions after consultations with the election officer, signaling the imminent release of the election schedule.

Reviewing TGSRTC's performance at the Secretariat here on Thursday, the minister said the government procured 2,815 new buses worth Rs.1,078 crore between 2023 and 2026 and sanctioned new depots at Eturunagaram and Peddapalli. He also announced implementation of 11 percent fitment under RPS-2021 from July 1, fulfilling a promise made during the RTC strike.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

DEFECT, THREAT OR POLITICAL REWARD?

MAHARASHTRA SECURITY UPGRADE SPARKS ROW AS 6 MPs GET Y+ COVER AMID SHIV SENA (UBT) DEFECTIONS



The official explanation points to threat perception. Critics see political patronage. Supporters argue that intelligence inputs cannot be ignored merely because the beneficiaries happen to be political defectors. The controversy raises a larger question: where does legitimate security end and political signalling begin?

BY C. SUBRAHMANYAM

Politics is often about timing. In this case, timing is not just important. Timing is everything. A wireless message issued by the Maharashtra Intelligence Department directs police units to provide Y+ category local security cover to six MPs. The official reason is straightforward. Authorities cite probable threats and instruct police formations to take immediate precautions. On paper, that appears routine. Governments are expected to protect elected representatives if intelligence agencies flag security concerns. But politics does not operate on paper alone.

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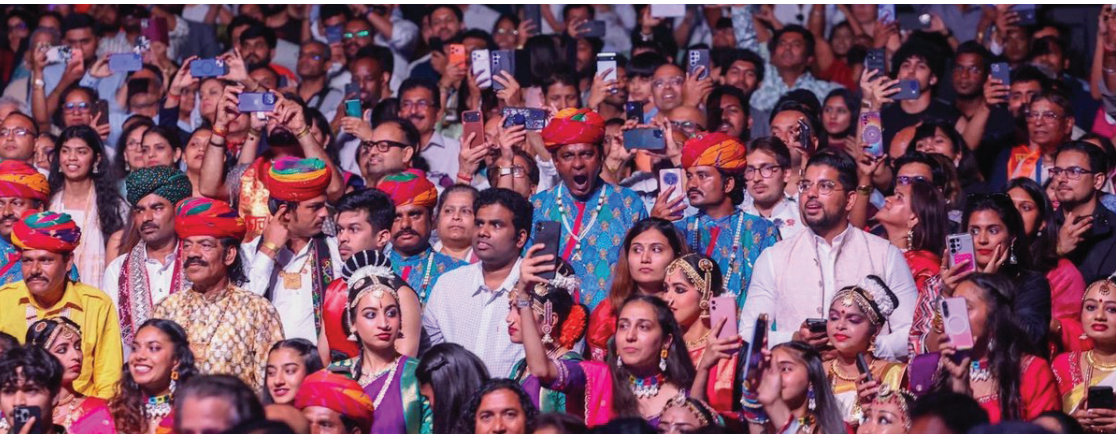
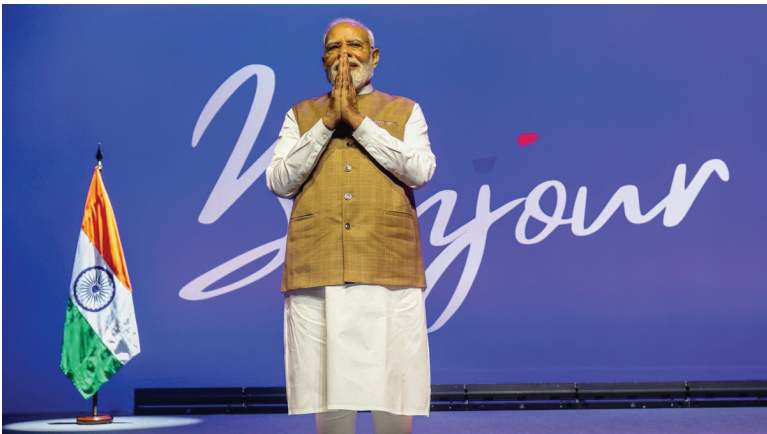
CEMENTING DREAMS WITH SUPERIOR STRENGTH.

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3 TIMES BETTER

“Era Driven by Aspirations”

PM Modi Hails Indian Diaspora as Pillar of India-France Ties



PARIS, JUNE 18

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday praised the Indian diaspora in France, describing it as the true strength of India-France relations and a vibrant reflection of India's cultural diversity. Addressing members of the Indian community in Paris, Modi said the Indian diaspora has played a significant role in strengthening people-to-people ties between the two nations.

Calling Paris a city of "lights, colours, ideas and innovation," the Prime Minister noted that Indians from every corner of the country—including Tamils, Punjabis, Gujaratis,

Marathis and Bengalis—have enriched the city with India's rich cultural heritage while showcasing the nation's unity in diversity.

Highlighting India's rapid transformation, Modi said the current phase of the country's development is being shaped by the aspirations and determination of its people. He remarked that future historians would remember this period as an era driven by the ambitions of ordinary Indians.

"When historians look back 50 or 100 years from now, one fact will stand out: this era was driven by the aspirations of the people of India. This is a new age of Indian aspirations," he said.

The Prime Minister observed that achievements once considered impossible are now becoming reality, reflecting the nation's growing confidence and capabilities. However, he credited India's citizens rather than political leadership for the transformation.

"The greatest force behind this change is not Modi; it is the people of India. When everyone progresses together, the nation progresses together," he said.

Referring to India's growing global influence, Modi stated that the country is no longer merely preparing for the future but is actively shaping it. He noted that in today's changing

geopolitical landscape, trust has become as important as trade, with nations seeking reliable partners and stable supply chains.

"Every country wants dependable partnerships and trusted relationships. India is increasingly being seen as a reliable partner in a rapidly changing world," he said.

Expressing confidence in the future of India-France relations, the Prime Minister said cooperation between the two countries would continue to expand across sectors. He highlighted ongoing efforts to simplify financial transactions, strengthen economic cooperation and deepen people-to-people connections.

Concluding his address, Modi urged members of the Indian diaspora to remain closely connected with India's development journey and contribute to the country's goal of becoming a developed nation.

"The true strength of India-France relations lies in the Indians living in France. Your participation will add new energy to India's development and provide an opportunity to serve the land of your ancestors," he said.

The address underscored the growing importance of the Indian diaspora in advancing India's global partnerships and enhancing bilateral ties with key strategic partners such as France.

Minority Schools Must Be Ready Soon: Bhatti

Hyderabad, June 18 : Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka on Thursday reiterated the Telangana government's commitment to the social, economic and educational development of minorities, stating that substantial budgetary allocations have been made and welfare initiatives are being implemented on a war footing.

Chairing a high-level review meeting at the Secretariat, attended by Minority Welfare Minister Mohammed Azharuddin and chairpersons of minority corporations, Bhatti assessed the progress of various minority welfare programmes and infrastructure projects across the state.

Reviewing the construction of minority residential schools, Bhatti said Telangana is building institutions with modern infrastructure and facilities that would serve as a model for the country. Officials informed him that 20 residential schools have been completed and are ready for inauguration, while 17 more are under construction. He directed officials to complete the remaining works within a fixed timeline and ensure close monitoring for early completion.

On the occasion of the Urdu Academy's Golden Jubilee celebrations, Bhatti announced that large-scale Mushairas showcasing Urdu culture would be organised not only in Hyderabad but also in all district headquarters. He instructed officials to make comprehensive arrangements for the main event at LB Stadium. The Deputy Chief Minister also announced that minority youth would receive large-scale financial assistance under the Rajiv Yuva Vikasam scheme to promote self-employment and economic independence. He directed officials to prepare a detailed implementation plan. Additionally, he said ₹50 crore would be allocated for the welfare of Christian minorities, particularly to support self-employment initiatives among youth. Bhatti further instructed officials to take legal measures to protect Waqf and other minority lands from encroachments and prioritise the construction of compound walls around minority burial grounds. He also said district collectors would be directed to identify and allocate land for burial grounds in areas with significant Muslim populations. He assured participation in a special programme during the upcoming Moharram celebrations in Hyderabad.

From Substations to Streets: TGSPDCL Rolls Out Modern Equipment for Faster Fault Mitigation

MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI, JUNE 18

TGSPDCL has launched a focused initiative, titled "Walk Along the Line," under the leadership of Jitesh V. Patil, Chairman & Managing Director, to minimize outages and provide customers with reliable, high-quality electricity. The program centers on proactive maintenance, fleet modernization, and real-time communication between field teams and control centers, aiming to reduce fault incidence and accelerate restoration when faults do occur.

The KPHB Substation footprint is the initial wave of this broader mission. As part of the rollout, field crews are receiving modern tree-pruning tools, branded as Advanced Tree Trunners, designed to safely and efficiently trim branches that encroach on live lines. This equipment is intended to enhance worker safety while enabling more precise pruning, thereby reducing the likelihood of line outages caused by vegetation. Alongside these tools, FOC personnel—who are typically responsible for fault observation and restoration—are being issued mobile phones

to improve on-site communication, situational awareness, and coordination with the control room during fault events or routine maintenance windows.

Senior engineers and frontline managers played a visible role in the rollout. Chief Engineer Pandya, Supervising Engineer Chandrashekhar, and Divisional Engineer Shyam Kumar participated in the program's early activities, signaling strong leadership buy-in and a commitment to practical improvements on the ground. Their involvement underscores an organizational emphasis on accountability, transparency, and rigorous execution of preventive measures as the system scales beyond KPHB.

CMD directives emphasize preemptive surveys as a cornerstone of the strategy. Teams are conducting comprehensive line surveys to identify conditions that could precipitate outages before they occur. Key focus areas include overhanging tree branches and encroachment near power lines, damaged or leaning utility poles, bent or compromised conductors and hardware, and other latent defects that could impair the integrity of the distribution network.

The survey results feed directly into a rapid-response workflow. When faults or vulnerabilities are detected, field crews are expected to implement corrective



tribution network.

actions promptly, thereby shortening the fault-to-repair cycle and improving overall reliability metrics.

A bridging schedule has been established to maintain ongoing improvements while minimizing customer impact. Through the end of the month, specific line rectification activities are scheduled daily for three hours in the early morning and three hours in the afternoon. This structured window allows for systematic attention to problem areas while providing predictable timing for customers who may experience temporary interruptions. Officials reassure that these interruptions are temporary and are part of a broader effort to strengthen the distribution network's resilience.

Officials and engineers cited expected outcomes from the program, including enhanced detection and prevention of disruptions due to vegetation or physical line faults, faster incident response and restoration times, more stable voltage profiles and fewer power quality fluctuations, and long-term improvements in system reliability and customer satisfaction.

The program's success hinges not only on equipment and schedules but also on active customer cooperation. Authorities are urging residents and businesses to understand and accommodate temporary outages when necessary, and to report any unusual power behavior promptly through official channels. Clear communication channels between TGSPDCL and the public are essential to maintaining trust during this transition period.

Looking ahead, TGSPDCL intends to expand the Walk Along the Line initiative beyond KPHB to other substations and distribution zones. If the pilot proves effective, the program could become a model for systematic vegetation management, field-force modernization, and proactive network health monitoring across the service territory. The combination of advanced tools, better communications, and disciplined field practices positions TGSPDCL to deliver more reliable power and improved customer experiences in the years ahead.

RTC UNION POLLS TO BE..

>FROM PAGE 1

The minister highlighted that compassionate appointments had been provided to 1,137 dependents, while arrears under CSS, PF and other employee welfare schemes had been substantially reduced. Officials were instructed to expedite pending compassionate appointments, review remaining dismissed employee cases and accelerate construction of bus stations and depots across the state.

"Due to measures taken by the government to improve the RTC's financial health, CSS arrears have decreased from Rs.1,096.90 crores to Rs.862 crore and PF arrears have dropped from Rs.2,018.15 crores to Rs.1,714.39 crores. Additionally, SRBS and SBT arrears were reduced by Rs.493.02 crore", the minister revealed.

TGSRTC currently operates 10,173 buses, employs 38,128 staff, covers 35 lakh km daily and serves around 61 lakh passengers every day, officials informed the meeting. On this occasion, the minister ordered for taking steps to organize a special meeting with Transport Ministers, Principal Secretaries, Commissioners and RTC Managing Directors from South Indian states to discuss pollution control, the EV policy and the expansion of electric bus services. He also directed the officials to expedite the land transfer processes required for the development of RTC bus stations.

RTC Managing Director Nagi Reddy, Executive Directors, and senior officials from various departments participated in the review meeting.

Telangana to Launch Rythu Bharosa on June 30

>FROM PAGE 1

both within and outside the government procurement system.

Centre Urged to Increase Fertilizer Supply

Expressing concern over fertilizer availability, the State Government said Telangana had not received the assured monthly allocation of around two lakh metric tonnes of urea from the Centre. Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao said the State was entitled to higher allocations during the peak agricultural season.

The government also demanded that a larger share of urea produced by the Ramagundam Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited (RFCL) plant be reserved for Telangana farmers to prevent shortages and reduce transportation costs.

Advisory on Sowing Operations

In view of forecasts predicting below-normal rainfall and possible dry spells, the government advised farmers not to rush into sowing immediately after the first rains. Farmers were urged to follow the guidance of Agriculture Department officials and ensure adequate soil moisture before taking up cultivation.

Push for Metro Expansion

The Cabinet resolved to seek early approval from the Centre for Hyderabad Metro Rail Phase-II. It urged the Union Government to sanction the proposed loan through the Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) and appealed to Union Ministers and BJP MPs from Telangana to support the project.

Digital Cabinet System Introduced

In a major governance reform, Telangana announced the adoption of a Digital Cabinet System. IT Minister D. Sridhar Babu has provided tablets to the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister and Cabinet Ministers to facilitate paperless governance. Cabinet agendas, notes and official documents will henceforth be handled digitally to improve efficiency and transparency.

Free RTC Travel for NEET Candidates

The government announced free travel in

TGSRTC buses for students appearing for the upcoming NEET examination. Nearly 2.95 lakh students are expected to appear at 2,008 examination centres across the State. Candidates can avail of free travel by producing their hall tickets.

Cabinet Sub-Committee on MGNREGS Reforms

Panchayat Raj Minister Seethakka said a Cabinet Sub-Committee comprising Uttam Kumar Reddy, Tummala Nageswara Rao, Vivek Venkataswamy and herself has been constituted to study the implications of the Centre's proposed changes to the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

The committee will assess the impact of the proposed reforms on Telangana and submit recommendations after consulting stakeholders.

Record Paddy Procurement

The government highlighted Telangana's record procurement of nearly 80 lakh metric tonnes of paddy during the recent Yasangi season, describing it as the highest achieved by any state during the period.

According to Uttam Kumar Reddy, procurement payments worth nearly ₹18,000 crore were credited directly into farmers' bank accounts within 48 hours. The State has paid farmers approximately ₹38,000-39,000 crore during the current agricultural cycle and nearly ₹1 lakh crore through procurement operations during the Congress government's tenure so far.

Concern Over Central Procurement

The ministers also expressed concern over what they termed inadequate procurement of Telangana crops by Central agencies. They urged agencies such as the Food Corporation of India (FCI), Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) and National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED) to procure crops under the Minimum Support Price (MSP) framework more effectively. The State Government announced that Telangana Ministers and Members of Parliament would soon visit New Delhi to press the Centre for enhanced procurement support and fertilizer allocations.

DEFECT, THREAT OR POLITICAL REWARD?

>FROM PAGE 1

The controversy erupted because these six MPs are reportedly in the middle of a politically explosive transition away from Shiv Sena (UBT). The moment the security order became public, a question began echoing across Maharashtra: is this a security decision or a political message? That question has become larger than the security cover itself.

SECURITY OR SIGNAL?

Every government insists that security classifications are based on threat assessments. That is how the system is supposed to work. Yet public trust becomes fragile when decisions arrive at politically convenient moments. If an MP faces genuine threats, security should be provided without hesitation. No democracy can allow violence or intimidation to become a tool of political competition. However, when politicians receive upgraded protection immediately before or during a high-profile defection, citizens inevitably begin connecting dots. The government says threat perception. Critics say political protection. The truth may lie somewhere in classified intelligence reports that the public will never see. And that is precisely the problem.

THE TAXPAYER QUESTION

The sharpest criticism revolves around public expenditure. Security cover is not symbolic. It requires personnel, logistics, vehicles, deployment planning and continuous monitoring. All of it is funded by taxpayers. Citizens therefore have every right to ask whether extraor-

inary security measures are justified. If there is a genuine threat, the answer is simple. Protect the individuals concerned. But if security upgrades become associated with political realignment, then the public begins viewing protection as a privilege attached to power rather than a necessity arising from risk. That perception damages confidence in institutions.

MAHARASHTRA'S DEFECTION ERA

This controversy is not emerging in isolation. Maharashtra has become the laboratory of India's defection politics. The state has witnessed dramatic party splits, shifting loyalties, courtroom battles, rival claims over party symbols and fierce public confrontations. Political identities that once appeared permanent have become negotiable. In such an atmosphere, every administrative decision acquires political meaning. A security upgrade is no longer seen merely as a security upgrade. A transfer becomes political. A meeting becomes political. A police deployment becomes political. Everything is interpreted through the lens of factional warfare. That is the price of prolonged political instability.

SELECTIVE OUTRAGE IS NOT A DEFENCE

The loudest voices on both sides are busy pointing fingers at past examples instead of addressing the present one. One camp cites previous governments. The other cites previous opposition leaders. But comparisons do not answer the central question. The issue is not

who benefited yesterday. The issue is whether there was a credible threat, a professional assessment and a justified decision today.

DEMOCRACY NEEDS TRANSPARENCY

No intelligence agency can reveal every detail of a threat assessment. That would defeat the purpose of security itself. Yet governments must understand that extraordinary decisions require extraordinary credibility. When politically sensitive figures receive enhanced protection, citizens deserve at least some reassurance that the decision was driven by security considerations rather than political convenience. Otherwise suspicion becomes inevitable. And once suspicion enters public life, trust becomes the casualty.

THE COST OF PERCEPTION IN POLITICS

The Maharashtra security controversy is not really about six MPs. It is about the growing gap between governmental intent and public perception. If the threat is genuine, security is justified. If the timing creates doubts, scrutiny is justified. In a healthy democracy, both statements can be true at the same time. The larger lesson is this: political defections may change governments, alter alliances and redraw power equations. But institutions must remain visibly above partisan calculations. Because the moment citizens start believing that state protection follows political loyalty, democracy begins losing something far more valuable than money. It begins losing trust.

SET AMBITIOUS GOALS, EMULATE PV: KTR

>FROM PAGE 1

and lasting impact on both India and the global stage. He implored the students to set ambitious goals and pursue excellence by emulating Narasimha Rao's example.

The BRS working president also referenced educational initiatives from the previous BRS administration, including the Chief Minister's breakfast scheme initiated by former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao, and various other programmes aimed at enhancing the education sector. He underscored the dual importance of high-quality education and adequate nutrition for students.

KTR pledged the school's development would receive support, including the addition of new classrooms and a modern library.

Sanathnagar MLA and BRSMP deputy leader Talasani Srinivas Yadav stated that assisting students from underprivileged backgrounds is a societal obligation. He confirmed that the trust would persist in offering educational aid and maintaining the mid-day meal program.

MLC Surabhi Vani Devi emphasised the vital role of nutrition in a child's holistic development and identified education as the most effective means to combat poverty. Reflecting on her father, PV Narasimha Rao's dedication to education, she credited his vision with fostering the expansion of residential and Navodaya school systems across India.

Lotus Lap Public Schools Receives International Genius Book of Records Recognition



HYDERABAD, JUNE 18

Lotus Lap Public Schools successfully organized the “International Genius Book of Records Mega Achievement Fest – 2026”, celebrating the outstanding academic excellence of its students. In recognition of their remarkable achievements, the institution received official recognition from the International Genius Book of Records.

During the academic year 2026, more than 300 students from Grades IV to IX demonstrated exceptional performance in Telugu, Hindi, English, and Social Studies examinations. A total of 1,296 outstanding performances were officially recognized and recorded by the

International Genius Book of Records. Students from the Boduppall and Dil-sukhnagar campuses played a significant role in achieving this prestigious distinction.

Prof. N. Uppender Reddy, former Professor and SCERT Telangana academician, attended the event as the Chief Guest and congratulated the students. He emphasized that discipline, values, and continuous hard work are the keys to reaching greater heights in life.

Vidyaratna Lion Dr. Komatireddy Gopal Reddy, Chairman of Lotus Lap Group of Schools, graced the occasion as the Guest of Honour. He stated that the institution is committed to providing quality education that empowers



students to excel at national and international levels. Mr. Bingi Narendra Goud, India Chief Coordinator of the International Genius Book of Records, attended as the Special Guest and appreciated the students’ achievements. He remarked that participation in record-setting activities helps develop self-confidence and leadership qualities among children. Renowned scholar Daivagna Sharma also attended as a special guest and blessed the students. He delivered an inspiring address on values, goal-setting, perseverance, and self-confidence, motivating students to strive for excellence in every sphere of life. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Komatireddy Abhishek Reddy, Direc-

tor of Lotus Lap Group of Schools, said that the institution remains committed to the holistic development of students and encouraged them to identify their talents and achieve greater success at national and international levels.

The dignitaries present at the event conveyed valuable messages and extended their blessings for the bright future of the students. They appreciated the collective efforts of the school management, teachers, and parents, stating that such a rare accomplishment was possible only through their dedication and teamwork. The successful conclusion of the event once again reaffirmed Lotus Lap Public Schools’ distinguished position in the field of education.

Engineering Counselling for International Students Conducted at Osmania University

HYDERABAD, JUNE 18

The Office of International Affairs (OIA), Osmania University, successfully conducted the counselling and seat allotment process for international category students seeking admission to engineering programmes for the academic year 2026–27. The counselling was held under the leadership of Prof. B. Vijaya, Director, Office of International Affairs, along with Dr. M. A.

Hameed and Dr. Amanchi Nageshwara Rao, Joint Directors.

Based on merit and the preferences exercised by the candidates, seats were allotted in various programmes offered by the University College of Engineering, including Computer Science & Engineering, Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning, Electronics and Communication Engineering, and Biomedical Engineering. Students belonging to the Overseas Citizen of

India (OCI) and Children of Indian Workers in Gulf Countries (CIWG/ NRI) categories participated in the counselling process. Several meritorious candidates secured admissions in highly sought-after branches such as CSE and AI&ML.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. B. Vijaya stated that Osmania University remains committed to providing quality technical education and strengthening its international

outreach through transparent and merit-based admissions for students from diverse international backgrounds.

She further announced that the Phase-II notification for admissions to engineering programmes under the international categories will be issued on 20 June 2026, providing another opportunity for eligible candidates to seek admission to the University College of Engineering.

Opportunity Extended: Detailed Timeline for DOST Third Phase Admissions through June 25 Seat Allotment

HYDERABAD, JUNE 18

In a recent announcement, Dr. Ch. Appayya Chinnamma, Principal of Government Degree College, YSR Nilayam, updated guidance for Intermediate (12th grade) students seeking admission into degree colleges. The DOST third-phase admissions deadline has been extended to June 21 this month, creating a renewed window of opportunity for applicants to complete their online registrations and select their preferred courses and colleges.

According to the principal, students can register online until June 21 and will have the opportunity to submit their web options until June 22, with seat allotment scheduled for June 25. She emphasized the importance of carefully choosing courses and colleges and ensuring that web options reflect genuine preferences and suitability for continued education and future career goals. Dr. Appayya Chinnamma also urged students to prioritize Government Degree



College, Hussainialam, citing its quality educational facilities and potential employment opportunities. Her message underscores the chance for students to maximize this extension by making informed decisions that align with their academic aspirations.

The extended deadline provides additional time for students to review available options, gather necessary information, and plan their next steps carefully. Timely registration and accurate web option submissions are crucial to improving the chances of a favorable seat allotment, and students are encouraged to monitor communications for updates on the process and subsequent steps.

In closing, the principal’s call to action centers on using this opportunity wisely to advance education and career prospects, with particular emphasis on Government Degree College, Hussainialam, as a top-choice institution given its demonstrated quality and potential benefits.

Journalists arrested during "Chalo Hyderabad" protest

HYDERABAD, JUNE 18

Journalists from across Telangana were detained by police on Thursday after attempting to march from Telangana Martyrs’ Memorial at Gun Park to the State Secretariat as part of the “Chalo Hyderabad” protest organized by the Telangana Working Journalists Federation (TWJF).

The protest was held to highlight long-pending demands of journalists, including clearance of government advertisement dues, issuance of accreditation and health cards, housing benefits, welfare measures and pension schemes. Addressing the gathering, TWJF founder and state president Mamidi Somayya alleged that successive governments had failed to address journalists’ concerns despite repeated representations. He expressed concern over the financial struggles of small and medium newspapers and demanded immediate payment of pending advertisement bills.

The federation also sought free education for journalists’ children, medical treatment in corporate hospitals, insurance coverage, RTC travel concessions and a Rs.100-crore allocation for journalists welfare.

As protesters attempted to proceed to-



wards the Secretariat raising slogans, police intercepted and detained them, shifting several participants to Panjagutta and Asif Nagar police stations. Federation leaders warned of intensified agitation if the government fails to address their demands.

The protest saw the participation of TWJF State Co-conveners Bandi Vijay Kumar, Yadagiri and Tanniru Srinivas; National Council members Chirra Srinivas, Damera Jagadeeshwar Gupta, K. Pandurangarao, Padmanabha Rao, and Samrat Gupta, Hyderabad District Convener V. Ravi Kumar, Co-conveners R. Srinivas Goud, Santosh Kumar, M. Ravikumar, Subhash and Regati Venkanna, Khammam District President and Secretary Nanabala Ramakrishna and Arvapalli Nagesh and several others.

From Classrooms to AI Labs: GDCW Hussainialam Rolls Out Digital Learning Internship

HYDERABAD, JUNE 18

GDCW Hussainialam is set to organize a teaching internship program titled “Anna Akka Mentorship,” focusing on artificial intelligence and digital learning. The training, designed by the Government of Telangana, aims to equip school students with essential AI skills while also empowering them to teach peers.

The program will be conducted on June 19 and June 24, 2026, and targets around 100 students from the college community, expanding AI literacy and digital learning capabilities. It will be led by Prof. Ch. Appiyya Chinamma garu, the principal of GDCW Hussainialam, who will serve as the chairperson, with Dr. D. Saritha, the State Nodal Officer, as the chief guest. The lead trainer for the initiative is Mr. M. A. Shahbaz from Deccan College of Engineering and Technology, who will guide participants through hands-on instruction in AI concepts, tools, and ethical considerations.

The program will also receive support from nodal officers and



department heads who will assist the trainees in digital learning. Prof. D. Shanmukhi Jyothi, HoD of the Physics Department, Dr. P. Manjula, HoD of the Commerce Department, and Dr. K. Shoba Rani, HoD of the Economics Department, will contribute to the training and mentorship. This collaborative effort aims to build foundational AI competencies among students, foster peer-teaching and collaborative learning within the campus, and align digital learning practices with Telangana’s training framework. Participants can expect

interactive sessions on AI fundamentals and practical applications, along with opportunities to mentor fellow students and share knowledge beyond the enrolled group. The program will also emphasize responsible use of AI and digital tools in academic settings, ensuring that learners are prepared to apply their skills ethically and effectively. This initiative highlights Telangana’s commitment to advancing AI literacy and digital learning in educational institutions, with a vision to scale similar programs across other colleges.

EASTERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No.: W_LLH_01_2026-27_R2, date: 16.06.2026. e-Tender (Open tender) is invited online by the Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer/Elect, C&W Workshop, Eastern Railway, Liluah, Howrah, Pin-711204 from tenderers having technical capabilities for the following work: **Name of the work:** Provision of Fully Automatic 20 passenger cum bed lift at newly constructed OPD at Eastern Railway Hospital, Liluah. **Approx cost of the work:** ₹ 41,58,000. **Earnest money:** ₹ 83,200. **Tender Closing Date and time:** 09.07.2026 at 14.00 hrs. **Website where complete details of tender is available:** www.irops.gov.in. (MISC-78/2026-27)

Tender Notices are also available at website: www.e.r.indianrailways.gov.in/www.irops.gov.in

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SOUTHERN RAILWAY

Construction Organization, Ernakulam Jn
TENDER NOTICE No. 08-CE-CN-ERS-2026-OT Dated 17.06.2026
Name of work: Balance works between CH: 236200m to 249150m between Neyyattinkara Yard(incd.) and Parsala Yard(excd.) section: - Proposed reggrading of existing track in NYY Yard and miscellaneous works in connection with doubling of track between Thiruvananthapuram Central and Kanniakumari.

Tender Value	Bid Security	Completion Period	Date and time of tender closing
₹ 4003.33 Lakhs	₹ 80,06,700/-	8 Months	13/07/2026, 15.00 Hrs

Complete details and tender document will be available at <https://www.irops.gov.in>
Chief Engineer/Construction Ernakulam Jn.

STORES E-PROCUREMENT

E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work:
1. E-Tender No.: NB265462, **Dated:** 16-06-2026; **Item Description:** Supply of Kit Piston Assembly-Air Side Designed for Pressurised Flushing System, Part No-SPAC 0023476 Or Equivalent, Kit Piston Assembly-Water Side Designed for Pressurised Flushing System, Part No-SPAC 0023477 Or Equivalent and Cylinder Barrel Assembly-Air Side Designed for Pressurised Flushing System. Material Specification and Quantity as per Annexure. **PL No.:** 336103990030. **Consignee:** SSE/ CBS/NBQS, NFR (Assam). **Qty:** 01 Set; **Earnest Money:** ₹66,630/-; **Closing of E-tender:** at 14:30 hrs. on 10-07-2026.

The complete information with the tender documents of above mentioned e-tenders are available in website <https://irops.gov.in>.
Dy.CMM/New Bongaigaon



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Prof. N. Kishan's Tenure Extended as Director of Academic Audit Cell, OU

HYDERABAD: The Honorable Vice-Chancellor of Osmania University, Prof. Kumar Molugaram, has extended the tenure of Prof. N. Kishan as the Director of the Academic Audit Cell. Prof. N. Kishan officially received his extension orders today. The university administration has expressed confidence that his continued leadership will further strengthen the academic standards and auditing processes of the institution.

GITAM Scholar Awarded Ph.D. in Chemistry

HYDERABAD: GITAM Deemed to be University, Hyderabad, proudly announces that Dr. G. Supriya has been awarded a Ph.D. in Chemistry for her research carried out under the supervision of Dr. K. Phani Raja, Department of Chemistry, School of Science, and Dr. P. V. Nagendra Kumar, Co-Supervisor. Her doctoral research, titled “Biosynthesis of Hybrid Metal Nanocomposites for Environmental and Biological Applications,” focused on the green synthesis of advanced metal nanocomposites with significant environmental and biomedical applications. The study demonstrated enhanced photocatalytic, antibacterial, electrochemical, and sensing properties, highlighting the potential of eco-friendly nanomaterials for sustainable technological solutions. The leadership of GITAM, including Prof. D. S. Rao, Pro Vice-Chancellor; D.V.V.S.R. Varma, Resident Director; Dr. M. Reza, Director, School of Science; and Dr. Gousia Begum, Head, Department of Chemistry, congratulated Dr. Supriya on her academic achievement and wished her success in her future research endeavors.



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Providing Indiramma Houses to All Eligible Beneficiaries is My Responsibility

■ AICC Member Ramreddy Sarvotham Reddy

SURYAPET, JUNE 18

AICC Member Ramreddy Sarvotham Reddy stated that it is his responsibility to ensure that every eligible beneficiary in the constituency receives an Indiramma house. On Wednesday, he inaugurated the Indiramma house of Mandava Mounika and Nagaraju at Akkaladevigudem village in Chivvema Mandal of Suryapet district, along with Mandal Party President Dharavath Veeranna Naik and Sarpanch Amaragani Anjaneyulu.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that the government's objective is to provide permanent housing to every homeless poor family and that Indiramma houses would be sanctioned to all eligible beneficiaries in a phased manner. He noted that the people's government led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is turning the dream of owning a house into reality for poor families.

He further stated that, with the support of Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy and MP Raghuvir Reddy, he would strive to secure the maximum possible number of houses for the constituency. He emphasized that the government is moving forward with the welfare and development of the poor as its primary goal. Sarvotham Reddy said that many



poor families who had been struggling in rented houses for years are now able to lead dignified lives through the Indiramma Housing Scheme. He described a house as a source of security and self-respect for every family and said that the Congress government is committed to extending that dignity to every poor household.

He mentioned that the sanctioning of 3,500 houses for each constituency is bringing hope and improving the lives of homeless poor families across the state. Housing construction activities are being implemented with equal priority in both rural

and urban areas. He also highlighted several welfare schemes being implemented by the Congress government, including the Mahalakshmi Scheme for women's economic empowerment, Rythu Bharosa for farmers, free electricity, 200 units of free power for domestic consumers, LPG cylinders at ₹500, and employment opportunities for youth. He said these initiatives are bringing significant positive changes to people's lives.

He affirmed that the government is fulfilling every promise made to the people and is committed to upholding the trust placed in it by the public. He

reiterated that the upliftment of the poor remains the government's foremost objective and assured that development and welfare programs would continue at an even faster pace.

District Congress Working President Abdul Rahim, District Youth Congress President Elimineti Abhinay Naidu, Sri Dandu Maisamma Temple Chairman Tangella Karunakar Reddy, Deputy Sarpanch Anusha, Amaragani Abbulu Goud, Nandyala Somireddy, Miryala Govind Reddy, Amaragani Savitri Nagaiah, Padidala Ravi, Boppani Anil, and others participated in the program.

Wristwatch, An Integral Part of Our Body

(On the occasion of "National Watch Day" on 19th June)

Since its launch, the wristwatch has become a part of our body. The smart-phones are in our hand, easily indicates the time, the watches worn on the wrist remain a major attraction in our lives. With the increase in the use of smart-phones, the use of wristwatches is also decreasing. The civil society, which has recognised the importance of the clock or watch as a part of our culture, which is a part of every moment, various attractive handicraft forms, and the clock or watch, has become a tradition since 2017 to observe "National Watch Day" every year on June 19. On National Watch Day, which was initiated by Nordstrom, watch lovers and ordinary citizens come together to remember the five centuries of history of watches and use them as timekeepers even in the present digital AI age.

The Rich History of Watches

We can organize various activities like wearing our favorite watch, organizing exhibitions of different watch designs, visiting watch shops, remembering the history of watches, organizing



watch competitions, getting our watches serviced, gifting watches to our loved ones, exploring vintage watches, doing social media campaigns, and showing watch making videos. In the 16th century, Peter Heinlein discovered that watches were made as pendants worn around the neck.

In 1868, the modern wristwatch was designed by Patel Philip. British soldiers began using wristwatches extensively during World War I. In 1926, waterproof Rolex watches were released. In the 1970s, along with quartz watches, digital LED wristwatches were introduced, in the 1980s, artistic watches were introduced, and in 2004, spot watches were introduced. Before the use of wristwatches,

soldiers used them, changing the tactics of warfare.

Watches have become a symbol of punctuality, personality, and health management in human lives. Today's watches not only indicate time but also play multifaceted roles such as a fashion statement, fitness monitor, activity tool, notifications, status symbol, and smart communicator. Let us make a decision to use our wristwatch, follow punctuality, stand in front of society with confidence, and move forward by achieving more goals in less time in our lives. Let us give a big push to the watch for punctuality.

— Prof: Burra Madhusudhan Reddy
9949700037.

Harish Rao slams Congress govt over agricultural policies



HYDERABAD, JUNE 18

Former minister and BRS Deputy Floor Leader T. Harish Rao strongly criticised the decisions taken by the State Cabinet, alleging that the Congress government is systematically undermining Telangana's farming community through inconsistent policies and anti-farmer decisions.

In a statement here on Thursday, Harish Rao said that after reducing the scope of crop bonus payments during the recent Agriculture department review meeting, the government has now effectively withdrawn from paddy procurement by introducing restrictions under the guise of a "Digital Cabinet" decision. He termed this a serious betrayal of farmers.

The BRS leader accused the Congress government of pushing agriculture into crisis through what he described as "destructive creativity," alleging that every new decision is creating fresh hardships for farmers. Harish Rao said the gov-

ernment's decision to limit paddy procurement to quotas fixed by the Centre amounts to abandoning its responsibility towards farmers. He questioned why Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, who once criticised governments for failing to procure crops, is now citing the Centre as an excuse to avoid procurement responsibilities.

"If the government refuses to purchase farmers' produce, what are farmers expected to do with their harvested crop?" he asked, adding that imposing procurement limits in the name of central quotas would leave farmers at the mercy of private traders and market forces.

He further criticised the government's decision to restrict crop bonus eligibility to only seven fine varieties of paddy, calling it an attempt to dictate cultivation choices to farmers. He said farmers who trusted government advice and shifted to crops such as maize, sorghum, sunflower and Bengal gram are already facing severe losses.

Win Siddipet first': Revanth fires back at Harish Rao over Future City row

HYDERABAD, JUNE 18

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy lashed out at BRS Legislature Party deputy Floor Leader Harish Rao, who has repeatedly stated that the 'Bharat Future City' project would be scrapped if their party came to power. Revanth Reddy countered that the state government is actively developing a 15,000-acre forest within India's Future City, aiming for 60% green cover. He accused Harish Rao of advocating for the establishment of chemical factories instead.

The Chief Minister further remarked, "Harish Rao, who lacks any future prospects, speaks of scrapping the 'Future City.' However, he must first secure a victory in Siddipet in the next Assembly election before he can even con-



template such an action."

Speaking at a meeting in Gurranguda, LB Nagar constituency, during the launch of the 'Vana Mahotsavam 2026' programme on Thursday, the Chief Minister voiced significant displeasure

regarding legal challenges filed at the National Green Tribunal (NGT) against the initiative to enhance greenery by 60 percent.

He declared, "Regardless of any criticism, I will proceed with building the 'Bharat Future

City' and attract international businesses. I will develop the Future City in a manner that future generations will speak of it with admiration." Furthermore, Revanth Reddy addressed accusations that HYDRAA was being

depicted as a threat, clarifying that the agency would not target the poor but would instead take stringent action against land encroachers.

He expressed deep anger over attempts by certain individuals to illegally occupy the Gurranguda Eco Park and pointed out with dismay that even temple lands in Vanasthalipuram had fallen victim to encroachment.

Revanth Reddy also stated that the development of LB Nagar had been neglected during the tenure of the BRS government. He pledged that, in his capacity as Chief Minister, he would endeavour to resolve the challenges faced by LB Nagar and assured that the state government stands in unwavering support of Rangareddy district across all fronts.

Telangana introduces meritorious service medals for forest personnel

HYDERABAD, JUNE 18

To mark the launch of 'Vana Mahotsavam-2026' and to encourage Forest department personnel who risk their lives to protect forest resources, the government has dedicated to give the "Telangana State Forest Conservation Meritorious Service Medals Rules-2026."

Through this new initiative, the Forest department has introduced four prestigious awards to officially recognise the services of its staff and accord due respect to their efforts.

The recognised accolades include the Telangana Forest Conservation Medal (Bronze), the Telangana Best Forest Conservation Medal (Silver), the Telan-



gana Distinguished Forest Conservation Medal (Gold), and the Telangana Chief Minister's Forest Valor Medal (Special Gold). Recipients of these medals

will also be granted a cash prize and a recurring monthly cash incentive. The cash prizes are set at ₹10,000 for the Forest Conservation Medal, ₹15,000 for the

Best Forest Conservation Medal, ₹20,000 for the Distinguished Forest Conservation Medal, and ₹25,000 for the Chief Minister's Forest Valor Medal. A monthly cash incentive will accompany these prizes.

Selection for these awards will be based on outstanding performance in critical areas such as preventing land encroachment, combating forest-related offenses, ensuring wildlife protection, executing forest development initiatives, managing nurseries, mitigating forest fires, leveraging advanced technologies like Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Management Information Systems (MIS), and engaging in research activities.

Meeting held with dal millers of AP.

TIRUMALA, JUNE 18

With a noble aim to supply high-quality delicacies involving dal in Annaprashad (the massive free meals programme of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams), a meeting was held by the Additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary with Dal millers hailing from different parts of Andhra Pradesh in Tirumala on Thursday.

The meeting discussed in elaborate about the Quantitative and Qualitative supply of ingredients (dals) to TTD. The Additional EO said, TTD utilizes Seven varieties of dals in its daily consumption of Annaprashad seven types of dals including Bengal Gram, Fried Bengal Gram, Black Gram without husk, Black gram with husk, Thor Dal, Greengram and groundnuts. "In the last couple of years, we have improved the quality of rice by procuring the rice from the Rice Millers Association without any compromise and anticipating similar quality and quantity supply of Dals from Dal Millers of AP also, he asserted.

Responding positively, the representatives of AP Dal Millers also said they are willing to associate in the divine service of Annaprashad activity of TTD- which is serving millions and millions of visiting pilgrims every day, by supplying the qualitative products.

Later the Additional EO instructed the officers concerned to work on the probabilities of procuring the Dals from the Millers in a transparent manner.

DyEO Annaprashad Rajendra Kumar, DyEO Warehousing Padmavathi, GM Procurement Umashankar, AEO Potu Munirathnam, Special Officer Catering Shastri, various Dal millers from AP were also present.

Fake paneer racket busted in Hyd; 825 kg seized in major crackdown

HYDERABAD, JUNE 18

In a major food safety enforcement drive, Hyderabad authorities uncovered widespread misbranding and adulteration of paneer, seizing nearly 825 kg of suspected adulterated and misbranded products during inspections at 45 outlets and 8 manufacturing units.

Officials found that Cheese analogue products made from vegetable fats and non-milk ingredients were allegedly being sold as paneer, malai paneer, and milk paneer, misleading consumers and violating food safety norms. Several establishments were also found selling unlabelled products without batch numbers, manufacturing details, or expiry dates. Investigators detected suspected adulteration practices, including the use of starch, excess water, non-milk fats, poor-quality milk, and unhygienic storage conditions. Some operators were al-



legedly functioning without valid FSSAI licences and repacking analogue products under misleading labels.

Authorities have collected samples for laboratory analysis and warned that strict legal action will be taken against violators. Consumers have been advised to purchase paneer only from licensed vendors and avoid loose or unlabelled products. The crackdown was carried out under the supervision of Hyderabad Task Force officials in the interest of public health and consumer safety.

"Spend Rs.1,000 cr on cleaning Godavari, not just Pushkaralu": FGg to TG govt

HYDERABAD, JUNE 18

Forum for Good Governance (FGG) President M. Padmanabha Reddy has urged the Telangana government to prioritize cleaning and rejuvenating the River Godavari ahead of the 2027 Pushkaralu festival.

FGG president stated that since last three decades Godavari has become one of the most polluted rivers in India. The river carries industrial effluents from Maharashtra and enters at Kandakurthi near Basar - Nirmal district. When it reaches Ramagundam Mancherla region the untreated waste is discharged directly into the river.

Added to it, mud from coal mine dumps and Ash from thermal plants enter into the River causing severe pollution problems. The Municipal landfill operated by Ramagundam Municipal Corporation located close to the river is further polluting the



river. In a representation to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, the forum president expressed concern over the alarming pollution levels in

the Godavari, citing industrial effluents, untreated sewage, coal mine waste, thermal plant ash and municipal dumping as major sources of con-

tamination. The organisation noted that studies by agencies such as the Central Pollution Control Board, Central Water Commission, NEERI and IIT Hyderabad have repeatedly flagged the deteriorating water quality.

FGG also pointed out that a series of barrages constructed upstream in Maharashtra have significantly reduced water flow into Telangana, leaving stretches of the river nearly dry during summer months.

Questioning the government's decision to allocate Rs.1,000 crore for Pushkaralu preparations, FGG said the funds would be better utilised for pollution control measures and river restoration.

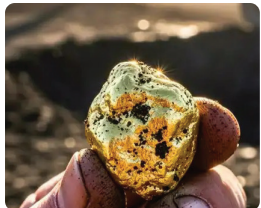
It urged the government to take immediate steps to prevent further degradation of the Godavari, a major source of drinking water for Hyderabad and millions of people across the State.



Mysuru – Madar Junction Express Special Train Services Further Extended

HUBBALLI, JUNE 18:

Railway Board has approved the further continuation of Train No. 06281/06282 Mysuru – Madar Junction – Mysuru Express Special to clear the extra rush of passengers. The train services will continue to run with the existing timings, stoppages, fare structure, and composition without any change. Accordingly, Train No. 06281 Mysuru – Madar Junction Express Special, which is presently notified up to 27.06.2026, will now be further extended to run on 04.07.2026 and 11.07.2026 (Saturdays), completing 2 additional trips. Similarly, Train No. 06282 Madar Junction – Mysuru Express Special, notified up to 29.06.2026, will be further extended to run on 06.07.2026 and 13.07.2026 (Mondays), also completing 2 additional trips.



Andhra will emerge India's largest gold supplier in few years: Official

AMARAVATI:

Andhra Pradesh will emerge as the largest supplier of gold to the country in a few years, an official said on Thursday, citing estimated reserves of 50 tonnes at Jonnagiri village in Kurnool district alone. Addressing a press conference, Mukesh Kumar Meena, principal secretary (Mines) said that apart from Jonnagiri, the state has identified four potential areas for gold mining, including Ramagiri, Javvakula and Chigurukunta Bisnatan. "Our estimate is that 50 tonnes of gold are available in Jonnagiri itself. So, we are confident that after a few years, we (Andhra Pradesh) will become the highest supplier of gold for the country," Meena told

NEXT DOOR
Government's Ultimate Goal
Deliver Affordable, High-Quality Energy Services to All Stake holders

VIJAYAWADA, 18 JUNE 2026

Reaffirming its unwavering commitment to combating climate change and promoting sustainable development, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has adopted a comprehensive multi-pronged strategy to accelerate energy efficiency initiatives and aggressively promote renewable energy adoption on a saturation basis across the State.

The initiative aims to protect the interests of citizens by ensuring affordable, reliable and high-quality energy services while safeguarding the environment for future generations. The Energy Department is working in close coordination with NITI Aayog, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) and Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL) under the Ministry of Power to deploy cutting-edge energy-efficient technologies and scale up renewable energy adoption across all sectors. Interacting with senior officials of EESL, Sri K. Vijayanand, Special Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister and Special Chief Secretary, Energy Department, said the government's ultimate objective is to provide cost-effective and world-class energy services to all stakeholders while simultaneously protecting the environment. "Adoption of advanced

- Andhra Pradesh Projects Additional 15 GW Capacity Requirement by 2036-37 to Meet Rising Power Demand
- 23rd May 2026 Becomes a Historic Day as AP Successfully Meets Record Power Demand of 288.9 Million Units amid Extreme Heatwave Conditions
- Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Programmes Play a Crucial Role in Meeting Peak Power Demand
- Accelerating Clean Energy Adoption is the Need of the Hour to Combat Climate Change.. Andhra Pradesh Becomes the Only State to Launch Three Major Energy Efficiency Programmes in a Single Day in the Presence of the Chief Minister and Union Power Minister: K. Vijayanand
- Another Landmark Initiative under the National Efficient Cooking Programme (NECP) Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu to Launch Final Phase of Distribution of Energy-Efficient Induction Stoves with Utensils to Anganwadis on June 20: P.S. Pradyumna
- Women & Child Welfare Department and EESL Gear Up for State wide Implementation: Secretary Surya Kumari
- Powering sustainable growth: AP accelerates energy efficiency and renewable energy transition



technologies and implementation of global best practices are significantly strengthening the power sector ecosystem in Andhra Pradesh. For instance, power utilities have saved around ₹190 crore within just six months, from January to June 2026, through timely and strategic interventions," he said. Highlighting the state's power management capabilities, he said Andhra Pradesh Discoms successfully met a record peak demand of 288.9 million units during May (23rd) despite extreme summer temperatures ranging between 45 and 48 degrees Celsius. "Renewable energy generation and energy efficiency programmes played a crucial role in meeting the

unprecedented demand while ensuring uninterrupted and quality power supply to consumers," he added. Sri K. Vijayanand further stated that Andhra Pradesh is the only state in the country to have launched three major EESL energy efficiency programmes in a single day in the presence of Chief Minister Sri N. Chandrababu Naidu and Shri Manohar Lal Khattar Union Minister for Power, Housing and Urban Affairs. These initiatives have already started delivering tangible results.

In another landmark development, Sri P.S. Pradyumna, Secretary, Chief Minister's Office, announced that Chief Minister Sri N. Chandrababu Naidu will launch the second

and final phase of distribution of energy-efficient 1,200-watt induction stoves, along with cooking utensils, to Anganwadi centres across the State under the Government of India's National Efficient Cooking Programme (NECP). The programme will be launched at Chikalapuripet AP on 20th June 2026. Sri PS Pradyumna, who played a key role in preparing the action plan and ensuring timely implementation of this first-of-its-kind initiative, held a virtual review meeting with Smt. A. Surya Kumari, Secretary, Women and Child Welfare Department; Sri M Venu Gopal Reddy, Director, Women and Child Welfare Department; and Sri Akhilesh Kumar Dixit, CEO, EESL. He said Dr Anil Malik, Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, is keen to showcase the Andhra Pradesh-EESL partnership model as a national best practice. Under this initiative, more than 55,000 Anganwadi centres are being equipped with induction stoves on a saturation basis. Smt. A. Surya

Kumari recalled that the recent National Conference on Women Development held in Udaipur, attended by representatives from several states, and had endorsed Andhra Pradesh's bold initiative aimed at promoting women's welfare and eliminating fossil fuel usage in all Anganwadi centres through the provision of induction stoves. She noted that several states have expressed interest in replicating the Andhra Pradesh model.

Sri M. Venu Gopal Reddy suggested that EESL should widely showcase the programme's key benefits, particularly the fact that induction cooking is nearly 30 per cent more energy-efficient than LPG, while substantially enhancing safety standards and significantly reducing carbon emissions.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh continues to position itself at the forefront of India's clean energy transition by integrating technology, sustainability and citizen-centric governance to build a greener, safer and energy-secure future for all.

Andhra Pradesh to Launch Quantum Incubator for Deeptech Startups in Amaravati

AMARAVATI, JUNE 18, 2026:

In a significant step towards building India's premier quantum and deep-tech innovation ecosystem, the Government of Andhra Pradesh, in collaboration with Chandigarh University and Amaravati Quantum Valley (AQV), will launch the Quantum Incubator (CUBIC – Chandigarh University Business Incubation Centre) on 19 June 2026 at Amaravati. The Quantum Incubator is being established as a dedicated platform to incubate and accelerate startups working in Quantum Technologies, Artificial Intelligence, Advanced Semiconductors, Robotics, Space Technologies and other frontier technology domains. The initiative will serve as a catalytic node within the Amaravati Quantum Valley ecosystem, helping transform breakthrough ideas, research and talent into globally competitive deep-tech enterprises.

As Andhra Pradesh advances its vision of making Amaravati one of the world's leading quantum hubs, the incubator will provide startups with access to mentorship, research collaborations, investor networks, incubation infrastructure, industry partnerships and opportunities to leverage the quantum ecosystem being developed in the State. Founders

will also benefit from access to specialized labs, quantum computing resources, innovation programs and market-linkage support. The incubator will initially operate from Medha Towers, Amaravati, enabling immediate startup onboarding and ecosystem development. Over time, it is envisioned to evolve into a larger innovation and technology hub supporting the growth of deep-tech ventures and commercialization of emerging technologies. The launch event will bring together policymakers, industry leaders, investors, researchers, startup founders and ecosystem partners to discuss opportunities in the quantum economy and the role of deep-tech entrepreneurship in driving innovation-led growth. The programme will feature addresses by senior government officials, industry experts, investors and technology leaders, followed by startup-investor interactions and ecosystem networking sessions. The launch of the Quantum Incubator marks another important milestone in the development of Amaravati Quantum Valley, reinforcing Andhra Pradesh's commitment to creating a vibrant innovation ecosystem that nurtures startups, generates high-value employment, attracts investment and positions Amaravati as a global destination for quantum and deep-tech innovation.

Train Services Diverted Due to Arakkonam Yard Remodelling Works

CHENNAI, JUNE 18:

Southern Railway has announced further changes in the operation of several long-distance express trains due to the ongoing yard remodelling works at Arakkonam Junction under Chennai Division. According to railway officials, four train services will be diverted on different dates in June 2026, resulting in the skipping of certain stations. Additional stoppages have been provided at Tiruttani for the convenience of passengers. Train No. 16224 Radhikapur-SMVT Bengaluru Express, departing Radhikapur at 9.30 pm on June 21, will be diverted via Gudur, Renigunta, Tiruttani and Melpakkam. The train will not stop at Nayudupeta, Sullurupeta, Perambur and Arakkonam. Similarly, Train No. 22604 Villupuram-Kharagpur Weekly Superfast Express, scheduled to leave Villupuram at 11.05 am on June 23, will run via Melpakkam, Tiruttani, Renigunta and Gudur, skipping Arakkonam and Perambur stations. Train No. 22606 Tirunelveli-Purulia Superfast Express, departing Tirunelveli at 3.15 am on June 24, will also be diverted via Melpakkam, Renigunta and Gudur, bypassing Arakkonam and Perambur. In addition, Train No. 18189 Tatanagar-Ernakulam Junction Express, leaving Tatanagar at 5 am on June 25, will be diverted via Gudur, Renigunta, Tiruttani and Melpakkam, skipping Perambur and Arakkonam stations. Southern Railway has advised passengers to verify the latest train running status through the National Train Enquiry System (NTES), Railway Helpline 139, or official Indian Railways platforms be-



25th June Uprising Day Manipur Remembers 2001 Martyrs

Imphal 18 June 2026: Manipur marked the 25th anniversary of the Great June Uprising on Thursday with ceremonies at Kekrupat, where 18 people who died in the 2001 protests were cremated. Organised by AMUCO and UCM under the Observation Committee for the 25th Great June Uprising-Unity Day 2026, the event drew residents, student groups, women's organisations, and families of the victims. Floral tributes and traditional Thang-Ta salutes formed the core of the observance. UCM General Secretary Santa Nahakpam, co-convenor of the committee, said the 2001 agitation remains a turning point. He criticized the lack of public disclosure of the CBI probe into the killings and said the case ended without fixing responsibility. Linking the past to the present, Nahakpam said victims of the violence since May 3, 2023, also await justice. He flagged concern over sepa-

rate peace talks with different communities and urged the Centre to ensure accountability for all conflict cases. He cautioned that if demands around Separate Administration, flag issues, and constitutional safeguards are not addressed soon, Manipur could see agitation on the scale of June 18, 2001. The state's territorial and administrative integrity, he said, remains non-negotiable.

BJP MLA Khongbantabam Ibomcha Singh said unity is Manipur's main defense. He paid tribute to the martyrs and argued that national interest must take precedence over other considerations. MLA Sapam Nishikanta called for trust and dialogue between communities to bring back normalcy. The day commemorates protests against the 2001 extension of the NSCN (IM) ceasefire "without territorial limits," which led to large-scale demonstrations across the state.

Chandrababu resolves aqua feed hike crisis

AMARAVATI:

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu resolved aqua feed prices hike crisis by bringing together aqua farmers and feed manufacturers. In a meeting held at the State Secretariat today with aqua farmers and feed company representatives, the Chief Minister directed that feed prices be reduced by Rs 4 per kg to reduce additional financial burden on aqua farmers. Both feed manufacturers and aqua farmers agreed to the proposal. As a result, the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) of aqua feed will be reduced from the current Rs 112 per kilogram to Rs 108 per kilogram. The Chief Minister also directed the formation of a committee comprising aqua farmers, feed manufacturers and officials to evolve a long-term mechanism for feed price stabilization. The committee has been asked to submit its report within 20 days, after which a final decision on pricing will be taken. Apart from feed pricing, the committee will also examine processing-related issues and pollution control measures and submit recommendations to the government.

Aqua feed manufacturers agree to reduce aqua feed price by Rs 4 per Kg
Committee to be formed for feed price stabilization:CM
Aqua farmers thank CM for feed price reduction and power subsidy



During the meeting, aqua farmers informed the Chief Minister that feed prices had been increased six times during the previous government's tenure without any intervention to protect farmers. They pointed out that feed prices rose from Rs 87.80 per kilogram in 2019 to Rs 107.80 per kilogram by the end of the previous administration. They also noted that the coalition government had reduced feed prices by Rs 5.80 per kilogram soon after assuming office. Farmers clarified that they had never opposed the coalition government and alleged that certain individuals had recently attempted to politicise the issue posing as

aqua farmers. The aqua farmers thanked the Chief Minister for providing power to the aqua sector at a subsidized rate of Rs 1.50 per unit. The farmers also acknowledged Chandrababu Naidu's contribution to the expansion of aquaculture from the Godavari districts to the entire coastal belt, from Srikakulam to Nellore.

The aqua farmers briefed the Chief Minister on the challenges currently faced by the sector. They pointed out that while the prices of all inputs used in aquaculture have increased significantly, the prices of aqua produce have not risen proportionately. They also highlighted difficul-

ties related to processing and requested greater awareness among farmers regarding subsidies offered through the Fisheries Department. They sought exemptions from certain empanelment requirements associated with subsidy schemes and requested wider insurance coverage for shrimp ponds. Farmers also urged the government to encourage the establishment of nursery ponds and ensure adequate water supply for fish and shrimp farms.

Responding positively, the Chief Minister assured farmers that there would be no shortage of water supply for aquaculture operations. Representatives of feed man-

ufacturing companies explained that shortages of key raw materials such as soybean and fishmeal, coupled with rising domestic prices, had increased production costs. They informed the Chief Minister that imports of low-cost soybean from the United States are currently not permitted, forcing manufacturers to procure soybean from the domestic market at nearly double the price. As a result, price increases became unavoidable.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said that protecting the aquaculture sector, which supports lakhs of livelihoods, is a key responsibility of the coalition government. He stated that the government has provided Rs 1,543 crore in electricity subsidies to the aqua sector over the last two years. The government intervened in the current issue after feed companies increased prices, he added. The Chief Minister urged all stakeholders to work sincerely toward a lasting solution that benefits

both farmers and feed manufacturers. He advised farmers to explore ways of reducing production costs and assured that the government is committed to support both fish and shrimp farmers. He encouraged farmer associations to hold regular consultations and develop collective solutions to sectoral challenges. Stressing the need for modernization, he called for greater adoption of technology across the aquaculture value chain. The Chief Minister noted that changing food consumption patterns worldwide have increased global demand for aquaculture products and urged stakeholders to capitalize on these opportunities. He also stated that market diversification efforts had helped expand exports to alternative destinations in the wake of restrictions in certain international markets. Emphasizing the importance of quality and certification, he cautioned farmers to remain vigilant about export standards. Referring to a recent instance in which China rejected chilli exports due to pesticide residue concerns, he stressed the need to maintain strict quality control in aquaculture production as well.



EDITORIAL.

From Prevention to Punishment: The Misuse of Preventive Detention in India

In Chander Pal Singh, a case concerning preventive proceedings, the Allahabad High Court has drawn attention to a dimension of the criminal justice system that often remains overshadowed by conventional criminal prosecutions. At the same time, it has highlighted the troubling reality that mechanisms originally intended to prevent disturbances have increasingly been used as tools to curtail personal liberty. While the State undoubtedly possesses the authority to intervene before a crime occurs when there is a reasonable apprehension that an individual may threaten public order, this power has gradually come to be exercised as a matter of routine. As a result, individuals are frequently subjected to detention without facing any substantive criminal charge. The High Court observed that its intervention was necessitated by the “highly irresponsible” deprivation of personal liberty in Uttar Pradesh, where police officers and executive magistrates were routinely invoking preventive powers to incarcerate individuals on the basis of relatively minor apprehensions. In the present case, the petitioner, a physically challenged Dalit advocate, was arrested following a minor dispute with a neighbour. The Bench further noted that between May 2025 and April 2026, nearly 2,500 individuals in Ghaziabad were reportedly subjected to preventive detention proceedings despite the existence of a 2021 State policy intended to regulate and guide the exercise of such powers.

The guidelines laid down by the Court are commendable and, if implemented effectively, could substantially reduce the misuse of preventive detention in neighbourhood and property disputes. They require executive magistrates to provide reasoned justifications for their decisions, facilitate constitutional challenges against unlawful preventive detention, and promote greater appellate scrutiny of compensation mechanisms. The ruling may also act as a check on the tendency of some magistrates to invoke vague and unspecified “communal tensions” as grounds for detention or to impose excessively burdensome bonds as a condition for release. Moreover, although the judgment does not directly affect the detention of activist Sonam Wangchuk under the NSA, it challenges the broader practice of invoking the preservation of peace as a justification for suppressing dissent. In doing so, it reminds the State that maintaining public order cannot come at the expense of democratic freedoms and that peace must be preserved through lawful and proportionate means. The principles articulated in the ruling may also extend to workers and activists recently detained in New Delhi under Sections 126 or 170 of the BNSS if such detentions lack valid legal grounds.

Nevertheless, translating the judgment into meaningful reform is likely to be challenging. The Bench stated that compensation awarded for unlawful detention may be recovered from the salaries of the responsible magistrates and/or police officers following a disciplinary inquiry. However, governments have historically shown reluctance to impose penalties on their own personnel. Furthermore, executive magistrates remain embedded within the administrative structure of the State, and their professional advancement may often be linked to maintaining “peace” as defined by the executive. Unless these structural and institutional barriers are addressed, the transformative potential of the ruling may remain limited. Overcoming these challenges is essential if preventive proceedings in India are to be reformed in a manner consistent with constitutional guarantees of liberty and due process.

THE ORCHARD BEYOND THE VOID

Between two vacant thoughts
there grows a tree
that has never belonged to earth.
Its roots drink
from the wells of forgotten time;
its branches lean
against the invisible ribs of
eternity.
It bears no ordinary fruit.
Only the weight of unsaid words,
clustered like seasons
that never found a sky.
Owls gather there,
patient archivists of darkness,
peeling the night
with beaks sharpened by silence.
Their wings disturb the air,
yet beyond every motion,
beyond every echo,
Silence sits unblinking,
guarding the republic of empti-
ness.
Then your laughter arrives,
not as sound,
but as dawn entering
a house abandoned by light.
The dust within my soul
rises like prayer.
Broken mirrors remember faces.
Forgotten doors remember
hands.
Even the ashes
begin to dream of forests.
You bite into a green mango,
and my illusion,
innocent as first rain,
believes
its wild sourness
has borrowed the warmth
of my waiting cheek.
Reason smiles.
The heart refuses.
Beyond illusion
my solitude stands,
a lighthouse
without a sea.
Beyond solitude
your loneliness waits,
a shore
without a tide.
Between them
hangs a bridge
woven from helpless longing,
where invisible footsteps

carry invisible destinies
toward invisible homes.
Beneath it
flows a river
too vast for maps,
where abandoned embraces,
unwritten letters,
unfinished songs,
and unborn kisses
drift like drowned constellations.
Into that endless current
I surrender
every tomorrow that never
reached us.
Still,
the river remains thirsty.
Because longing
is the only water
that deepens
by disappearing.
So I choose illusion.
There,
the letters of your name
circle my thoughts
like planets
too faithful
to escape their own gravity.
Their silent orbit
becomes the rhythm
inside my breathing.
And whenever
your name
finds shelter
beside mine,
the void grows flowers,
silence grows wings,
darkness grows fragrance,
and time forgets
its own mortality.
Then I know Love is not the
meeting of two hearts.
Love is the impossible radiance
that survives
between two absences;
the unseen bridge
where eternity walks barefoot,
carrying a single impossible
blossom
from one loneliness
to another,
until the universe itself
mistakes
that fragile illusion
for truth.



... Dr. Peruka Raju ...
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OPINION
BEYOND THE SKY

On the occasion of June 18, commemorating Sally Ride becoming the first American woman to travel into space in 1983

There are certain moments in history that transcend the boundaries of time. They are not remembered merely as events; they become symbols of human progress, courage, and transformation. June 18, 1983, is one such day. On that day, Sally Ride became the first American woman to travel into space, creating a milestone that extended far beyond the field of science. Her journey was not merely a personal achievement. It was a powerful statement about equality, opportunity, and the limitless potential of human talent.

The history of human civilisation is often narrated through discoveries, inventions, and scientific breakthroughs. Yet, behind every breakthrough lies another story—the struggle for access, inclusion, and opportunity. For centuries, scientific institutions across the world were largely dominated by men. Women were frequently denied access to education, research, and leadership positions. Their capabilities were questioned, their ambitions underestimated, and their aspirations restricted by social expectations. Against such a backdrop, Sally Ride’s journey into space represented not only scientific success but also a profound social transformation.

When Sally Ride boarded the Space Shuttle Challenger, she carried with her the dreams of countless women and girls who had long been told that certain fields were beyond their reach. Her achievement challenged deeply rooted stereotypes and demonstrated that excellence knows no gender. The significance of her mission lay not merely in reaching space but in redefining what society believed women could accomplish.

Even today, more than four decades later, the relevance of that achievement remains undiminished. The world is experiencing rapid advancements in artificial intelligence, space exploration, biotechnology, and digital innovation. Nations are competing to shape the future through science and technology. Yet, a fundamental question continues to demand attention: Are opportunities truly accessible to all?

Across many parts of the world, including developing nations, access to quality education remains uneven. Economic limitations, geographical barriers, and social inequalities continue to prevent millions of young people from realising their full potential. For many girls, especially in rural and marginalised communities, the path towards scientific education remains difficult. While society celebrates extraor-



inary success stories, it must also address the systemic barriers that prevent countless others from pursuing similar aspirations.

Sally Ride’s legacy therefore extends beyond the realm of space exploration. It serves as a reminder that talent is universal, but opportunities are often not. Societies that fail to provide equal opportunities ultimately deprive themselves of innovation, creativity, and progress. Every child denied quality education, every young woman discouraged from pursuing science, and every aspiring researcher held back by circumstances represents a loss not only to the individual but to society as a whole.

India’s development journey offers an important perspective in this regard. The country has made remarkable strides in science and technology. Indian women scientists have played crucial roles in major space missions and research programmes. Their contributions have strengthened the nation’s scientific standing globally. However, the journey towards complete inclusion is far from over. Greater investment in

scientific education, research infrastructure, and opportunities for young women remains essential. The true measure of progress lies not merely in celebrating achievements but in ensuring that such achievements become attainable for many more.

Another enduring lesson from Sally Ride’s life is the importance of scientific temper. Science is not confined to laboratories, equations, or spacecraft. It is fundamentally a way of thinking—a commitment to evidence, inquiry, and rationality. In an age where misinformation spreads rapidly and unverified claims often gain traction, nurturing scientific thinking becomes increasingly important. A society that encourages questioning, curiosity, and critical thought is better equipped to address its challenges and shape its future.

The significance of Sally Ride’s achievement also lies in its broader message about leadership and representation. Visibility matters. When young people see individuals who resemble them succeeding in fields previously considered inaccessible,

their own horizons expand. Role models do more than inspire; they redefine what is perceived as possible. Sally Ride’s presence in space communicated a message far more powerful than words—it showed that barriers can be broken and that limitations imposed by society need not determine one’s destiny.

History often remembers great achievements as isolated moments. In reality, they are milestones in a much larger journey. Sally Ride’s mission was the result of decades of efforts towards educational access, gender equality, and social progress. It reflected the collective determination of countless individuals who challenged conventions and demanded a more inclusive future. Her success became a victory not just for women, but for the principle that merit and dedication should prevail over prejudice and exclusion.

As the world continues to confront complex challenges—from climate change to technological disruption—the need for diverse perspectives has never been greater. Progress depends on drawing talent from every section of society. Innovation flourishes when opportunities are open, barriers are removed, and potential is allowed to thrive irrespective of gender, background, or circumstance.

More than forty years have passed since Sally Ride’s historic flight, yet its message remains timeless. Her journey was not simply from Earth to space. It was a journey from limitation to possibility, from exclusion to inclusion, and from assumption to achievement. It reminds humanity that the greatest frontiers are not always found beyond our planet; often, they exist within societies that have yet to fully recognise the potential of all their people.

The sky was never the limit. The real challenge has always been creating a world where every dream has an equal chance to soar.



CHITIKENA
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Karmyodha Modi's Journey from Antyodaya to Global India

In the history of Indian democracy, certain personalities transcend the boundaries of political leadership and come to define an era. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has emerged as one such figure. In June 2026, he set a new record as the longest-serving continuously elected Prime Minister in independent India’s history. This achievement is not merely a matter of numbers or tenure; it symbolizes the trust, public support, and developmental journey that have reshaped India’s politics, economy, governance, and global standing. In a democracy, a leader’s true success is measured not by the length of time in office but by the impact of his work. If the ultimate test of governance is delivering the benefits of development to the last person in society, then the greatest contribution of the Modi era has been its success in taking development out of government files and policy declarations and bringing it directly into the lives of ordinary citizens. This reflects the philosophy of Antyodaya—the upliftment of the last person—articulated by Deendayal Upadhyaya.

Since independence, India has undertaken a long and remarkable development journey. Jawaharlal Nehru laid the institutional foundations of a newly independent nation. Democracy, scientific temper, public institutions, education, research, and industrial development all gained momentum under his leadership. However, over time it became evident that formulating policies and ensuring their benefits reached the intended beneficiaries were two entirely different challenges. For decades, a long chain of intermediaries stood between government schemes and citizens, causing significant leakage and inefficiency. When Narendra Modi assumed office in 2014, India faced multiple challenges, including economic sluggishness, allegations of corruption, incomplete projects, bureaucratic inertia, and declining public trust. At such a critical juncture, he sought to transform the traditional style of governance by placing technology, transparency, and accountability at its core. This was not merely a policy shift; it represented a transformation in the very philosophy of governance.

One of the most significant achievements of the Modi government has been the expansion of the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system. By integrating bank accounts, Aadhaar identification, and mobile

technology, a mechanism was created that enabled government assistance to reach beneficiaries directly. This not only reduced corruption and leakages but also gave millions of citizens the confidence that the government could genuinely reach their doorstep. The poor, farmers, women, students, senior citizens, and workers all benefited from this transformation. The Jan Dhan financial inclusion initiative played a historic role in empowering people who had never before been part of the formal banking system. It was not merely a campaign to open bank accounts; it marked the beginning of a new chapter in economic empowerment. Similarly, the Ujjwala Scheme freed millions of women from smoke-filled kitchens by providing clean cooking fuel, significantly improving their health, dignity, and quality of life.

Another defining feature of the Modi era has been the unprecedented expansion of infrastructure. Roads, expressways, railways, metro systems, airports, ports, and digital networks have developed at a remarkable pace, giving fresh momentum to economic growth. Today, smaller cities are being connected through air travel, villages are linked by roads, and the railway system is undergoing rapid modernization. Modern trains such as the Vande Bharat have become symbols of India’s technological capability and growing self-confidence. Through housing initiatives, millions of economically disadvantaged families have received permanent homes. For those who spent years living in fragile huts, a house represents not merely shelter but dignity, security, and hope. Likewise, the Jal Jeevan Mission has brought clean drinking water to millions of households, while the nationwide sanitation campaign transformed cleanliness into a people’s movement. These achievements are reflected not only in statistics but also in tangible improvements in living standards.

Significant changes have also been witnessed in the agricultural sector. The ethanol blending program has opened new avenues of income for farmers, enabling them to emerge not only as food providers but also as contributors to India’s energy future. Efforts in biofuels, natural farming, agricultural infrastructure, and technological innovation have sought to make farming more profitable and sustainable, injecting new vitality into the rural economy. The Digital India initiative has given the country a new identity on the global



stage. India’s digital payments ecosystem is now studied and admired worldwide. The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has made transactions simpler, faster, and more transparent. Digital technology has evolved beyond convenience to become a powerful instrument of good governance. Its impact is visible across education, healthcare, banking, commerce, and public administration.

India’s international stature has also risen significantly. Today, the country is viewed not merely as a developing nation but as a potential global leader. Its successful presidency of the G20, influential presence on international platforms, balanced role during global crises, and efforts to amplify the voice of developing nations reflect its growing strength and confidence. Even at recent G7 summits, despite not being a member, Prime Minister Modi’s presence and influence have underscored India’s rising diplomatic significance and the confidence of its foreign policy. A distinctive aspect of the Modi era has been its ability to connect nationalism with development. The vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India) is not simply an economic program; it is a movement aimed at strengthening national confidence. Advances in defense manufacturing, space exploration, startup culture, innovation, and industrial production are manifestations of this broader vision. India is increasingly positioning itself not merely as a consumer of global products and technologies but as a creator and innovator.

“Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas” (Together with All, De-

velopment for All, Trust of All, and Efforts by All) has evolved beyond a political slogan to become a guiding principle of governance. Its objective is to ensure inclusive development so that no section of society is left behind. Consequently, the focus of development policies has increasingly shifted toward those who once stood on the margins of the system. Like any long tenure in office, the Modi government’s policies and decisions have been subject to debate and criticism. Such scrutiny is both natural and necessary in a vibrant democracy. Yet it is equally true that over the past twelve years, India has witnessed a profound transformation in governance, development, and public expectations. Citizens today are no longer satisfied with promises alone; they seek visible and measurable results. This, in itself, is a sign of democratic maturity.

Perhaps Narendra Modi’s greatest strength lies in his effort to transform governance into a people’s movement. He presents himself not as a ruler but as a “Prime Servant” of the nation. His leadership is characterized by consistency, hard work, dedication to goals, and an unwavering commitment to placing the nation above all else. This explains why he remains one of India’s most popular leaders and an influential figure on the global stage. The vision of building a developed India by 2047 is not merely an economic aspiration. It is the dream of an India that is self-reliant, inclusive, technologically advanced, culturally confident, and socially compassionate. The Modi era has laid many of the foundational changes required to achieve this goal, and their impact is likely to become even more evident in the decades ahead.

As India advances through its Amrit Kaal—the transformative period leading to the centenary of independence—it can be said that Narendra Modi’s contribution extends far beyond schemes and projects. He has inspired millions of Indians with the belief that change is possible, development is a right for all, and every citizen has a role to play in the nation’s progress. The journey from Antyodaya to a developed India is a story of faith, determination, and relentless action—a story that continues to shape the destiny of modern India with renewed energy and direction.

LALIT GARGG
Writer, Journalist, Columnist





Bihar: Woman gang raped in Begusarai

PATNA, JUNE 18

A shocking case of alleged sexual assault and extreme brutality against a woman in Bihar's Begusarai district has triggered widespread outrage, with police launching an intensive investigation and search operation to apprehend the accused. According to an official, the incident occurred within the jurisdiction of the Chakiya police station on the night of June 11. The woman stepped out of her home to use the toilet when she was allegedly intercepted by five men, who forcibly dragged her to a secluded location, tied her hands and legs with her clothes, and gang raped her. Moreover, the accused inserted a cartridge, wood and a sharp-edged object in her private part. The victim was initially taken to a hospital in an injured condition on June 11 and discharged the following day. However, after her pain intensified five days later, she was admitted again for medical examination in the Sadar Hospital. Family members claim that subsequent tests and an ultrasound examination revealed objects inserted inside her private part, which doctors later removed during treatment. The woman's family has also accused the local police of failing to respond appropriately and sending them back home when they first attempted to lodge a complaint.

HOMELAND

Service and Spirituality Can Transform Society: President Murmu

Addressed the program "Empowerment of tribal society through spiritual awakening"

DR.BHUPENDRA VIKAL

Bhopal (Betul): President Smt. Draupadi Murmu said that empowerment of the society should not be limited to economic development only. Real empowerment occurs when a person develops self-confidence, self-respect, awareness and sense of responsibility. President Smt. Murmu said that the tribal society is a society that lives with self-respect and this very characteristic makes it special. He said that spiritual awakening makes a person experience his inner strength and connects positive thinking with the higher ideals of life. He said that the balance of development and culture is the foundation of any strong and prosperous society. Eternal development is that which strengthens our roots and paves the way for future possibilities. President Smt. Murmu said that India has set a target of becoming a developed nation by the year 2047. Achieving this goal is possible only when every section of the country joins the mainstream of development. From the Himalayas to Kanyakumari, India's cultural and natural heritage must remain safe and intact. He said that such conferences organized by Brahma Kumari Institute will prove to be extremely useful for the spiritual upliftment,



social awareness and overall development of the tribal society. Praising the Madhya Pradesh government, President Smt. Murmu said that many schemes for education, health and tribal welfare are being run in the state. Specifically mentioning sickle cell anemia, he said that this disease is more prevalent in tribal areas and effective efforts are being made to eradicate it. President Smt. Murmu expressed confidence that these efforts will further improve the health level of the tribal society. President Smt. Murmu said that Betul district of Madhya Pradesh has a special identity in the entire country for its rich tribal culture, natural beauty and spiritual consciousness. The tribal communities here have preserved their traditions, folk knowledge and cultural values from generation to generation. The vibrant form of high life values like collectivity, cooperation, simplicity, honesty and spirituality is visible in the tribal culture of Betul. President Smt. Murmu said that she is extremely happy to participate in this mega conference focused on the goal of empowerment of the tribal community. Congratulating Brahma Kumari Sansthan for



this important initiative, he said that this event has special importance not only for Betul or Madhya Pradesh, but for the entire country and society. President Smt. Murmu expressed confidence that the action plans prepared in the conference will play an important role in making the tribal society a strong partner in the progress of the nation. President Smt. Murmu said that Brahma Kumari Institute has taken forward its plans and programs by keeping mother power at the center. The internal purity, human dignity, spirit of service and sensitivity towards nature of the institute are inspiring for the society. He said that in today's fast-paced world, the importance of inner purity and spiritual values has increased more than ever. On the basis of these values, a feeling of egalitarian conduct, sensitivity towards nature and conservation of natural resources develops in the society. In the present times, when the world is facing situations like tension, conflict and war, the need for such events increases even more. The lifestyle of the tribal community has naturally been close to spiritual values and nature.

Spiritual awakening is

an effective medium of empowerment of tribal society: Governor Patel

Governor Mangubhai Patel said that through spiritual consciousness and religious values, the society gets inspiration to live an advanced, cultured and respectable life. Expressing his gratitude to Prajapita Brahma Kumari Ishwariya Vishwavidyalaya for this grand and inspiring event, he extended best wishes to all the brothers and sisters of the institution. Governor Patel said that he has a close association with the Prajapita Brahma Kumari organization since 1995. He has got the opportunity to participate in programs organized at various places including the Brahma Kumari Center located in front of his residence in Navsari, Mount Abu, Gandhinagar. He said that the work of the organization in bringing positive change in the society through spiritual awakening is commendable and exemplary. Governor Patel said on the basis of personal experience that setting aside some time every day for meditation brings peace to the mind, positive energy and spiritual balance. Such spiritual practices infuse happiness, peace and harmony in a person's life and

also provide positive direction to the society. President Smt. Murmu's life is a unique example of struggle and devotion to duty: Union Minister Shri Uike, Union Minister of State for Tribal Affairs, Shri Durgadas Uike said that President Smt. Murmu, who came from a small tribal village in Odisha and reached the highest constitutional post of the country, is a living example of the power of Indian democracy, the greatness of the Constitution and social harmony. Union Minister Shri Uike said that the life of President Smt. Murmu is a unique example of struggle, dedication, service and devotion to duty. On the strength of her hard work, patience and unwavering commitment towards the upliftment of the deprived sections of the society, she has not only adorned the highest constitutional post, but has also become a source of inspiration for every daughter of the country, tribal society and common citizen. He said that every tribal family of the district is feeling proud due to the arrival of the President in Betul. His leadership inspires everyone towards social justice, protection of constitutional values and nation building. On the arrival of President Smt. Murmu, an attractive and charming welcome dance was presented by 7 member artists of Anhad Music College, Betul. On this occasion, Minister of State for Public Health and Medical Education Narendra Shivaji Patel, Rajyogini Shailja Didi from Brahma Kumari Institute, Rajyogini Manju Didi, Rajyogi Dr. B.K. Nathmal are present

Uddhav Holds Emergency Meet Amid MP Defection Buzz

MUMBAI, JUNE 18

In a major political development that mirrors the high-stakes drama of 2022, Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena-UBT is facing a massive vertical split in its parliamentary ranks. Six out of the party's nine Lok Sabha MPs skipped a crucial parliamentary party meeting in New Delhi, defying a strict party whip. As "Operation Tiger", launched by the Shinde camp, gathers momentum, Shiv Sena-UBT chief Uddhav Thackeray has called an urgent damage-control meeting on Friday. The possible loss of a Member of Parliament from Mumbai -- where the Thackeray faction boasts a robust and fiercely loyal grassroots cadre -- has deeply unsettled the party leadership. Angry party workers have raised concerns about the vacu-

Uddhav Holds Emergency Meet Amid MP Defection Buzz



The six rebel MPs -- Sanjay Dina Patil (Mumbai North-East), Omraje Nimbalkar (Dharashiv), Sanjay Jadhav (Parbhani), Sanjay Deshmukh (Yavatmal-Washim), Nagesh Patil Ashtikar (Hingoli), and Bhausahab Wakchaure (Shirdi) -- have reportedly signed a letter seeking to form a separate bloc in the Lok Sabha and are

widely expected to officially join the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena. The political tremor became undeniable when Chief Whip Anil Desai called an emergency meeting of the Lok Sabha parliamentary party in New Delhi. Only three Lok Sabha MPs -- Arvind Sawant, Anil Desai and Rajabhau Waze -- along with Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut, attended. The Shiv Sena-UBT leadership has taken a tough stance, issuing formal show-cause notices to the six absent lawmakers. They have been given a seven-day window to respond, failing which the party will initiate legal proceedings under the anti-defection law to seek their disqualification. "We will fight this battle on the streets, and we will fight

it in the courts," Sanjay Raut said, alleging that massive financial inducements were used to lure the MPs away.

The most significant blow to Uddhav Thackeray comes from the heart of his home turf -- Mumbai. Mumbai North-East MP Sanjay Dina Patil, who had defeated the BJP candidate in the Lok Sabha elections, has crossed over to the Shinde faction. Patil, who originally hails from a Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) background before moving to the undivided Shiv Sena in 2019, represents a critical loss for the Thackeray camp. Despite his public denials just days earlier, his absence from the Delhi meeting has intensified speculation over his defection. Incidentally, his daughter was recently elected on a Shiv Sena (UBT) ticket in the recently held elections to

the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation. The current crisis marks the second major rebellion against Uddhav Thackeray in four years. In June 2022, Eknath Shinde led a massive revolt involving 40 Shiv Sena MLAs, resulting in the collapse of the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) coalition government. Shinde subsequently aligned with the BJP to become the Chief Minister, and the Election Commission eventually recognised his faction as the "real" Shiv Sena, awarding it the iconic 'Bow and Arrow' symbol. Despite being stripped of his party name and symbol, Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena (UBT) delivered a strong performance in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, winning nine seats across Maharashtra through emotional appeal and strong grassroots networks.

07

Let's Bridge the Digital Divide

(On the occasion of "World Wi-Fi Day" on 20 June)

World Wi-Fi Day observed every year on 20 June, is a unique worldwide initiative organised by "Wireless Broadband Alliance" under the leadership of "Connected Communities Forum". The "Wi-Fi" is widely taught and accepted as abbreviated for "Wireless Fidelity". On this day we celebrate the great contribution and innovation that Wi-Fi brings to our daily lives and a charter to connect the unconnected. There are more than 4 billion people around the world with no internet access. Access to Internet provides people in developed and developing countries growth, improve their social mobility and computer literacy as well as enrich their education prospects. This day got its start back in 1997.

Let's Connect the Unconnected:

World Wi-Fi Day celebrates the transformative role of wireless technology in bridging the digital divide and highlights the ongoing mission to "connect the unconnected" across both rural areas and urban environments. It highlights efforts to make internet access affordable and sustainable, giving underprivileged communities access to education, research, tele health, and economic opportunities. This day recognises the rapid advancement of standards, from early 2 Mbps networks in 1977 to modern gigabit-speed Wi-Fi 6 and Wi-Fi 7 technologies. Aligning with the theme of the recently launched India Mobile Congress, "Innovate to Transform", this year's World Wi-Fi Day celebrations are themed "Transforming India, Innovating for the World".

Prime Minister Wi-Fi

Access Network Interface, PM-WANI:

This day also underscore Wi-Fi's profound impact on global connectivity and its vital role in driving economic growth, social mobility, education, and digital inclusion. In India, initiatives like PM-WANI (Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access Network Interface) aim to expand public hotspots, supporting the goal of digital inclusion for all. With over 90 percent of broadband usage in India occurring over Wi-Fi networks, the recent delicensing of the 6 GHz band is expected to unlock a new era of next-generation Wi-Fi (6E and beyond) - leading to faster and more reliable home Wi-Fi, enhanced digital connectivity for in-building coverage, and opportunities for innovation in the area of Private Networks in industries like smart cities and smart factories. The goal of achieving 50 million public Wi-Fi hotspots by 2030. Kolkata is recognised as India's first Wi-Fi enabled metro city in 2015. However, for commercial and fully wireless public access, the heritage city of Mysore achieved this distinction much earlier in 2005. Mumbai was the first Indian City to roll out a massive government-funded network of 500 public Wi-Fi hotspots in January 2017.

The internet has long been entrenched in daily life. From online research and video meetings at work, to private communication and entertainment - more and more areas of our lives are online. Thanks to Wi-Fi, this happens wirelessly with most modern client devices. To celebrate World Wi-Fi Day, we are taking a closer look at the technology, its history and its future.



CRS Begins Inspection of Katihar-Kuretha and Katihar-Sonaili

MALIGAON, 18 JUNE, 2026

Double Line Sections

The Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), Northeast Frontier Circle, Kolkata, Shri Sumeet Singhal, is carrying out the statutory inspection of the newly constructed Broad Gauge (BG) double line sections between Katihar (1,380 km)-Kuretha (12,440 km) and Katihar (1,327 km)-Sonaili (17,542 km) in Katihar Division of Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR). The inspection programme commenced on 17 th June, 2026 and is scheduled to continue till 19 th June, 2026. Both these sections form part of the Katihar-Kumedpur and Katihar-Mukuria New Double Line Projects. The Katihar-Kumedpur and Katihar-Mukuria New Double Line Project, spanning a total length of 64.14 km, is a significant infrastructure development initiative aimed at enhancing rail capacity and operational efficiency in the region. The project includes 2 important bridges, 27 major bridges and 23 minor bridges, along with extensive track and associated railway infrastructure. Upon completion, the double line corridor will serve 16 railway stations, facilitating improved train operations, increased line capacity, reduced congestion, and more efficient movement of both

passenger and freight traffic across the Katihar Division of Northeast Frontier Railway. The CRS inspection of the Katihar-Kuretha and Katihar-Sonaili sections are an important step forward in the progress of the project. During the ongoing inspection programme, Shri Sumeet Singhal will inspect station infrastructure, track geometry, bridges, signalling and telecommunication systems, electrical installations, safety arrangements and other associated railway assets of the newly constructed sections. The inspection will also include detailed examination of stations and field installations along the route. As part of the statutory inspection, speed trials are being conducted to assess the operational safety, stability and readiness of the sections prior to their commissioning. The ongoing CRS inspection is a major step towards the commissioning of these newly constructed double-line sections. The completion of the Katihar-Kuretha and Katihar-Sonaili double line sections will mark another important milestone in the modernization and capacity augmentation efforts of Northeast Frontier Railway, contributing to enhanced connectivity and more efficient train operations across the region.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji's Sacrifice Inspires Humanity: Nayab Singh saini

CHANDIGARH, JUNE 18:

Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini said the sacrifice of the Fifth Sikh Guru, Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji, is a unique example of truth, righteousness, humanity and spiritual strength in Indian history. His life and martyrdom inspire us never to bow before injustice, oppression and falsehood. The Chief Minister was addressing a state-level function organised in Panchkula on the occasion of the 420th Martyrdom Day of Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji on Thursday. A documentary film based on the life of Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji was also screened on the occasion. The Chief Minister also participated in Chhabeel Seva. Numerous saints and spiritual leaders from Haryana and Punjab attended the programme and appreciated the Haryana Government for organising the event, expressing their gratitude to Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini. Addressing the gathering organised under the Haryana Government's Sant Mahapurush Samman

State-Level Function Organised in Panchkula on the 420th Martyrdom Day of Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji
Teachings of Guru Sahib are Our Greatest Inspiration in Building a Viksit Bharat: Chief Minister

Evam Vichar Prasar Yojana, the Chief Minister said that he felt fortunate to be present at the event held on the sacred land of Sri Mata Mansa Devi and Sri Nada Sahib. Paying floral tributes to Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji, he said that the Guru's sacrifice is not only the heritage of the Sikh community but a source of inspiration for the entire nation.

He said that India's history is filled with a glorious tradition of sacrifice, penance, devotion and spiritual valour. Whenever the nation, religion, culture and humanity faced challenges, saints and Gurus came forward with their sacrifices to protect truth and righteousness. The martyrdom of Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji stands as one of the greatest examples of this noble tradition. The Chief Minister said that Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji played a historic role in uniting society and bringing humanity together. He established Sri Harmandir Sahib



in Amritsar and ensured that it had four entrances, symbolising that the holy shrine is open to all humanity irrespective of caste, class or religion. He said Guru Sahib had, centuries ago, given practical shape to the ideals of social harmony, equality and the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (the world is one family).

Sh. Nayab Singh Saini said that by compiling the teachings of saints such as Sant Kabir, Sant Namdev, Baba Farid and Sant Ravidas in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji created an unparalleled example

of unity in diversity. He said Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji continues to serve as a spiritual beacon guiding humanity. The Chief Minister said that Martyrdom Day is not merely an occasion to pay tribute but also an opportunity for self-reflection. Remembering Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji's sacrifice fills us with pride while also reminding us of the immense suffering he endured for the protection of truth and faith. He said the Mughal ruler Jahangir became fearful of Guru Sahib's growing influence and spiritual awakening among the people. Guru Sahib was imprisoned in Lahore and subjected to inhuman torture, yet he never compromised on his principles.

He said that making Guru Sahib sit on a burning iron plate, pouring hot sand over his body and inflicting unbearable pain represented the peak of cruelty. Yet, not a trace of distress appeared on Guru Sahib's face.

Uttering the words "Tera Kiya Meetha Lage", he accepted the will of the Almighty. The Chief Minister said this was not merely a martyrdom but the highest example of spiritual resilience, inner strength and unwavering faith in God.

He said Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji's sacrifice teaches us never to compromise on truth, justice and culture. At a time when the country is moving towards the vision of a Viksit Bharat under the leadership of Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi, the teachings of Guru Sahib continue to guide the nation. Sh. Nayab Singh Saini said that Haryana has always been the land of saints, Gurus and brave warriors. Its soil carries both the wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita and the sacrifices made by great Gurus. To preserve and promote this heritage, the State Government is working with full commitment. He said that under the leadership



Indian women peacekeepers exemplify UN role in giving hope to women in conflicts

UNITED NATIONS, JUNE 18

Women peacekeepers give hope to vulnerable women in conflict situations, serving as symbols of female empowerment, and the more than 160 women in UN missions exemplify this role, according to India's Permanent Representative to UN P. Harish. Indian Army Major Abhilasha Barak, who was awarded the UN Peacekeeper's Gender Advocate Award this month, and the two other Indian women awardees before her, are outstanding examples of this role, P. Harish told the Security Council on Wednesday. The "deployment of uniformed women in UN peacekeeping operations represents one of the most tangible and impactful dimensions of the Women, Peace

and Security agenda", the India's envoy to UN said during a debate on "Women Peace and Security" focusing on enhancing their participation as they emerge from conflicts. "India was the first to deploy an all-female Unit to the United Nations Mission in Liberia, inspiring 1000s of Liberian women to join their national police," he added. "Today, more than 160 Indian women peacekeepers serve in the field in various UN Missions." On the importance on deploying women in peacekeeping operations, P. Harish said, "They build trust in communities. They give hope to vulnerable populations, particularly women and children. They serve as visible symbols of women's agency in maintaining peace and security."

"Most critically, they help address gender-based violence and ensure that peace processes reflect the needs and perspectives of all segments of society," he added. To enhance the role of women peacekeepers from around the world, P. Harish said, "India set up the Centre for UN Peacekeeping in Delhi to train women military officers from across the globe since." "Last year, participants from 15 countries attended the UN Women Military Officers Course, and women peacekeepers from 35 countries came together for the Conference for Women Peacekeepers from the Global South," he added. But these efforts to empower women cannot "ultimately yield lasting results unless women are genuinely empowered: political-



ly, financially and socially," the Indian envoy to UN said. He cited the example of India in empowering women through the Constitutional reservation of one-third of seats in local self-governing bodies that brought more than a million women to decision-making roles, and the Women's Reservation Act of 2023 that extended the provision to the Parliament.

He mentioned the nation's "consistent record" of women in high offices -- President Droupadi Murmu, former Head of government (Prime Minister Indira Gandhi) and Parliament Speakers (Sumitra Mahajan and Meira Kumar). "Women-led development is a model promoted by the Government of India to make women the driving force of India's economic growth," P. Harish added. The Executive Director of UN-Women, Sima Bahous, said, "Gender equality and women's empowerment is among the most powerful approaches to achieving peace." Since the Council adopted a resolution in 2000 calling for empowering women and involving them in peace processes, evidence shows these measures reduce violence, strengthen peacekeeping, and ensure sustainability of peace agreements. "Women neither choose nor lead many of the conflicts around the world today, yet when they are kept out of the negotiations to end them, they are affected the most," she said. Kaavya Asoka, an activist and advocate for women, said, "Every day, we see International law increasingly undermined in favour of narrow interests." She warned, "The cost of dismantling the norms we have collectively built will be far greater." Asoka, who is the Executive Director of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, called for the Council to go beyond "empty condemnation of attacks on civilians" and take concrete actions like ending arms transfers.



India's drone procurement strategy aligns with PM Modi's 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' vision: Report

ATHENS, JUNE 18

India's drone programme extends beyond defence procurement, reflecting a strategic effort aimed at modernising the armed forces, strengthening domestic industry, reducing foreign dependence, and preparing for contemporary 21st-century warfare. The drone strategy is not shaped solely by military concerns but represents a major industrial and economic project. In contrast to India's traditional defence acquisitions, which depend heavily on foreign suppliers, the new drone initiative is expected to prioritise domestic production, according to a report in Athens-based 'Directus'. "The move aligns closely with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-Reliant India) vision, which seeks to strengthen indigenous manufacturing and reduce dependence on foreign technology. Government officials increasingly view drone development as one of the sectors where India can rapidly establish globally competitive capabilities. The goal is not only to strengthen national security but also to create a domestic drone industry capable of competing in international markets," the report detailed. It highlighted that India's proposed drone procurement programme envisions a comprehensive network of unmanned capabilities across diverse operational domains. The report noted that the acquisition is expected to include "reconnaissance and surveillance drones; logistics and supply drones; loitering munitions; armed strike platforms and tactical battlefield support systems". Collectively, these systems would provide continuous surveillance, faster battlefield awareness, and rapid-response strike capabilities. According to the report, India's indigenous drone expansion is set to complement another major defence acquisition: the procurement of 31 MQ-9B Predator drones from the United States -- with two initiatives designed to serve different but complementary operational roles.

Historical Evolution in Japan's Defense Sector

For decades following the end of World War II, Japan limited itself to self-defense under a "pacifist constitution," but today, it is undergoing revolutionary changes in its defense policy due to shifting international security conditions and increasing threats from neighboring countries. This transformation represents a major geopolitical strategy rather than a mere expansion of military power, as Japan actively accelerates key defense programs, including the milestone procurement of advanced "Tomahawk" missiles from the United States to secure "counter-strike" capabilities. Japan is simultaneously



prioritizing the development of long-range strike capabilities, high-level cyber warfare defenses to protect national infrastructure, and Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based systems to facilitate rapid battlefield decision-making. Furthermore, the nation is expanding drone technology and

strengthening space security systems to prepare for potential future warfare, marking a significant departure from its historical doctrine toward becoming a key regional security partner in the Indo-Pacific, particularly within the "QUAD" alliance. This evolution extends to the global stage, as Japan relaxes strict arms export bans to share defense technology with allies and integrates automation, robotics, and AI into its military to overcome recruitment challenges posed by an aging population. Currently, Japan is nearing its critical goal of increasing defense spending to 2% of its GDP, with the 2026 fiscal year

budget reaching approximately 10.6 trillion yen (\$66.5 billion), which is equivalent to roughly 1.9% of its 2022 GDP. Driven by concerns over China's military modernization, North Korea's missile tests, and the Russia-Ukraine war, the Japanese government has set a firm plan to fully reach this 2% target by the 2027-28 fiscal year. Ultimately, this massive shift reflects Japan's commitment to redefining its security as a responsible and powerful partner while balancing its traditional pacifist values against the modern, volatile geopolitical landscape. - Dr Chityala Ravinder 7798891795.

Rights body flags massive surge in killings by Pakistani authorities in Punjab province

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 18

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) on Thursday expressed grave concern over persistent extrajudicial killings in Pakistan's Punjab province, where 808 police 'encounters' reportedly have resulted in the deaths of 1,100 suspects. According to the HRCP, the organisation had earlier cautioned the Punjab government that the Crime Control Department (CCD) Punjab appeared to be routinely using lethal force as a tactic to "control" crime. Since the CCD was formed in April 2025, the HRCP has recorded 808 police 'encounters' in which at least 1,100 suspects have been killed. The rights body further criticised the killing of a nine-year-old child, describing it as part of a broader normalisation of the use of lethal force outside due process. Calling for an immediate judicial enquiry into the incident, the HRCP said, "The fact



that this normalisation of lethal force outside due process has directly resulted in the death of a nine-year-old child should be a call to conscience for the Punjab government. While the CCD has acknowledged that this incident was a 'violation' of departmental rules, the incident cannot be treated as an isolated operational failure, nor can internal accountability substitute for independent oversight." Meanwhile, as violence against civilians continues

to mount across Balochistan province, human rights organisation Baloch Voice for Justice (BVJ) strongly condemned the extrajudicial killing of another Baloch man, Abdul Razzaq Baloch, by Pakistan's Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) on June 12 in Sibi district. According to the rights body, Razzaq was forcibly disappeared after being taken into custody earlier this year. "The identification of Abdul Razzaq Baloch among those killed in a CTD operation in Sibi on 12 June 2026 raises grave concerns about the treatment of individuals subjected to enforced disappearance. His case reflects a disturbing pattern in which people vanish for months and later appear among those killed in operations presented as armed encounters, without transparency, accountability, or access to legal protections," the BVJ stated. Last month, the HRCP raised alarm over the sharp deterioration in security in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where residents were increasingly caught between enforced disappearances, targeted killings and militant attacks. It stated that the alleged kidnapping of the vice-chancellor, pro-vice chancellor and two other Gwadar University employees in Mastung, while travelling from Gwadar to Quetta, sparked questions about the state's ability to secure major highways and protect residents.

Pakistan: BYC leaders continue sit-in protest inside Quetta jail over 'unfair judicial proceedings'

QUETTA, JUNE 18

The sit-in protest by leaders of the human rights body Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) inside Huda Jail in Balochistan's capital Quetta against "unfair judicial proceedings and faceless trials" entered its sixth consecutive day on Thursday. The rights body described the proceedings against the BYC leaders and activists as "unconstitutional, illegal," and in violation of the basic principles of transparent justice. In a statement shared on its social media platform X, the BYC said, "Today, into its sixth day, the sit-in by BYC leaders inside Huda Jail against faceless trials continues. Five days ago, the organisation's leaders rejected the decision of the faceless court and began a sit-in inside the jail in protest, which is now entering its sixth day." "Following the announcement of the leaders' sit-in, the organisation declared a three-day online protest, which has been ongoing for the past three days. In this protest, individuals from various walks of life have participated and expressed their stance and concerns against unconstitutional practices such as faceless trials," it added. The BYC called on the people of Balochistan, political activists, students, lawyers, intellectuals, and human rights activists to continue raising their voices against faceless trials. "This practice is tantamount to creating an even more suffocating environment for a coercion-ridden society. If the law itself becomes a weapon against those who raise their voices against the ongoing inhumane atrocities in Balochistan, then this system will become intolerable for any human being," it noted. The BYC further alleged that Pakistan's judicial system operates under the directives of the military establishment and applies unequal standards for the elite class and the ordinary citizens. "In Pakistan, the judicial system is constantly being questioned, with claims that it has badly failed to meet legal requirements. Even at the international level, expressions of dissatisfaction are being voiced. This judicial system is being run entirely through directives from the military establishment. Here, separate laws have been made for the elite class and the common people," the rights body stated. "Under this judicial system, the Baloch people are currently the most affected. Daily occurrences include extrajudicial killings, abductions disguised as arrests, violations of the sanctity of veils and homes, dishonour of Baloch women, unjust arrests, imprisonment, and so on," it added. The BYC cited the arrests of its leaders, including Mahrang Baloch, as a clear example of what it called "unjust arrests," saying they have faced "baseless cases" and have remained in detention for the past fourteen months. It also alleged that five Baloch women have been forcibly disappeared.



Iran must change behaviour to get relief: Vance



WASHINGTON, JUNE 18

US Vice President JD Vance on Thursday defended the Trump administration's Iran agreement, saying Tehran would receive no meaningful economic benefits unless it verifiably dismantled elements of its nuclear programme and altered its regional conduct. Speaking at a White House briefing a day after President Donald Trump signed a memorandum of understanding with Iran aimed at ending months of conflict, Vance said the agreement was already helping stabilise energy markets and restoring commercial traffic through the Strait of Hormuz. "The United States isn't giving up a cent of money to Iran," Vance said, rejecting criticism that the deal offers Tehran major concessions up front. He said Iran's nuclear infrastructure had been "destroyed" during the conflict and argued that any future sanctions relief would be tied to inspections, verification measures and broader changes in Iranian behaviour. "If they don't change their behaviour, they don't get the benefit of the bargain," he said. Vance said more than 12 million barrels of oil had passed through the Strait of Hormuz overnight, while oil prices and petrol prices in the United States had declined from levels

seen during the conflict. "The President's peace plan in Iran is already bearing real fruits for the American people," he said. The vice president repeatedly stressed that the agreement was based on verification rather than trust. "We don't trust words. We trust action, and we trust conduct," Vance said. He said Iran would be required to permit inspections and take steps to eliminate its stockpile of highly enriched uranium before receiving broader economic benefits. Vance said Washington would closely monitor financial flows and retain the ability to restore economic pressure if Tehran failed to comply. "No sanctions will come off

unless they perform the benefit of the bargain, and every sanction will come back on," he said. Vance also sought to draw a contrast with the 2015 nuclear agreement negotiated under former President Barack Obama. "The Obama deal allowed enrichment. Ours will not," he said. "The Obama deal gave them over \$1 billion of American money. This deal gives them \$0 of American money." The vice president said Gulf Arab partners supported the current framework, unlike the 2015 accord. "The Gulf Coast coalition loves this deal because they think that it makes Iran weaker," he said. Asked about criticism from some Republican lawmakers and Israeli officials, Vance urged sceptics to give the process time. "So many of what I've read or heard that people believe about this deal is just fundamentally untrue," he said. He confirmed that Congress would receive a formal briefing on the agreement and said technical talks involving US and Iranian negotiators were expected to begin in Switzerland in the coming days. The agreement comes after months of military confrontation involving Iran, Israel and US forces, raising concerns about regional stability and the security of global energy supplies.

US V-P Vance warns allies not to undermine Iran deal

WASHINGTON, JUNE 18

US Vice President J.D. Vance on Thursday delivered a blunt warning to critics of the Trump administration's Iran agreement, saying that efforts to undermine the deal could jeopardise a rare opportunity to stabilise the Middle East after months of conflict. Speaking at the White House, Vance defended the agreement against criticism from some Israeli Ministers and Republican lawmakers, saying many opponents had misunderstood its terms. "So many of what I've read or heard that people believe about this deal is just fundamentally untrue," the US Vice President said. A significant portion of Vance's remarks focused on Lebanon, where he said the US administration was trying to reduce violence involving Hezbollah and Israel. "We expect Hezbollah is not going to be firing rockets and firing drones at the Israelis," he added. At the same time, Vance said Israel also had responsibilities under the broader peace framework. "We also expect that the



Israelis are not going to be going wild in Lebanon." Vance acknowledged that ceasefire in the region are often imperfect. "The President of United States said this a couple of weeks ago, that a ceasefire in that region of the world just means they're shooting a little bit less at each other than they were before." Still, Vance said violence had declined significantly and diplomacy was producing results. Sharp words for Israeli Ministers Vance reserved his strongest language for members of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition who have publicly criticised the agreement. "Donald J. Trump is the only Head of state in the entire world who is sympathetic to the nation of Israel at this moment in time,"

he said. "If I was in the Cabinet of the Israeli government, I might not be attacking the only powerful ally that I have anywhere left in the entire world." The Vice President also highlighted American military support for Israel during the conflict. "Over the last three months, two-thirds of the defensive weapons that have protected your homeland have been built by American hands and paid for by American tax dollars." Vance said the broader goal was to create conditions that would reduce Iranian support for armed groups across the region and strengthen state institutions. "What this agreement does fundamentally is it requires Iran to behave like a normal country," he added. "And if they do, then that's a great thing for everybody." The agreement comes as Washington seeks to contain tensions stretching from the Gulf to the eastern Mediterranean. Hezbollah, backed by Iran, has been a central actor in Lebanon's security landscape for decades and remains a key concern for Israel. The United States has long supported Israel's security while also backing efforts to strengthen Lebanon's state institutions and prevent wider regional conflict.

Regional peace framework Vance said the broader goal was to create conditions that would reduce Iranian support for armed groups across the region and strengthen state institutions. "What this agreement does fundamentally is it requires Iran to behave like a normal country," he added. "And if they do, then that's a great thing for everybody." The agreement comes as Washington seeks to contain tensions stretching from the Gulf to the eastern Mediterranean. Hezbollah, backed by Iran, has been a central actor in Lebanon's security landscape for decades and remains a key concern for Israel. The United States has long supported Israel's security while also backing efforts to strengthen Lebanon's state institutions and prevent wider regional conflict.

Ex-Australian PM Scott Morrison Joins BLS International
NEW DELHI: (JUN 18)

BAL Services Ltd on Thursday announced the appointment of former Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison as its Global Strategic Advisor. The company hopes to draw on Morrison's deep economic, trade, and commercial background to further its long-term growth vision built on the pillars of cutting-edge technologies, government engagement, public-service transformation and long-term institutional partnerships, BLS International Services said in a statement. "Morrison's experience in leading a major nation and managing complex public institutions provides valuable strategic insight for BLS International, which continues to partner with governments worldwide for delivering secure, efficient and citizen-centric services," BLS International Chairman Diwakar Agarwal said.

MONEY MATTERS

Sensex closes 254 points higher, Nifty near 24,200; IndiGo up 3%

Benchmark indices extended their winning streak on Thursday as falling crude oil prices and strength in banking stocks helped the market overcome weakness in information technology shares triggered by the US Federal Reserve's hawkish commentary.

The S&P BSE Sensex rose 254.36 points, or 0.33%, to close at 77,409.98, while the NSE Nifty50 gained around 82 points, or 0.34%, to settle at 24,168. The benchmarks have now risen about 4.8% and 4.3%, respectively, over the last five trading sessions. Markets remained range-bound for most of the day before witnessing a late surge in the final hour of trade, aided by expectations of foreign investor buying and continued optimism surrounding lower oil prices. **FALLING CRUDE REMAINS THE BIGGEST POSITIVE** The biggest support for Indian equities continued to be the sharp correction in crude oil prices following the US-



Iran peace agreement. Brent crude fell another 2.1% to around \$77.8 per barrel after the United States and Iran signed an interim agreement aimed at ending their conflict. WTI crude also remained below \$76 per barrel. Lower crude prices are a major positive for India as they help ease inflationary pressures, improve the current account balance, support the rupee and reduce concerns over imported inflation. **BANKING STOCKS LEAD THE MARKET HIGHER** Banking and financial stocks emerged as the key drivers of Thursday's gains. Nifty Financial Services rose 0.73%, while Nifty PSU

Bank gained 0.66% and Nifty Private Bank added 0.49%. Among Sensex stocks, SBI climbed 1.64%, HDFC Bank gained 1.49%, Axis Bank rose 0.67% and ICICI Bank advanced 0.39%. Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Investments Limited, said banking stocks outperformed due to expectations of strong credit growth and attractive valuations. "The domestic equities traded within a range, maintaining a positive bias as the initial optimism surrounding the US-Iran peace deal was tempered by hawkish remarks from the US Fed. However, the sustained decline in crude oil prices and moderation in Indian bond yields could offset

inflationary concerns in the second half of FY27," he said. **IT STOCKS CONTINUE TO DRAG** While the broader market remained positive, IT stocks continued to face selling pressure after the Federal Reserve indicated that interest rates may remain higher for longer and could even rise later this year. Nifty IT was the worst-performing sectoral index, falling 1.19%. Infosys emerged as the biggest loser on the Sensex, declining 2.66%. Tech Mahindra fell 1.07%, TCS slipped 0.82% and HCLTech lost 0.41%. Higher US interest rates can impact technology spending by global clients and reduce the attractiveness of emerging markets, making investors cautious on export-oriented IT companies. **INDIGO, TRENT AND BEL SHINE** Among the top gainers on the Sensex, IndiGo parent InterGlobe Aviation rose 2.73%, followed by Trent, which gained 2.52%. BEL climbed 2.08%, NTPC advanced 1.86%, SBI rose 1.64% and HDFC Bank gained 1.49%. Other no-

JioBlackRock Integrates Overnight Fund with 'Savings Pro'

MUMBAI, JUNE 18, 2026

JioBlackRock Asset Management Private Limited, a joint venture between Jio Financial Services Limited and BlackRock, one of the world's leading asset managers, today announced the integration of the JioBlackRock Overnight Fund with 'Savings Pro', a savings-plus-investment feature available on the JioFinance App through Jio Payments Bank Limited (JPBL). The integration enables customers to seamlessly deploy surplus balances from their bank accounts into overnight mutual funds through a fully digital experience. JPBL's Savings Pro is designed to combine the convenience of digital banking with access to mutual fund investments. The feature allows customers to automatically invest idle balances above a self-defined threshold into overnight funds while retaining liquidity and flexibility. The offering provides customers with the option of an Auto-Invest feature, where surplus balances above a selected threshold are invested on a daily basis, or a One-Time investment option for immediate deployment. Customers can set thresholds between ₹5,000 and ₹1,50,000, with a daily investment limit of up to ₹1,50,000 through the platform. Savings Pro is structured to offer an alternative for managing surplus balances while maintaining ease of access to funds. Customers can redeem up to ₹50,000 or 90% of the invested amount, whichever is lower, on an instant basis. Redemption requests beyond this limit are processed

on a T+1 basis, in accordance with applicable regulatory guidelines. The offering has no entry or exit load, no lock-in period, and no hidden charges. Sid Swaminathan, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, JioBlackRock Asset Management Private Limited, said: "Customers today are increasingly seeking simple and seamless ways to manage surplus balances. Through this integration, we are combining digital banking convenience with access to overnight fund solutions in a transparent and accessible manner. This is aligned with our broader effort to expand access to investment solutions for a wider set of investors." Vinod Eswaran, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Jio Payments Bank Limited, said: "At Jio Payments Bank, we continue to focus on enhancing digitally enabled financial solutions for customers. Savings Pro is designed to provide a convenient way to manage surplus balances while maintaining flexibility, liquidity and ease of access." Savings Pro is available to Jio Payments Bank savings and salary account customers and offers a fully digital onboarding experience enabled through Aadhaar and video KYC on the JioFinance App. Customers can set or modify thresholds, track investments and monitor transactions through the platform. This integration represents a step towards building a more integrated, accessible and digitally enabled financial ecosystem, combining everyday banking with investment access for customers.

NSE IPO May Unlock ₹25,000 Crore for Key Investors

NSE has filed draft papers for its long-delayed initial public offering after nearly a decade. The move could unlock major gains for existing investors and value the exchange at about \$57 billion.

AFTER a wait of nearly 10 years, the National Stock Exchange (NSE) has finally taken a major step towards its stock market debut. India's largest stock exchange on Wednesday filed draft papers for its long-awaited initial public offering (IPO), reviving a listing process that first began in 2016 but was repeatedly delayed by regulatory hurdles and legal proceedings. The filing marks a milestone not just for the exchange, but also for some of its biggest investors who have waited years for an opportunity to unlock the value of their holdings. The IPO could generate windfall gains of nearly Rs 25,000 crore for the top shareholders participating in the share sale, with State Bank of India (SBI), Singapore's Temasek and the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board among the biggest

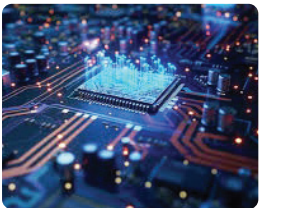
beneficiaries, reported news agency Reuters. The NSE IPO is expected to be one of India's largest public offerings, alongside Reliance Jio's proposed listing, and could value the exchange at around \$57 billion, making it one of the world's most valuable stock exchange operators. The exchange filed draft papers for its initial public offering (IPO) on Wednesday, reviving a listing journey that first began nearly a decade ago. **SBI SET TO EMERGE AS BIGGEST WINNER** Among all shareholders expected to sell shares in the IPO, State Bank of India (SBI) stands to make the biggest gain. Reuters calculations based on the draft prospectus show that SBI could earn about Rs 4,700 crore from the sale of part of its stake in the exchange. **Other major beneficiaries include:** Morgan Stanley's Mauritius-based fund MS Strategic, which could make around Rs 2,934 crore Singapore sovereign wealth fund Temasek, through its Aranda Investment arm, which could gain about Rs 2,067 crore Cana-



da Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB), which could earn roughly Rs 1,871 crore Overall, Reuters estimates that the top 10 shareholders participating in the offer could collectively pocket around \$2.6 billion, or nearly Rs 25,000 crore at current exchange rates. **WHY IS THE NSE IPO SUCH A BIG DEAL?** The listing is expected to be one of the biggest IPOs in India this year alongside Reliance Jio's proposed public issue. Unlike a traditional IPO where a company raises fresh capital, NSE's offering will be a pure Offer for Sale (OFS). Existing shareholders will sell around 6% of the exchange's equity, while the company itself will not issue any new shares. The IPO is expected to be worth around \$3.3 billion, according to Reuters. That would make it one of the largest public offerings in India's capital market history. **NSE MAY BE VALUED AT \$57 BILLION** Shares of NSE currently trade at around Rs 2,000 in the unlisted market. Based on those prices, the exchange is estimated to be worth around \$57 billion, Reuters reported. That valuation would place NSE among India's most valuable companies and make it the world's fifth-most valuable stock exchange, behind only a handful of global exchange operators. Sources cited by Reuters said the IPO could be priced at around Rs 1,900 per share, representing a discount of 5% to 10% compared to current unlisted market prices.

At that level, the exchange would still command a valuation close to \$57 billion. **A LISTING THAT TOOK NEARLY 10 YEARS** The NSE's IPO journey has been one of the longest in India's corporate history. The exchange first filed IPO papers in 2016. However, its plans were derailed by regulatory investigations, legal disputes and the co-location controversy, which kept the listing on hold for years. While rival BSE went public in 2017, NSE remained unlisted despite dominating India's stock market ecosystem. The breakthrough came earlier this year when the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) cleared the exchange to move ahead with the public issue. The filing of draft papers now marks the strongest sign yet that the long wait may finally be coming to an end. **WHAT ARE INVESTORS BETTING ON?** NSE is not just India's largest stock exchange. It is also the world's most active derivatives exchange by trading volume. The exchange has benefited enormously from the retail investing boom in India.

According to Reuters, NSE's revenue has more than doubled since 2019 to around Rs 18,700 crore in FY26, largely driven by strong growth in options trading. The exchange reported a net profit of over Rs 10,300 crore in FY26, making it one of the most profitable financial institutions in the country. NSE now has more than 2 lakh shareholders and sits at the centre of India's rapidly expanding capital markets ecosystem. **RISKS STILL REMAIN** Despite its strong position, the exchange has highlighted certain risks in its IPO documents. Reuters reported that NSE's growth could be affected by future regulatory measures aimed at curbing excessive activity in derivatives trading. The exchange has already seen growth moderate over the past year after a series of regulatory changes in the derivatives segment. However, market experts remain optimistic about the long-term outlook. Ravi Varanasi, former group president at NSE and now a market consultant, told Reuters that the exchange's dominance in the cash market gives it significant room for future growth.



GenAI can add \$14-17 bln to India's real estate economy: Report
NEW DELHI: (JUN 18)

Generative AI (GenAI) has the potential to add USD 14-17 billion to India's growing real estate economy over the next seven years by enhancing operational efficiency, according to a report. Consultancy firm EY-Parthenon and realtors' apex body CREDAI, in its report 'GenAI in Indian real estate - Scaling the next frontier of innovation' released on Thursday, stated that the adoption of GenAI could increase sales velocity by 30-50 per cent and reduce project costs. "Real estate developers are increasingly recognising the strategic value of GenAI in unlocking operational efficiency, customer insights and competitive differentiation when deployed effectively," the report said.

Got your Form 16? Check these 6 details before filing your ITR

Since Form 16 forms the foundation of income reporting for salaried taxpayers, spending a few minutes verifying the information can save you a lot of trouble later.

The income tax return (ITR) filing season is here, and if you're a salaried employee, chances are you have already received your Form 16 from your employer or will receive it soon. Many taxpayers treat Form 16 as the green signal to start filing their returns immediately. But tax experts say that can be a mistake. Before you rush to file your ITR, it is important to carefully review the details mentioned in your Form 16. A mismatch in salary figures, incorrect PAN details, missing deductions or TDS that has not been deposited with the government can lead to refund delays and, in some cases, notices from the Income Tax Department. Since Form 16 forms the foundation of income reporting for salaried taxpayers, spending a few minutes verifying the



information can save you a lot of trouble later. Here are six important details you should check before filing your income tax return. **VERIFY YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS** The first step is to carefully check your basic information. Ensure that your name, PAN, employer's name, TAN, financial year and assessment year are correctly mentioned in the document. Even a small error in these details can create problems while claiming TDS credit or filing your income tax return. **MATCH SALARY DETAILS WITH YOUR PAYSLEIPS** Form 16 should accurately reflect the salary you received during the financial year. Compare the gross salary, allowances, bonuses and other components mentioned in Form 16 with your monthly salary slips and annual salary statement. If you find any mismatch, contact your employer before filing your return. **REVIEW ALL DEDUCTIONS AND EXEMPTIONS** One of the most common mistakes taxpayers make is assuming that all deductions have been correctly captured. Check whether investments and expenses claimed by you are properly reflected under

the relevant sections, including Section 80C for PPF, ELSS and LIC premiums, Section 80D for health insurance premiums, and Section 80CCD for National Pension System (NPS) contributions. Also verify whether any home loan interest deduction or other income details declared to your employer have been included correctly. **CHECK WHICH TAX REGIME WAS USED** Many employees forget to verify whether their employer calculated TDS under the old tax regime or the new tax regime. This becomes important because the tax liability may differ depending on the regime selected. Even if your employer deducted TDS under one regime, you can still choose a different regime while filing your ITR, subject to the applicable rules. **MATCH FORM 16 WITH AIS AND FORM 26AS** This is one of the most important checks before filing your return. Compare the information in Form 16 with your Annual Information

Statement (AIS) and Form 26AS. These documents help verify whether your salary income, TDS credits, interest income, dividends and other financial transactions have been correctly reported to the Income Tax Department. The TDS shown in Form 16 should match the tax credit reflected in Form 26AS. If there is a mismatch, you should immediately contact your employer. **REPORT ERRORS BEFORE FILING YOUR ITR** Do not ignore any discrepancy, no matter how minor it appears. If you spot incorrect salary figures, missing deductions, wrong TDS details or any other error, reach out to your employer's HR, payroll or finance department. Your employer may need to file a revised TDS return and issue a corrected Form 16 before you proceed with your ITR filing. Taking a few minutes to verify these details can help ensure a smoother filing process, faster refunds and fewer chances of receiving a notice from the Income Tax Department later.



The third dimension – after inspectors and employers, now the consultants

In the eleventh part of this series on labour laws and Inspector Raj, this article examines the role of labour consultants who, instead of ensuring compliance, sometimes help employers create the appearance of compliance while facilitating violations of labour laws.

So far, I have presented cases of partial compliance by employers and the connivance of inspectors who chose not to report such violations. I have not yet dealt with the role of consultants. **Now I come to them. They fall into two categories.** The first consists of professionals possessing the requisite qualifications who are appointed or engaged by employers. Most discharge their responsibilities honestly, but some do not hesitate to suggest methods of avoiding compliance. **FACILITATION IN THE GUISE OF CONSULTANCY** The second category comprises self-styled consultants, often without professional expertise, who function mainly as facilitators. For some, it is a full-time vocation. For others, it is a part-time activity, and they may include serving or retired employees. Their consultancy can deliver results as long as proper scrutiny is not undertaken. I shall share two experiences. A regular inspection of a small factory was conducted on 27 June 1988, covering the period from August

1986 to September 1987. Subsequently, the unit was selected randomly for a special inspection, and the task was assigned to me. After serving the mandatory prior notice, I reached the factory on 27 June 1988. It was a modest proprietary concern located in an industrial estate. The factory manufactured natural and coloured polythene bags, curved polythene bags, tubes, sheets, reprocessed granules, and shopping and wedding bags. At first glance, nothing appeared unusual. Then I began examining the records and found payments made to another concern. The employer explained that the cutting and sealing work, along with the washing and printing of polythene bags, had been outsourced to another factory—let us call it Factory B—located elsewhere in the same town. There was nothing unusual in subcontracting work. However, what caught my attention was the address of Factory B. It was the residential address of the proprietor of Factory A. Then the matter became even more interesting. The sole proprietor of Factory B was none other than the wife of the proprietor of Factory A. The balance sheets of Factory A revealed that it had paid 24,438 during 1985–86 and 35,729.97 during 1986–87 to Factory B towards "cutting and sealing charges." These amounts were strikingly high when compared with the salaries paid by Factory A to its own employees: 12,752.40 during 1985–86 and 13,008.55 during 1986–87.



The 90-Second Fix

How Somatic Breathing Is Helping Professionals Combat Workplace Burnout

By the time the clock strikes mid-afternoon, many office workers find themselves battling an all-too-familiar slump. Concentration fades, energy levels dip, and even routine tasks begin to feel overwhelming. What is often dismissed as an ordinary workday lull may, in fact, be a sign of a much larger problem: workplace burnout.

Globally, nearly 67% of office workers experience some form of burnout, a condition that is increasingly affecting both physical and mental health. Beyond reduced productivity, burnout contributes to rising healthcare costs, chronic stress, and long-term health complications among urban professionals. Midday fatigue, one of its most common manifestations, often arrives alongside symptoms such as brain fog, irritability, and diminished focus, making it harder for employees to perform effectively.

Health experts warn that prolonged stress, nervous system dysregulation, and cognitive exhaustion are becoming major contributors to modern health challenges. As workplaces become increasingly demanding and digital distractions multiply, professionals are searching for practical, evidence-based solutions to regain control of their well-being. One such solution gaining attention is somatic breathing, a simple technique that can be performed in as little as 90 seconds.

Understanding Somatic Breathing

The term “somatic” refers to body-based awareness. Somatic breathing is a mindfulness-focused breathing practice designed to calm the nervous system by directing attention to the body’s physical sensations while regulating the breath. Unlike ordinary deep breathing exercises, somatic breathing emphasizes awareness of bodily responses and intentional control of breathing patterns. Neuroscience supports the effectiveness of this approach. Breathing directly influences the vagus nerve, a key component of the parasympathetic nervous system responsible for relaxation and recovery. Controlled breathing can help regulate stress hormones and restore balance when the body becomes trapped in a prolonged state of alertness. Practitioners suggest that even a brief, 90-second session can help interrupt the cycle of stress and bring the nervous system back to a more regulated state, particularly when performed consistently throughout the day.

Why Burnout Peaks in the Middle of the Day

Many workers experience a noticeable decline in energy during the afternoon. This phenomenon is not merely psychological; it is rooted in biology. Midday burnout often occurs when cortisol, the body’s primary stress hormone, naturally declines and the internal body clock enters a lower-energy phase. Long hours spent sitting, excessive screen exposure, poor dietary habits, dehydration, and the mental burden of constant decision-making can intensify this natural dip.

These lifestyle factors place additional demands on the nervous system, forcing it to work harder to maintain focus and alertness. Over time, the body can become stuck in a heightened “fight-or-flight” response, resulting in chronic fatigue, anxiety, and reduced mental performance.

A Neurologist’s Perspective on the 90-Second Reset

According to Dr. Sudhir Kumar, Consultant Neurologist at Apollo Hospitals, somatic breathing offers a practical method for interrupting work-induced stress. “Somatic breathing works as a rapid reset for the brain and body during work-induced stress,” he explains. “During prolonged work hours, the brain often remains in a heightened stress state, leading to midday fatigue and reduced productivity.

The process involves the following steps:

- Sit upright and relax your shoulders.
- Inhale slowly through your nose for four to five seconds.
- Hold the breath gently for approximately two seconds. Exhale slowly for six to eight seconds, making the exhalation longer than the inhalation.
- Focus your attention on the sensations in your chest, abdomen, and body as you breathe.
- Repeat the cycle six to eight times over roughly 90 seconds.

The extended exhalation signals safety to the nervous system and encourages a shift toward relaxation and recovery.

tigue and reduced productivity. A simple 90-second somatic breathing exercise can activate the parasympathetic nervous system, helping the body shift from ‘fight-or-flight’ to a ‘rest-and-recover’ mode. This not only reduces stress hormones like cortisol but also improves mental clarity and focus almost immediately.” Experts note that the technique may help restore physiological balance, improve oxygen delivery to the brain, and create the mental reset necessary for sustained concentration and productivity.

How to Practice the 90-Second Somatic Breathing Technique

One of the biggest advantages of somatic breathing is its simplicity. It requires no special equipment and can be performed at a desk, during a meeting break, or whenever stress levels begin to rise.

The Science Behind the Benefits

Research continues to highlight the physiological advantages of controlled breathing techniques. Studies suggest that somatic breathing may help lower cortisol levels, reducing the harmful effects of chronic stress on both the mind and body. Evidence also indicates improvements in heart rate variability (HRV), a marker associated with the body’s ability to adapt to stress. Higher HRV is generally linked to better cardiovascular health and emotional resilience. Additional reported benefits include enhanced mental clarity, improved concentration, reduced symptoms of anxiety and burnout, and stronger emotional regulation. These outcomes are particularly relevant for professionals who spend long hours navigating high-pressure environments.

Recognising the Warning Signs of Burnout

Burnout rarely appears overnight. Instead, it develops gradually through a pattern of persistent symptoms that can easily be overlooked.

Common warning signs include:

- Constant exhaustion during the middle of the workday
- Difficulty concentrating or persistent brain fog
- Frequent headaches and irritability
- Declining productivity despite sustained effort
- Feelings of emotional detachment or overwhelm

Ignoring these signals can allow burnout to worsen, potentially affecting both professional performance and overall health.

Beyond Breathing: Additional Strategies for Recovery

While somatic breathing can be a valuable tool, experts emphasize that sustainable recovery from burnout requires broader lifestyle changes. Maintaining proper hydration and eating balanced meals can help stabilize energy levels throughout the day. Short movement breaks can counteract the effects of prolonged sitting and improve circulation. Limiting excessive caffeine consumption may prevent energy crashes and fluctuations in alertness.

Regular exposure to natural sunlight supports healthy circadian rhythms, while consistent sleep habits remain one of the most effective ways to restore cognitive and emotional resilience. Although anyone can practice somatic breathing, it may be especially beneficial for individuals working in high-pressure environments. Professionals facing demanding workloads, desk workers experiencing screen fatigue, and people struggling with anxiety or burnout symptoms may find the technique particularly useful. As workplace stress continues to rise, accessible interventions such as somatic breathing offer a practical way to support mental and physical well-being. In just 90 seconds, a deliberate breathing practice may help professionals reset their nervous systems, improve focus, and navigate the demands of modern work with greater balance and resilience.

Who Can Benefit Most?

Although anyone can practice somatic breathing, it may be especially beneficial for individuals working in high-pressure environments. Professionals facing demanding workloads, desk workers experiencing screen fatigue, and people struggling with anxiety or burnout symptoms may find the technique particularly useful. As workplace stress continues to rise, accessible interventions such as somatic breathing offer a practical way to support mental and physical well-being. In just 90 seconds, a deliberate breathing practice may help professionals reset their nervous systems, improve focus, and navigate the demands of modern work with greater balance and resilience.



Pudina Water vs Khus Water Which Is More Cooling

The rising heatwave has made the temperatures rise to 45 degrees Celsius and higher, which has made the risk of dehydration imminent. This has resulted in the growing popularity of traditional cooling drinks such as pudina water and khus water. These summer drinks are consumed traditionally due to their cooling properties. Mint water and khus water are both backed by science to function as internal coolers. A review published in the Sage journal confirms that menthol in mint acts as an internal coolant in summers. Research published in the Discover Geoscience journal pinpoints that khus water is beneficial for inter-

nal cooling in summers as it contains phenolic acids and terpenoids with potent antioxidant effects. Cooling drinks in summer are necessary to prevent dehydration and heat exhaustion, which are common when temperatures reach extremes. It can also help regulate body temperature while also supporting digestion and maintaining electrolyte balance.

What Is Pudina Water?

Pudina water is infused with mint leaves known for their cooling, digestive, and refreshing properties. It is popular in Indian households during the summer. Mint water is beneficial to counter summer heat, as it contains

menthol, which helps the gastrointestinal muscles relax. Furthermore, it also contains polyphenols, such as rosmarinic acid, that suppress inflammatory pathways.

Mint leaves also contain flavonoids and phenolic acids, which exhibit scavenging activity for free radicals.

What Is Khus Water?

Khus water is made from vetiver roots (khus), and it is also known as a traditional Ayurvedic cooling drink. It is also known for deep body cooling and calming effects, which make it beneficial for summer heat. Research published in the Pharmacology journal highlights that khus water retains

antioxidant properties that help reduce oxidative stress, linked to heat, fatigue, and inflammation.

Pudina Water: Benefits For Summer Cooling

Pudina water has multiple benefits for summer cooling and can be helped with the following:

- Promotes instant freshness and hydration, which is necessary in periods of extreme heat.
- Supports digestion and reduces bloating that is commonly experienced in summers.
- Mild cooling effect on body temperature, which is necessary to keep dehydration and the risks associated with it at bay.
- Helps relieve nausea and heat fatigue that can have ill-effects on the body.
- Khus Water Benefits For Body Cooling



The Hundred

Fatima Sana lands wildcard deal with Birmingham Phoenix



LONDON: Pakistan captain Fatima Sana will become the first player from her country to feature in the women's Hundred after being signed by Birmingham Phoenix in Thursday's wildcard draft. Fatima has now filled the Phoenix's fourth overseas slot, after it was vacated as Cricket Australia withdrew Lucy Hamilton to manage her workload. Fatima, the seam-bowling all-rounder, will get 15,000 pounds for playing at The Hundred, though her availability could be affected by Pakistan's tour of Sri Lanka from July 23 to August 4. Her selection comes a day after she produced a stunning all-round performance in Pakistan's defeat to South Africa .

Asian Doubles Squash

Abhay-Velavan kick off title defence in style



SARAWAK (MALAYSIA): India's leading men's duo, Abhay Singh and Velavan Senthilkumar, began their title defence successfully at the 3rd Asian Doubles Squash Championships in Sarawak, Malaysia, on Thursday. The top seed smoothly defeated the South Korean duo of Oh Seojin and Min-Woo Lee 11-7, 11-10 in Pool A, using a mix of finesse and control to secure the win in a quick, intense match. Meanwhile, compatriots Rahul Baitha and Suraj Chand defeated Singapore's Samuel Quek Wei Yi/Justin Yap 11-3, 11-3, but narrowly lost to Japan's Naoki Hayashi/Pen Makino 8-11, 11-8, 6-11 in Pool B.

Manika Batra raises questions over her exclusion from Asian Games squad

NEW DELHI, JUNE 18

The Table Tennis Federation of India has picked a 10-member men's and women's team led by Olympians Sreeja Akula and G Sathiyan for the upcoming Asian Games 2026, which has resulted in another Olympian, Manika Batra, raising questions over her exclusion from the squad for the event to be played at Aichi-Nagoya in Japan in a few months.

Table tennis at the Asian Games 2026 is scheduled to take place from September 20 to 28. Medal events will be held across the team, singles and doubles categories.

The men's team includes Harmeet Desai, Manav Thakkar, Manush Shah, Payas Jain, besides Sathiyan, while the women's side comprises Sreeja Akula, Yashaswini Ghorpade, Diya Chitale, Sutirtha Mukherjee, and Syndrela Das.

Batra was selected among the reserves along with Ankur Bhattacharjee, Ronit Bhanja (men), and female paddler Swastika Ghosh. Manika's absence from the squad was surprising and has resulted in a controversy with the player asking the Sports Minister, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, to inquire that the selection process is "transparent, accountable, and beyond doubt".

"My exclusion from the Asian Games 2026 squad is deeply disheartening, not only because of the outcome, but because of the manner in which the selection criteria appear to have been interpreted and applied. No specific reason has been communicated to me. I respectfully request the Hon'ble Sports Minister and the leadership of the Indian Olympic Association to kindly look into this matter to ensure that the process is transparent, consistent, and fair to all athletes," Manika Batra said in a statement posted on social media.

The 31-year-old Manika, who has won two gold medals, a silver medal, and a bronze medal in the Commonwealth



Games and a bronze medal in the Asian Games, said the TTFI needs to explain the selection criteria used for picking the sides. "I am seeking full clarity and accountability so that there is no ambiguity in how selection decisions are made at the highest level.

As per publicly reported information, the selection framework is understood to be based on a combination of World Ranking, National Ranking, and Selection Committee discretion.

"If this is indeed the case, then transparency requires that each component and its application be clearly explained to the athletes concerned. I also note that during the previous Asian Games selection cycle, players who were outside similar ranking thresholds in both World Ranking (beyond the top 50) and National Ranking (outside the top 10) were still included in the squad

under special considerations and were given special privileges," said Batra in her statement.

"This makes it important that the present selection clearly explains how the same or similar principles have been applied or not applied in my case," she added.

Batra said she is near the cut-off limit of World Ranking of 50, and with the rankings being dynamic, could rise in the list soon. "With respect to World Ranking, I am currently World No. 51, having moved just outside the Top 50 very recently. The margin is extremely narrow, and I remain very close to that bracket. I have not dropped to a distant range; rather, I am at a marginal difference where movement in either direction can occur within a single ranking cycle. In such a context, I find it difficult to understand how this alone becomes a decisive factor outweighing

long-standing performance at the highest level," she added.

Regarding her performance at the international stage, the paddler from Delhi, the first Indian male or female player to reach the Round of 16 in the singles section at the Asian Games, said she has been quite consistent this season.

"In my case this season, I have been more consistent in performance and have recorded wins against strong international opponents, including U-19 youth champions from China and several other top Asian players. My current form reflects consistency at a high international level," he said. Manika said, "If rankings and numbers are to be the primary basis of selection, it is also important to recognise that ranking fluctuations are dynamic for all athletes within the same competitive cycle and can change significantly over short periods. Regarding National Ranking considerations, I understand that domestic performance has been cited in the selection discussion. However, with the increasing number of international tournaments and the demands of maintaining consistent performance at the highest global level, it is not always feasible to participate in every domestic event." She said she has a few concerns regarding the selection process.

"A key concern remains the consistency of application of selection norms. If discretion forms even a small part of the process, then the manner in which it is applied must be transparent, uniform, and clearly recorded. Any variation in its application naturally raises questions of fairness and equal treatment.

"I have formally sought a detailed explanation regarding my non-selection, including the complete basis of the decision, applicable norms, selection criteria, and the manner in which each factor was weighted in my case. I expect a clear, structured, and factual response supported by documented criteria," she said.



Tommy Paul notches 7th straight win at Queen's Club

LONDON, JUNE 18

Tommy Paul of the United States continued his march in the HSBC Championships at the Queen's Club in London, bringing out some of his best tennis to get the better of Botić van de Zandschulp, progressing to the quarterfinals on Thursday.

The 29-year-old Paul came up with a gritty second-round display to defeat Van de Zandschulp 7-6(5), 6-3 and extend his winning streak at the grass-court ATP 500 event to seven matches. Paul, who lifted the title at Queen's Club in 2024 before missing last year's event through injury, recovered from an unsteady start and struck a series of brilliant winners to book his return to the quarter-finals. After dropping serve in the opening game, Paul found himself in a nervy first set that featured four breaks of serve between the pair. However, the eighth seed raised his level when it mattered most, delivering a composed tie-break performance before taking control in the second set. Having withdrawn from the 2025 edition due to an abdominal injury, Paul has wasted little time making his mark on his return. The American now boasts an impressive 9-2 record at Queen's Club, according to the Infosys ATP Win/Loss Index, having defeated five Top-50 opponents on his way to the 2024 title.

In the quarter-finals in west London, Paul will face fourth seed Alejandro Davidovich Fokina, who earlier eased past the dangerous Corina Moutet 6-4, 6-3 in one hour, 39 minutes. Davidovich Fokina now leads the Frenchman 3-0 in their Lexus ATP head-to-head series, having also beaten him in Hamburg last month. "We know each other very well, so it's difficult to play against a friend," Davidovich Fokina said of Moutet. "He's a very tricky player.

Dropped England Test captain Stokes to turn out for Durham in County Championship

LONDON, JUNE 18

England Test captain Ben Stokes will make his return to competitive cricket for Durham after being named in their 15-member squad for the County Championship match against Northamptonshire beginning at Chester-le-Street near Durham on Friday.

Stokes, along with fast bowler Gus Atkinson, were left out of England's ongoing second Test against New Zealand at The Oval due to investigations pending into a nightclub incident in London. Both Stokes and Atkinson, however, have been cleared to feature in domestic cricket.

While seam-bowling all-rounder Stokes will line up for Durham at Chester-le-Street, Atkinson is expected to be part of Surrey's squad for their fixture against Glamorgan in Cardiff.

The duo breached England's midnight curfew while celebrating their 115-run victory over New Zealand in the first Test at Lord's and were present in the nightclub when a member of the team's security staff



was struck by a Saracens rugby player. The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and the independent Cricket Regulator are conducting their inquiries. But concerns over Stokes' future surfaced in the immediate aftermath, with speculation about a possible retirement from international cricket.

Those fears were eased when Stokes, 35, returned to training with Durham, and is now set to play his third county match of the season. In Stokes' absence, Joe Root has taken charge as England's Test captain on a 'game by game' basis.

Phillips century helps New Zealand take upper hand against England

LONDON, JUNE 18

Glenn Phillips scored a hundred and shared an 87-run partnership with Kyle Jamieson before their bowlers claimed crucial wickets to leave England struggling at the end of the second day of the second Test at The Oval in London on Thursday.

New Zealand dominated the day with Phillips' hundred and Jamieson's 31, helping them reach a first-innings total of 391 before Matt Henry (2-57) and Will O'Rourke (2-61) struck crucial blows to reduce England to 222-6 in 59 overs at stumps, leaving them 169 runs behind and in a position to further strengthen their position. New Zealand had lost the first Test at Lord's and now have a good opportunity to



win the second match and level the three-match series.

Henry caused the most damage to England's first innings by claiming the wickets of stand-in skipper Joe Root (46) and Harry Brook (24), while O'Rourke bagged the crucial wicket of opener

Emilio Gay for 53 and wicket-keeper-batter James Rew (24). Emilio Gay (53 off 114) had kick-started England's innings with a second successive Test half-century, only to fall two balls later as New Zealand worked their way through the top order. A 39-run stand be-

tween debutants James Rew and Jordan Cox looked to have seen England through to the close, only for O'Rourke to dismiss Rew at the death to leave England six down and in trouble. Earlier, Phillips smashed his first century for New Zealand in 133 balls as England took the entire morning session to wrap up the Black Caps' innings, before their reply unravelled in an extended evening session.

New Zealand resumed on 291-7 at the start of a miserable morning session for England, where the hosts were architects of their own downfall. Ben Duckett shelled a gilt-edged chance to remove Kyle Jamieson on 15 in the third over of the day, before their persistence with a short-ball strategy failed to bear fruit.

Sunit Chourasia Crowned Champion at DP World PGTI NexGen-Varanasi

Creates History with Third Consecutive Title

BLW General Manager Shri Ashutosh Pant Honours Winners of the DP World PGTI NexGen-Varanasi Golf Tournament

VARANASI, JUNE 18

The prestigious DP World PGTI NexGen-Varanasi Golf Tournament, carrying a total prize purse of ₹25 lakh, concluded successfully on Friday at the Golf Course of Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW). At the prize distribution ceremony, the Chief Guest, Shri Ashutosh Pant, General Manager, BLW, presented trophies and prize money to the winners.

The three-day tournament witnessed thrilling competition, with 31-year-old Kolkata golfer Sunit Chourasia emerging as the champion after delivering an outstanding performance. He carded a final-round score of 73 to finish with a total score of six-under 204, securing an impressive four-stroke victory.

With rounds of 67-64-73, Sunit Chourasia created history by becoming the first player in DP World PGTI NexGen Tour history to win three consecutive tournaments. Earlier this year, he had won the Alpha Sports Academy Golf Championship at Patna Golf Club in March and the Vijay Ku-



mar Memorial Tournament in Lucknow last week. The victory earned Sunit ₹3,17,875 in prize money. With total season earnings of ₹10,04,393, he finished as the 2026 DP World PGTI NexGen Order of Merit Champion, thereby securing his card for the 2027 main DP World PGTI Tour.

Sunit Chourasia, nephew of legendary Indian golfer SSP Chawrasia, also equalled Maniram's 2010 record of winning three tournaments in a single NexGen season. Mukeem Ali of Mathura (67-68-73) and Souvik Nayak of Kolkata (69-69-70) finished as joint runners-up with a total score of two-under 208.

Hemant Yadav, a BLW employee and local golfer, who had equalled the course record with a brilliant six-under 64 in the second round, finished fourth after returning a final-round score of 77, ending the tournament at

even-par 210. He shared fourth place with Nikhil Sharma of Gurugram (68-74-68) and Pawan Kumar of Delhi (76-70-64). Pawan Kumar also equalled the course record with a superb six-under 64 in the final round.

Rajesh Kumar Gautam of Lucknow (70-71-75) finished tied for 17th place with a total score of six-over 216. He received ₹44,125 in prize money and retained second place in the NexGen Order of Merit with cumulative earnings of ₹7,25,185. Speaking after his victory, Sunit Chourasia said: "Securing my card for the main tour is a major achievement for me. The past few weeks have been very special, and it is satisfying to see my hard work paying off. Making a comeback after a difficult injury phase makes this success even more meaningful. My goal now is to perform consistently on the main tour and continue improving my

game." With the successful hosting of this championship, the BLW Greens Golf Course has firmly established itself among India's leading professional golf venues, while Varanasi has strengthened its presence on the national sporting map.

Among those present at the prize distribution ceremony were Shri Manish Kumar, Principal Chief Electrical Engineer and President, BLW Sports Association; Shri Anurag Kumar Gupta, Chief Design Engineer (Electrical) and Secretary, BLW Golf Course; Shri Shishir Tyagi, Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer (Headquarters) and Captain, BLW Golf Course; Shri Sagar, Deputy General Manager; Shri Rajesh Kumar, Public Relations Officer, BLW; Shri Prabhash Thakur, Director of Operations, PGTI; along with other senior officials and golf enthusiasts.

Hockey India congratulates Jugraj Singh on completing 100 international caps

ROTTERDAM, JUNE 18

Hockey India extended its heartfelt congratulations to Indian men's hockey team defender and dragflicker Jugraj Singh, who achieved the milestone of 100 international caps on Thursday during India's FIH Pro League match against Germany in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

Jugraj, who hails from Amritsar, Punjab, made his senior international debut in 2022 during the FIH Pro League matches in South Africa and quickly established himself as an integral part of the Indian backbone. He is highly regarded across the hockey circuit for his lethal dragflicks, and his robust defensive capabilities make him a vital asset to the team.

Over his career, 29-year-old Jugraj has been a central figure in several historic triumphs for the nation. He was a member of the gold medal-winning Asia Cup 2025 team in Rajgir, Bihar. His impressive list of achievements also includes gold medals at the 2023 and 2024 Asian Champions Trophy in Chennai and China, respectively, and a silver medal at the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games.

Expressing his delight on reaching the milestone, Jugraj said, "It is an absolute honour



to complete 100 international matches for India. Wearing the national jersey has been my lifelong dream. I am truly delighted to reach this milestone today and want to express my deepest gratitude to my family for their unconditional support. I also want to thank Hockey India, my coaches, and my teammates for always believing in my abilities and pushing me to excel."

He added, "Every single match for India teaches you something new. This journey has given me incredible memories. My goal is to continue working hard and keep contributing to the team's success. I want to play for In-

dia for as long as possible and win many more laurels for the country." Meanwhile, Hockey India President Dr. Dilip Tirkey praised Jugraj for his dedication and consistency. "Hockey India congratulates Jugraj on completing 100 international caps. He has progressed remarkably since making his debut. His fierce penalty-corner conversions and solid defence make him a crucial asset for the national team. Reaching this landmark shows his hard work and commitment to the sport. We wish him the very best and look forward to seeing him achieve greater heights," the President said.

Industry Needs At Least A Dozen Anil Ravipudis!

Anil Ravipudi had the Murtham of his next with Victory Venkatesh and Nandamuri Kalyan Ram this morning. As usual, the movie will release for Sankranti 2027. Anil has this habit of delivering minimum guarantee content for the family audiences. He finishes the shoot in record time and gives a bumper collection using the Season Advantage. While there are people who are critical of him, what matters is that he delivers success to his name, his actors, the producers, and the trade. That makes everybody happy. What makes Anil Ravipudi even more special is how he keeps his films in news and audience memories. Days before the movie release, Anil released a Special Video from Vizag Beach mimicking Jandhyala. The concept clicked big time and made the film a talking point. At the launch today, he did a small skit-like act with Venkatesh, Kalyan Ram, and the heroines which made the social media keep guessing about the storyline. And then, another video was specially recorded and will be released tomorrow. In the industry, filmmakers are in the attitude of promoting their films only just before the release. Anil broke this and moreover, he does this with minimal expense which makes the producer even happy. Industry needs at least a dozen Anil Ravipudis! If they deliver quickies with good success and reasonable production costs and good marketing, the industry will be flourishing.



Mrunal Dazzles in Desi Avatar

Mrunal Thakur is proving she's just as comfortable in ethnic wear as she is in glam western fits. The actress recently treated fans to a set of stunning traditional looks, each one radiating its own distinct charm. In the first photo, she breaks into a hearty laugh in a vibrant red floral anarkali set, paired with chunky gold jhumkas, a stack of bangles and marigold garlands for a festive touch. The second look has her resplendent in a deep red sequin-bordered saree with an embellished blouse, exuding quiet elegance against an ornate backdrop. For the third, Mrunal opted for a blush pink kurta set with intricate gold embroidery and a flowing dupatta, finished with statement jhumkas for a regal touch. On the work front, Mrunal's film Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai continues to hold steady at the box office. The David Dhawan directorial, also starring Varun Dhawan and Pooja Hegde, has comfortably outpaced Kangana Ranaut's Bharat Bhagya Vidhaata, which opened to a muted response. The film has crossed over Rs 70 crore worldwide so far.



Secrets Lurk in Mahendragiri

Sumanth returns with another unconventional project in Mahendragiri Varahi, a mythological mystery thriller directed by Santhosh Jagarlapudi. The teaser introduces a mysterious world centered around the sacred Varahi Matha temple and an age-old secret spanning generations. With atmospheric visuals, strong world-building, and a compelling blend of folklore and fantasy, the teaser stands out from routine thrillers. Sumanth appears to be at the heart of a quest to uncover hidden truths, while the film's impressive production design and technical quality add to its intrigue. The teaser has successfully generated buzz, leaving audiences eager to discover the mysteries of Mahendragiri Varahi. The background score enhances the suspense and adds emotional depth to the visuals. Every frame is designed to create a sense of wonder, danger, and anticipation. The makers have avoided revealing too much of the plot, making the mystery even more compelling. The teaser also hints at a larger conflict involving faith, history, and forgotten legends. Sumanth's intense screen presence adds weight to the narrative and raises expectations for the film. If the final film delivers on the promise of the teaser, Mahendragiri Varahi could emerge as one of the most intriguing thrillers of the year.

‘Happy’ Returns Genelia Rejoices

Actress Genelia Deshmukh has expressed her excitement over the re-release of the cult Telugu hit Happy starring Allu Arjun, saying that “some things never go out of style.” Sharing a glimpse of the popular song Osa Osa on social media, Genelia celebrated the film's return to theatres and the overwhelming response from fans. “Because some things never go out of style — it's trending everywhere again!” she wrote, referring to the renewed buzz surrounding the film's re-release. Directed by A. Karunakaran, Happy is a romantic action-comedy that follows the story of a pizza delivery boy who gets caught in a political family's turmoil after being forced to pose as the lover of a politician's daughter. The film also featured Manoj Bajpayee, Rahman, Brahmanandam, Kishore and Tanikella Bharani in key roles. Released in 2006, the film gained a strong fan following over the years and achieved remarkable success in Kerala after being dubbed into Malayalam as Happy Be Happy, where it reportedly enjoyed a long theatrical run. Genelia, one of the most popular actresses of the 2000s, made her acting debut with Tujhe Meri Kasam and rose to fame with films such as Boys, Sye, Dhee, Ready, Sachin and Jaane Tu... Ya Jaane Na.



Venky - Anil - Kalyan Ram Film Launched

Following his massive regional industry blockbuster, Mana Shankara Vara Prasad Garu, director Anil Ravipudi shifts his focus to his highly anticipated next project. Bringing together the powerhouse duo of Venkatesh and Nandamuri Kalyan Ram, this film promises to be the definitive Sankranti entertainer. Keerthy Suresh and Krithi Shetty are the heroines. The film will be produced by Sahu Garapati under the prestigious Shine Screens banner. It is presented by Suresh Productions and Smt Archana, with Zee Studios joining as co-producers. Meanwhile, the film being called for now as #VenkyAnil5 and #Nk-rAR2 has its launching ceremony splendidly today.



Industry stalwarts also participated in the launch, with Allu Aravind sounding the clapboard, Suresh Babu turning on the camera, and K Raghavendra Rao directing the first shot on Venkatesh, Kalyan Ram, Keerthy Suresh and Krithi Shetty. Dil Raju and Shirish gave the film's script to its makers. Anil Ravipudi is known

for his unique brand of commercial entertainment, and this project is being crafted specifically to dominate the festive box office. GV Prakash Kumar, Sameer Reddy, Tamiraju and AS Prakash will take care of music, cinematography, editing, and art direction respectively. The film's regular shoot commences soon.

A FILM FOR ALL AGES: NAVEEN

The upcoming film Transfer Trimurthulu marks the directorial debut of Kamal Teja Nalla, and actor-producer Vadde Naveen has expressed strong confidence in his vision and storytelling approach. The film has been shaped through extensive collaboration and detailed script work. The film releasing worldwide on June 19th. Speaking about the director, Naveen said, “Kamal worked extensively on this story. We spent nearly a year focusing solely on the script. His approach to filmmaking and storytelling felt very fresh and innovative.” He added that the director

brought a new perspective to the project. The actor-producer also spoke about actress Rashi Singh, who plays a key emotional role in the film as his on-screen wife. Her character is expected to add depth to the narrative. He said, “She plays the wife of Trimurthulu in the film. Raashi has delivered an excellent performance. I believe her character will impress everyone.” He expressed confidence that her role will resonate with audiences. When asked what made him choose the story of Transfer Trimurthulu, he said, “The core idea and story of Transfer Trimurthulu are very different and unique. I liked the story immensely. It has thrilling elements while still being a film that the entire family can watch together. My character in the movie also feels very fresh and different.”

