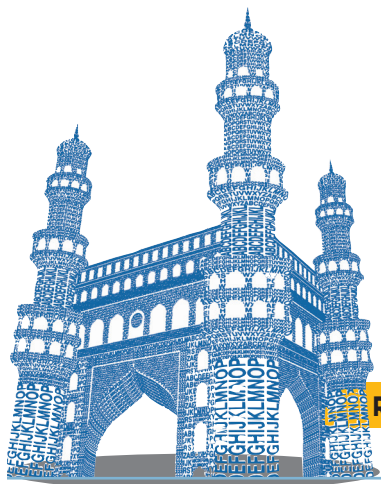




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CM Revanth writes another LETTER TO KISHAN REDDY

HYDERABAD, JUNE 20

The state government has taken another step toward resolving the pending issues related to the Hyderabad Metro Rail project. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has requested Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy to arrange a meeting with Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw to discuss matters related to Metro Phase-2 and IRFC financing. He

wrote another letter to Kishan Reddy on June 20.

The Chief Minister recalled that in his letter dated June 16, he had already highlighted the issues concerning the Hyderabad Metro Rail project. He stated that the pending issues require an expedited resolution and requested the Central Government's intervention in the matter. Revanth Reddy informed that he would be in Delhi on June 22

and 23 and requested Kishan Reddy to arrange a meeting with Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw during that period. Through the letter, the Chief Minister also conveyed that he would bring copies of the proposals and documents related to the Metro takeover, loan agreements with IRFC, and Metro Phase-2 proposals. He requested Kishan Reddy to arrange the meeting and inform him accordingly.



BJP has no presence in Telangana : TPCC chief

HYDERABAD, JUNE 20

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president Mahesh Kumar Goud asserted that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has no presence in Telangana and the Congress party is poised to secure a second consecutive term in government.

This statement was made during a Satyagraha Diksha held at Gandhi Bhavan on Saturday, organised in conjunction with the Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Raj Sangathan. The protest was a response to the rejection of the Rajya Sabha nomination for Meenakshi Natarajan, who serves as the Telangana Congress in-charge.

The TPCC chief elaborated that the BJP's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

YOGA SHOULD BECOME AN INTEGRAL PART OF DAILY LIFE: GOVERNOR



HYDERABAD, JUNE 20

Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla stated that yoga is not merely a form of physical exercise but a holistic way of life that promotes harmony between the body, mind and soul. The Governor

was speaking after participating as the chief guest at the 24-hour countdown event organised at Parade Grounds, Secunderabad on Saturday ahead of the International Day of Yoga. The programme was organised under the leadership of Union Minister for

Coal and Mines G. Kishan Reddy. Addressing the gathering, the Governor said that in an era marked by stress and fast-paced lifestyles, yoga offers inner peace, discipline and positive energy. He observed that yoga, a symbol of India's ancient wisdom and

spiritual heritage, has emerged as a global movement for health and well-being. Shukla lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi for playing a pivotal role in securing worldwide recognition for the International Day of Yoga.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

Interim Bail Granted to Bandi Bhagirath

HYDERABAD, JUNE 20:

A special POCSCO court on Saturday granted a seven-day interim bail to Bandi Bhagerath, son of Union Minister Bandi Sanjay, to appear for his engineering exams until June 26.

Bhagerath was arrested on May 26 for allegedly sexually harassing a 17-year-old girl. The survivor's mother alleged they faced intimidation and pressure to compromise during a prior meeting.

Union Minister Bandi Sanjay maintained his son's innocence, stating that everyone is equal before the law and they will face the legal process.

Bhatti orders state-wide survey of milk-producing animals



HYDERABAD, JUNE 20

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka said the State government is taking necessary steps to support farmers who depend on the dairy industry for their livelihood and to strengthen Vijaya Dairy financially. He recalled Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's statement that the government is committed to supporting the dairy sector in the state and providing economic

security to those whose lives depend on milk production and dairy products.

Bhatti Vikramarka stated that the state government has decided to supply milk from Vijaya Dairy to its schools and Anganwadi centres. A high-level review meeting chaired by the Deputy Chief Minister was held at the Secretariat on Saturday to discuss the feasibility of this initiative. Animal

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

KTR urges farmers to hold Congress accountable for broken crop promises

ADILABAD, JUNE 20

"Farmers should not plead with officials if their crops are not procured. They must hold Congress leaders accountable and ask them what happened to their promises on bonus payments, procurement centres and support prices," BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) said while launching a sharp attack on the Congress government's recent crop procurement policy.

Addressing a party general body meeting in Boath constituency during his Adilabad tour on Saturday, KTR alleged that the Congress government had abandoned

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

BY C SUBRAHMANYAM

A remarkable convergence of events separated by more than three years has thrust an Indian physician's warning back into the centre of public debate. On January Twelve Twenty Three, Dr Vyakarnam Nageshwar, a leading pulmonologist, allergist and immunologist, wrote directly to Prime Minister Narendra Modi placing before him clinical concerns arising from the Covid 19 vaccination programme, including adverse events following immunisation and the challenges faced by millions of Indians with allergic disorders. On June Eighteen Twenty Six, disclosures released by the United States intelligence establishment reignited global scrutiny over pandemic origins, gain of function research and the conduct of key decision makers during the Covid era. Taken together, these developments raise profound questions about transparency, scientific accountability and the obligation of governments to continuously reassess public health policy in the light of emerging evidence. A DOCTOR'S MANN KI BAAT THAT REFUSED TO FADE AWAY

Some documents disappear into official files and never return to public memory.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

DR VYAKARNAM NAGESHWAR'S

JANUARY 12, 2023

LETTER TO PM MODI

DELIVERS DEVASTATING

CLINICAL TRUTH

NOW VINDICATED BY

JUNE 18, 2026 FAUCI

DECLASSIFIED EXPLOSION

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PULMONOLOGIST | ALLERGIST | IMMUNOLOGIST

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✓ A FEARLESS TRUTH TELLER.
✓ A REVOLUTIONARY JOURNALIST.

92,003
ADVERSE EVENTS
REPORTED TILL DEC 31, 2022:
GOVT DATA

33 CRORE
INDIANS AT RISK
FROM ALLERGIES:
DOCTOR

U.S. DISCLOSURES EXPOSE
FAUCI ROLE IN WUHAN
'GAIN OF FUNCTION'

A Doctor's Mann Ki Baat for the PM

12th January 2023

Dr. Vyakarnam Nageshwar, a practicing Pulmonologist, Allergist & Immunologist, and the National President of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), has written the letter to bring to your kind attention the adverse events following immunisation (AEFI) in a documented form of age, gender, race, etc.

DECLASSIFIED

U.S. DISCLOSURES EXPOSE FAUCI ROLE IN WUHAN 'GAIN OF FUNCTION'

DECLASSIFIED

Bengal Free of Shackles, Poised to Create History: PM

TARAKESWAR, JUNE 20:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday asserted that West Bengal has broken free from decades of misrule and is now on the path to achieving new milestones under the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in the State.

Addressing a gathering at the Paschim Banga Dibas celebrations in Tarakeswar, Hooghly district, the Prime Minister praised the State government led by Chief Minister Suven- du Adhikari for implementing welfare schemes such as Ayushman Bharat, Annapurna Yojana and the Jal Jeevan Mission. He said the State had entered

a new phase of development and governance.

"West Bengal is free of shackles and moving towards creating history. The glory of Bengal will return, and the State is taking confident strides towards a brighter future," Mr. Modi said. Highlighting the achievements of the newly elected BJP government, the Prime Minister noted that land for border fencing had been made available after years of delay and praised the State's "Swachhata Se Swagat" initiative. He also sought public feedback, asking the audience in Bengali, "Paribortan Bhalo Lagche To?" (Do you like the change?).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

4 Killed, 23 Injured in Parbhani Temple Roof Collapse

PARBHANI, JUNE 20:

Four people were killed and 23 others injured after the roof of the Sabhamandap (outer hall) collapsed during ongoing construction at the renowned Yashwadi temple in Maharashtra's Parbhani district on Saturday afternoon. The incident

occurred around 3:30 PM at the temple premises in Yashwadi village, located approximately 190 km from Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar. The temple is the most prominent pilgrimage site in the district, drawing between 25,000 and 50,000 devotees every Saturday.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

CEMENTING DREAMS WITH SUPERIOR STRENGTH.

GERMAN TECHNOLOGY

ROBOTIC QUALITY CONTROL

TAMPER PROOF PACKING

3 TIMES BETTER

Cong trying to suppress truth of coal theft

HYDERABAD

BJP State President N Ramchander Rao strongly condemned denying police permission to BJP delegation to visit to SCCL mine to find out who is the coal thief in disappearing of tonnes of coal.

Speaking to media at state office here on the occasion of joining of Phani Kumar, a prominent entrepreneur in the fields of mining, exports, and waste-to-energy, in the BJP, Rao alleged that CM Revanth Reddy is spreading false propaganda against Union Minister Kishan Reddy solely to hide massive Singareni coal scam and suppress the truth from coming out. Phani Kumar, a prominent entrepreneur in the fields of mining, exports, and waste-to-energy who has been contributing to the nation's progress, was attracted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's governance and leadership and took the primary membership of the BJP. Rao welcomed him warmly by presenting the party shawl.

BJP state chief lashed out at the Revanth government for using the police to obstruct a fact-finding team consisting of our party Floor Leader Maheshwar Reddy, MLAs, and MLCs, who went to uncover the truth behind newspaper



reports that nearly 45 lakh metric tonnes of coal had vanished within the jurisdiction of Singareni Collieries mines.

He clarified that even though the state government holds a 51 per cent stake and the central government holds a 49 per cent stake in Singareni, the central government does not have the administrative or financial powers to even appoint or transfer an attender there. He stated that complete power lies in the hands of the state government, which is why Kishan Reddy, acting responsibly as the Union Minister for Coal and Mines, wrote a letter to CM Revanth Reddy demanding an inquiry into this scam.

Rao questioned why the BJP's fact-finding committee was stopped if no wrong was done, and demanded an answer as to who the real thieves behind this coal theft.

He said it was highly ridiculous for CM Revanth Reddy to put up "No Admission" boards in government schools. He criticized that while the previous KCR government neglected the education system, the current Revanth government is completely destroying the system. Education system has been collapsed due to negligence of Revanth Reddy government, he accused. He alleged that by reducing the number of schools in the name of rationalization, they are now pushing them towards closure. He slammed the government, stating that over 90 per cent of government schools in the state are in a dilapidated condition, lacking separate toilets for female students and basic infrastructure. He reminded that even though it has been nearly a month since the academic year started, new textbooks have not been printed and uniforms have

not been provided yet. Rao also questioned why state government schools do not have the same demand and standards as the central government's Kendriya Vidyalayas. He demanded that the education budget be increased immediately. He pointed out that teachers lack proper promotions and there are inadequate DEOs and MEOs in many districts.

BJP state chief criticized that the Rs 1,000 crore funding promise announced by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy during his visit to Osmania University has not seen the light of day. Expressing deep concern, he said the condition of hostels in OU is pathetic; while 'B' hostel has already been closed down, 'D' and 'E' hostels are on the verge of collapse. He termed the quality in the messes as poor and condemned the suspension of professors who speak up for

students' problems and rights. He demanded the immediate reconstruction of hostels at Osmania and Kakatiya Universities.

Expressing grief that farmers are facing severe hardships due to delay in gain procurement, he condemned the CM Revanth Reddy's statement on procurement of grain and said "it was a betrayal of farmers to say that he will procure grains if Rahul Gandhi is made the Prime Minister." He asked CM Revanth Reddy when he will resolve problems of farmers in the state. He remarked that it looks like neither will Rahul Gandhi become Prime Minister nor will Revanth Reddy buy the grain..

He stated that it is improper for Congress to sling mud at the BJP by accusing it of breaking regional parties, recalling that it was Congress that imposed Emergency and ran a dictatorial rule and that Congress has a history of its own party fracturing into pieces. He demanded that the Congress fulfill its all promises, save the education system and deliver immediate justice to the farmers.

BJP state president called upon the youth, women, and educated individuals to join the BJP in large numbers for the nation's development and to further strengthen the leadership of Narendra Modi.

Revanth Reddy extended heartfelt best wishes to all students appearing for the NEET examination

HYDERABAD

The Chief Minister expressed hope that the students would attend the exam which is being re-conducted on Sunday with complete confidence and free from anxiety and stress.

The CM noted that the students are working hard for the important exam for their career and advised them to trust in their own efforts and perseverance to deliver an outstanding performance in the exam.

Approximately 2.95 lakh students across Telangana are set to appear for the nationwide NEET exam at around 208 centers in the state. State Government has already announced free



RTC bus travel for the students appearing the Medical Entrance exam. CM Revanth Reddy appealed to the students to reach the exam centers well in advance without any delay and take the exam with a composed mind while adhering to all regulations. The Chief Minister wished for all the students to achieve their goals and reach great heights.

ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT OF MATRIX EXCHANGE

E-Tender No.: **SNT-07-LMG-2026-27**; Date: **18-06-2026**. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work. **Name of Work & Place:** Annual maintenance contract of Matrix Exchange at Lumding in Lumding Division for a period of Three years. **Tender Value:** ₹2,77,536.00; **Bid Security:** ₹5,600.00. E-tender will be **Closed** at 15:00 hrs. on 10-07-2026 and **Opened** at 15:30 hrs. on 10-07-2026. For details visit: www.ireps.gov.in

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Disciplined lifestyle key to achieving goals: Capt Dr. Burra Madhusudhan Reddy

HYDERABAD

Retired Principal, columnist and personality development expert Capt Dr. Burra Madhusudhan Reddy said that a disciplined lifestyle and regular daily routine are essential for achieving success in any field.

Addressing a programme organised by the Fatimanagar Adoration Society at St. George's High School, where educational materials were distributed free of cost to students, he said

children should pursue higher education with moral values and discipline and grow into responsible citizens.

He said students who work hard with punctuality and consistency are more likely to achieve their desired goals. Developing the habit of studying for three to four hours every day would help students become highly educated and successful throughout their lives, he added. Dr. Reddy advised students to stay away from bad



habits and strive to fulfil their ambitions of becoming collectors, doctors, engineers, police officers, lawyers, teachers and entrepreneurs. During the pro-

gramme, educational materials worth over Rs. 4 lakh including notebooks, school bags, uniforms, pens, pencils, scales, erasers and other stationery

items were distributed to 105 children under the auspices of the Fatimanagar Adoration Society. Around 150 children and their parents attended the event. St. Alphon Principal Fr. Santosh, Project Director Sister Jisa, Sakhi Centre Administrator Lakshmi, Sister Vijayarani, Sister Joyce, Sister Aruna, Marri Mallesham, Nareddy Srinivas Reddy, Rupa, Ramesh, Sravanthi, Mounika, Saritha, Jamuna, Vijaya and Ganga, among others, were present.

Lotus Lap Public Schools Students from Dilsukhnagar, Boduppall and Badangipet Branches Participate in International Yoga Day Celebrations

HYDERABAD

Students of Lotus Lap Public Schools – Dilsukhnagar, Boduppall, and Badangipet branches enthusiastically participated in the International Yoga Day celebrations held at the Parade Grounds, Secunderabad, on Saturday. The event was organized by the International Yoga Team and witnessed the participation of thousands of yoga enthusiasts from across the city.

The students actively took part in various yoga sessions and gained valuable insights into the importance of yoga in promoting physical fitness, mental well-being, concentration, discipline, and holistic personality development. Through the practice of yoga, the students were encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles and cultivate inner peace and self-confidence.

The management of Lotus Lap Public Schools expressed its heartfelt gratitude to the organizers of the International



Yoga Team for conducting such a meaningful and well-coordinated event.

The institution also conveyed its sincere thanks to its Chairman, Vidya Ratna Dr. Lion Komati Reddy Gopal Reddy Garu, and Director, Mr. Komati Reddy Abhishek Reddy Garu, for their continuous encouragement and commitment towards providing students with opportunities that promote health, leadership, values, and overall development. The grand event was graced by several eminent

personalities including Union Minister Shri G. Kishan Reddy, Hon'ble Governor of Telangana Shri Jishnu Dev Varma, Former Vice President of India Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Former Governor Shri Bandaru Dattatreya, popular actor Naveen Polishetty, and many other distinguished guests, who highlighted the significance of incorporating yoga into daily life.

The school management stated that it was a matter of pride for the students to be part of such a prestigious event and to listen to

the inspiring messages delivered by eminent dignitaries. The programme was attended by Mrs. Madhavi Sanghi, Vice Principal of Dilsukhnagar Branch; Mr. Gangadhar, Vice Principal of Boduppall Branch; Mrs. Sruthilaya Reddy, Principal of Badangipet Branch, along with teachers and parents, who actively participated in the celebrations and encouraged the students to embrace yoga as a way of life. The management once again expressed its gratitude to the Chairman of this "Gold School," Vidya Ratna Dr. Lion Komati Reddy Gopal Reddy Garu, for providing such enriching opportunities that nurture discipline, wellness, and character building among students. With the message, "Yoga for Health, Harmony, and Holistic Development," the students of Lotus Lap Public Schools made their presence felt at the International Yoga Day celebrations and reaffirmed their commitment to healthy and mindful living.

Yoga for Healthy Aging Workshop Promotes Health Awareness

HYDERABAD

Government Degree College for Women, Hussainialam, Hyderabad, successfully organized a one-day workshop on "Yoga for Healthy Aging" to promote health awareness, wellness education and the importance of adopting yoga as a daily lifestyle practice.

The workshop was conducted on June 20 at 11:00 AM in the Khurshed Jha Seminar Hall under the aegis of the college Yoga Cell, in collaboration with NSS Units I, II and III. The programme was held under the guidance of the Principal, Dr. Appiya Chinnamma.

The main objective of the workshop was to educate participants about the role of yoga in maintaining physical fitness, emotional balance and mental well-being. The session also highlighted how regular yoga practice can help prevent life-



style-related health issues and support healthy aging.

Vice Principal Dr. Ghouse, IQAC Coordinator Dr. Sridevi and Academic Coordinator Dr. Pranitha were present on the occasion. Faculty members from various streams actively participated in the programme, while a limited number of students also attended the session.

The workshop featured expert guidance from Ms. Sailaja Reddy and Ms. Chamundeshwari, renowned yoga practitioners from the Art of Living, along with Prof. Prasanna Khadkikar, Professor of Commerce and

Yoga Cell Incharge. The resource persons explained the significance of yoga in improving flexibility, strengthening the body, reducing stress and enhancing overall quality of life.

As part of the practical session, participants were trained in various yoga asanas and pranayama techniques. The experts demonstrated breathing practices such as Anulom Vilom and deep breathing exercises in a simple and effective manner, making them suitable for people of all age groups.

The speakers emphasized that yoga is not only a physi-

cal exercise but also a holistic practice that brings harmony between the body and mind. They encouraged participants to include yoga in their daily routine to improve concentration, reduce anxiety, maintain posture and build long-term health resilience. The programme concluded with a relaxation session and practical guidance on incorporating yoga into everyday life for better health and well-being. The session proved to be informative and beneficial, creating awareness among participants about the importance of yoga for healthy aging.

The NSS Programme Officers, Dr. Anitha Monga, Dr. Geetha Rani and Dr. P. Latha, played a key role in the successful organization of the event. The workshop reflected the college's continued commitment to promoting health education, awareness and wellness among its faculty and students.

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SHORT
TAKES

CM Revanth Reddy pays tributes to Professor K Jayashankar



HYDERABAD: Chief Minister Shri A Revanth Reddy paid rich tributes to the father of Telangana Professor K Jayashankar on the occasion of his death anniversary. The Chief Minister remembered Jayashankar's sacrifices and his dedicated efforts for separate Telangana. Professor Jayashankar lived his life with a mission of achieving a separate Telangana state, the CM said affirmed that Telangana people and the People's Government will always cherish the memory of the great leader and pledged to carry forward the spirit of the movement the Telanganana protagonist inspired. CM Revanth Reddy reiterated the government's firm commitment to realizing the ideals for which Jayashankar stood. Jayashankar had also opposed the merger of the Hyderabad state with Andhra state, the Chief Minister said lauded Jayashankar for keeping the Telangana movement alive for six decades by consistently highlighting the injustice caused by the merged of Telangana with AP.



Kavitha Alleges Massive Sand Looting, Slams Government and Pawan Kalyan

WARANGAL

Telangana Rakshana Sena chief K. Kavitha levelled serious allegations against the State government, claiming that large-scale sand mining was being carried out under the guise of the Seethamma Sagar Project submergence area and demanded clarity on allegations of sand looting worth thousands of crores. She also claimed that farmers were angry enough to drive away Congress leaders if they approached them. Addressing a gathering after inaugurating the party office in Hanamkonda, Kavitha said the united Warangal district had been neglected after the formation of Telangana, with no major development taking place in any sector. She said she was happy to visit Warangal district for the first time since the formation of Telangana Rakshana Sena and appealed to people to support the newly formed party. She said Warangal had produced several leaders who fought against oppression and recalled the contributions of Telangana ideologue Prof. Kothapalli Jayashankar, Biyyala Janardhan Rao, poet Varavara Rao and Kakatiya ruler Rudrama Devi.

Development Neglected

Kavitha alleged that Warangal-Hana-

mkonda-Kazipet had not received any major educational institution after statehood and said expected improvements in education, health-care, employment and infrastructure had failed to materialise. She claimed district reorganisation had only increased opportunities for corruption and pointed out that the region's largest municipality did not even have a commissioner. Though the Chief Minister had announced an underground drainage project worth ₹5,200 crore, no master plan had been prepared so far, she alleged.

Concerns Over Education and Healthcare

Stating that people should not have to spend from their own pockets for education and healthcare, Kavitha alleged that MGM Hospital, which handles nearly 4,500 outpatients daily, had been neglected. She expressed concern over plans to close 23 schools in Warangal and said Kakatiya University lacked adequate hostel facilities and recruitment. She also alleged that funds promised to Osmania University had not been fully released.

Industry and Employment

Kavitha alleged that land earmarked for a textile park was being converted into real-estate layouts and urged the

government to focus on attracting industries instead of promoting real-estate ventures.

If the proposed rail coach factory comes up, she said, 90 per cent of jobs should be reserved for local people. She demanded that dependent employment issues affecting Singareni workers be resolved within a month and warned that she would undertake a hunger strike on July 20 if the demands were not met.

Sand Mining Allegations

Kavitha alleged that sand extraction was being carried out across a 70-km stretch in the backwater areas of the Seethamma Sagar project, causing severe environmental damage to the Godavari River. She claimed that ministers Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy and Seethakka were continuing the activity under directions from the Chief Minister's Office. She said tribal communities had approached the National Green Tribunal over the issue but alleged that their concerns were not receiving adequate attention.

Future City and Musi Riverfront

Describing the proposed Future City as a "real-estate city", Kavitha alleged that the government was consulting developers rather than local resi-

dents. She claimed that construction activity was continuing despite court orders and without proper permissions and assured support to affected farmers.

Remarks on Pawan Kalyan

Referring to Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, Kavitha said Telangana youth should regard film personalities as entertainers rather than political leaders. She alleged that Telangana language and culture had been mocked in films in the past and said the younger generation should understand the history of the Telangana movement and the struggle against cultural domination. People could enjoy films and performances, she said, but should not treat celebrities as political alternatives.

Agitations Planned

Kavitha announced that Telangana Rakshana Sena would launch agitations over land issues concerning Telangana movement activists. A protest has been scheduled for July 2 at Uppal Bhagayat, and similar programmes would be organised across districts. She reiterated that she would launch an indefinite hunger strike on July 20 if the employment demands of Singareni workers were not addressed.

Pursuing doctoral research is a commitment to curiosity , perseverance: SU Chancellor Dr Srinivas Rao

Dr Srinivas Vooradi

MANGALURU

"Choosing to pursue doctoral research is a commitment to curiosity, perseverance, and the disciplined search for new knowledge. It is a decision to ask difficult questions, to challenge assumptions, and to contribute work that will stand up to scrutiny and, we hope, make a meaningful difference to society. We value that commitment deeply at Srinivas University," said Chancellor of Srinivas University (SU) Dr A Srinivas Rao. Addressing the research scholars online on Saturday, Chancellor Dr Rao said that a doctoral thesis must advance knowledge, aim for clarity in your research question, methodological rigor, and

plications, or capacity building in communities. Plan for pathways to translate your findings beyond academic publication. "As Chancellor, I take pride in seeing our scholars shape rigorous, relevant, and ethical research agendas that will enhance Srinivas University's academic profile and serve the communities we belong to," the Chancellor added.

Speaking on the occasion, Director (Research and Innovation Council) Dr Praveen BM advised the scholars to uphold research integrity, ethical standards, and reproducibility and not to compromise on ethics for expediency.

"Doctoral study is a marathon, not a sprint. Build support networks, manage expectations, and communicate openly with your supervisors



honest, transparent reporting of results.

Stating that originality matters, the Chancellor remarked that whether through novel theory, new methods, unique datasets, or fresh applications and even incremental advances, when carefully argued and well-evidenced, are valuable.

Exhorting the scholars to align scholarly excellence with societal needs, sustainable development, public health, technology for inclusion, cultural preservation, policy improvements, and industry innovation, the Chancellor stated that impact takes many forms: citations and subsequent research, policy influence, practical ap-

and committee," said Ph D Coordinator for English Dr Reena Ranjith. Advising the scholars to be prepared to present a clear problem statement, proposed methodology, expected contributions, and a realistic timeline, Dr Reena urged the Research Professors to help scholars refine scope and timelines early to avoid later pitfalls and encourage publication of parts of the work in reputed journals. 17 scholars from the Department of English participated in the Pre-DCM. Research Professors Dr Srinivas Vooradi, Dr Thungesh GM, Dr Ambika G Mallaya and Dr Manjula KT, Dr Varadesh Hiragange were also present.

TRLD Organized a round table conference on HYDRAA

HYDERABAD

The Telangana Rashtriya Lok Dal (TRLD) organized a Round Table Conference on HYDRAA on 20.06.2026 at Hotel Central Court, Lakdikapul, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sri Kapilavai Dileep Kumar, Ex-MLC, who chaired the meeting, opined that the formation of HYDRAA is a positive step. He stated that Sri Ranganath is doing a good job and expressed the hope that HYDRAA would not touch the dwellings of poor people without providing suitable compensation and rehabilitation.

Mr. Pargain, IFS, stated that the protection of lakes and tanks is the need of the hour and that people should actively participate in conservation measures. Mr. Sharath, a leading advocate and political analyst, stated that HYDRAA has earned both a good and a bad name, particularly attracting the ire of the judiciary many times.



He requested Sri Ranganath, Commissioner, HYDRAA, to be careful while dealing with the weaker sections.

Smt. Paduri Karuna, social activist, stated that there is a hue and cry among the weaker sections because of HYDRAA's actions against them, though its action against rich and influential encroachers is well appreciated. Sri Gopal Sarma requested the Commissioner, HYDRAA, to remain unbiased in its activities and particularly suggested that encroachments by MIM

leaders should not be spared. Smt. Uppala Sarada stated that there are fears among the weaker sections that HYDRAA's actions may damage their interests. Mr. Bhagavanth Reddy, representative of TUF, requested HYDRAA to keep the welfare of the weaker sections as a priority while continuing its action against the rich and illegal encroachers. Sri Venkateshwarlu, IAS (Retd.), stated that officers who play to the tunes of politicians get key postings, while honest officers are neglected. He

requested HYDRAA to function in an unbiased manner.

Sri Prakash Reddy, BJP spokesperson, cited several encroachments in Hyderabad that had taken place over the last 70 years and appreciated the work of HYDRAA in restoring some of the lakes and tanks. Sri V.V.S. Satyanarayana, Polit Bureau Member of TRLD, stated that the activities of HYDRAA are the need of the hour for a better tomorrow. He appealed to everybody to protect the lakes and tanks in and around Hyderabad and support HYDRAA in restoring the old water bodies.

Prof. Gali Vinod stated that HYDRAA and its Commissioner, Sri Ranganath, are doing a commendable job in retrieving encroached land as well as restoring lakes and tanks. He requested the Commissioner to act in an unbiased manner, spare the weaker sections, and not demolish their houses unless a full rehabilitation package is provided.

Uttam gives new hope for water-starved Krishna bank villages

* Rs 394-Crore Lift Scheme Nears Reality
* Celebrates Birthday midst of Farmers

DONDAPADU (SURYAPET DIST)



For generations, it has been a painful paradox for thousands of farming families in Suryapet district. They lived within sight of the mighty Krishna River, yet their fields often remained thirsty. On Saturday, that story appeared a step closer to the long awaited transformation.

As hundreds of farmers gathered to greet Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister, N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on his birthday, the celebrations were marked not merely by bouquets and birthday wishes, but by something promising.

Standing amidst enthusiastic crowds, Uttam Kumar Reddy reviewed the progress of the Rs 394-crore Rajiv Gandhi Lift Irrigation Scheme, an ambitious project designed to carry Krishna waters to the tail-end ayacut areas that have suffered from chronic shortages for decades.

For many farmers who turned up to greet the Minister, the occasion was both personal and symbolic. They said the greatest birthday gift for the region would be the completion of a project that could finally bring assured irrigation to their lands.

The scheme aims to provide reliable water supply to nearly 14,000 acres under the Mukteshwarapuram Major and Ganapuram Major ayacuts, besides filling tanks and improving water security across several villages in Kodad, Huzurnagar, Chilukuru and neighbouring mandals.

Significant progress has already been made. Of the total

22-kilometre pressure-main, fabrication of 16 kilometres has been completed, while six kilometres have already been laid. Major civil works are advancing steadily and the remaining components are expected to gather pace in the coming weeks. The project is expected to benefit villages including Kandibanda, Ramapur, Huzurnagar, Dondapadu, Ganapuram, Uchhipudi, Erravaram, Ramalakshimpuram, PK Banda, Kogarrayi and Palanagaram.

For farmers in these villages, the project represents far more than an engineering undertaking. It is a long-awaited assurance that water will finally

reach the last fields in the irrigation chain — fields that have too often been left at the mercy of erratic rainfall and depleting groundwater. Addressing farmers during the visit, Uttam Kumar Reddy reiterated the government's commitment to ensuring that every acre in the tail-end ayacut receives its rightful share of water. He emphasized that irrigation development must reach the most disadvantaged farmers and that no village should be denied the benefits of river waters simply because of its location at the end of the canal network.

The Minister also noted that while the Nagarjuna Sagar Project remains the irrigation lifeline, supplementary projects such as the Rajiv Gandhi Lift Irrigation Scheme are essential to bridge gaps and ensure equitable distribution of water. Farmers pinned all their hopes on the giant pipeline gradually taking shape across the countryside.

For people of these Krishna river bank villages, the river flowing by is all set to become a dependable partner in their lives and livelihoods.

CEO Telangana Clarifies Special Intensive Revision (SIR) Process

■ Citizens Urged to Participate to Ensure Error-Free Electoral Rolls

HYDERABAD

Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Telangana, C. Sudharsan Reddy, IAS, addressed a press conference on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls at B.R.K.R. Bhavan, Hyderabad, on Saturday. The press meet was aimed at creating public awareness about the Special Intensive Revision process and addressing various doubts being raised by voters regarding the exercise.

The CEO explained that the Election Commission of India has initiated the Special Intensive Revision to maintain the accuracy and integrity of electoral rolls. The exercise seeks to remove duplicate and ineligible entries, delete names of deceased voters, and ensure that every eligible citizen is included in the electoral roll.

According to the Election Commission, the SIR process will commence on June 25,

2026, and conclude with the publication of the final electoral roll on October 1, 2026.

The revision process will be carried out in multiple phases. House-to-house enumeration will be conducted from June 25 to July 24, 2026. The draft electoral roll will be published on July 31, 2026, followed by a claims and objections period from July 31 to August 30, 2026. Verification, hearings, and disposal of claims will continue until September 28, 2026, before the final publication of the electoral roll on October 1, 2026.

Addressing public concerns, the CEO clarified that Booth Level Officers (BLOs) will visit every household and distribute pre-printed Enumeration Forms. Each BLO will make at least three visits to ensure maximum coverage. Voters may fill the forms and submit them during subsequent visits or use the online facility provided by the Election Commission.

The CEO informed that voters who do not receive the Enumeration Form can obtain it

through the BLO or access it online. In case of difficulties in filling the form, BLOs will provide assistance during their visits.

Special emphasis was laid on the availability of digital services. Voters can verify whether their names existed in the 2002 electoral roll, search for details of parents or grandparents, and submit Enumeration Forms online through the Election Commission's portal. The online facility has been introduced to help voters who are living away from their residence, employed in other states, or residing abroad.

Clarifying concerns regarding Aadhaar, the CEO stated that furnishing Aadhaar details is entirely optional and not mandatory for submission of Enumeration Forms.

The Election Commission also announced that new voters who have attained 18 years of age, as well as those who will attain 18 years on or before October 1, 2026, can apply for inclusion in the electoral roll through Form-6 during the revision process. Regarding address chang-

es, voters will be able to submit Form-8 after the publication of the draft electoral roll. Such requests will be processed during the claims and objections period.

The CEO further clarified that no documents are required during the house-to-house enumeration stage. However, in cases where verification is necessary after publication of the draft electoral roll, Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) may seek supporting documents to establish eligibility.

These may include birth certificates, passports, educational certificates, residence certificates, government-issued identity documents, caste certificates, land allotment certificates, and other officially recognized records.

Citizens were advised to return their Enumeration Forms promptly. Officials cautioned that if forms are not submitted and inquiries reveal that an elector is absent, shifted, deceased, or duplicated elsewhere, such names may not be included in the draft electoral roll.

■ A Leader with Vision - Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy

SURYAPET

AICC member Ramreddy Sarvotham Reddy stated that State Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister Nalamada Uttam Kumar Reddy is a leader with a clear vision for both the development of Suryapet district and the welfare of its people.

On the occasion of Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy's birthday, he was courteously met at his residence in Hyderabad, where he was honored with shawls and presented with a bouquet, along with birthday wishes.

Speaking to the media later, he said that Uttam Kumar



Reddy once piloted a MiG fighter aircraft, which travels at twice the speed of sound, to protect the people of India, and that he is now working with the same speed and dedication for the development of the state and the welfare of its people.

He further stated that Uttam Kumar Reddy served the nation in various capacities for nine years in defense. Inspired by his close association with former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and his service to the nation, he entered politics with

the aim of serving the people of his region.

Since 1994, he has been serving continuously in public life—as MLA from Kodad and Huzurnagar, as Member of Parliament from Nalgonda, and as a minister in both the united Andhra Pradesh and the present Telangana governments. Currently, he is serving as the State Minister for Irrigation and Civil Supplies, rendering numerous valuable services to the people. He also mentioned that Uttam Kumar Reddy holds the distinction of serving as one of the longest-serving PCC Presidents in the country.

He expressed his hope that Uttam Kumar Reddy will attain many higher positions in the future and wished him a long, healthy life spanning a hundred years.

Police Book
Accused for
Defaming
Minister Girish
Mahajan Online

MUMBAI: (Jun 20) The Maharashtra Cyber Police has registered a case against multiple social media handles, including X accounts, for allegedly circulating offensive and defamatory content targeting state minister Girish Mahajan, officials said on Saturday.

The First Information Report was registered under sections 351 (2) (criminal intimidation), 336 (4) (forgery) and 356 (3) (defamation) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), along with sections 66(C) (identity theft), 66(D) (cheating by personation using computer resource), and 67 (publishing obscene material) of the Information Technology (IT) Act, an official said.

Conference on
Non-Destructive
Evaluation,
enabling
technologies to
be held in Nov

HYDERABAD: (JUN 20)

The 36th annual conference on Non-Destructive Evaluation and Enabling Technologies, organised by the Indian Society for Non-Destructive Testing, will be held here from November 15 to 17, officials said on Saturday. For the first time, 'Aero-NDT 2026', the 15th International Symposium on NDT in Aerospace – under the theme 'Innovation for Strategic and Economic Excellence', is also being held in conjunction with the conference, they said. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Union Minister of New and Renewable Energy Pralhad Joshi will attend the event. The conference will feature the prestigious Baldev Raj Memorial Lecture to be delivered by former DRDO director general VK Saraswat.

'Life in death':
Collection of
verses composed
amid raging
pandemic
launched in Delhi

NEW DELHI: (JUN 20)

As humanity suffered in the wake of the deadly COVID-19 pandemic and people lived in quarantine, a foreign affairs expert in Delhi turned his gaze towards redemption amid surrounding despair, capturing glimpses of hope and rejuvenation in verses penned in desolation. His musings have culminated into a book of poetry titled, 'Quatrains in Quarantine: Dwelling Poetically on the Earth'. Authored by foreign affairs expert Manish Chand in "the height of the pandemic", the verses transform the pandemic-era suffering and despair into luminous poems, celebrating the transfiguring power of imagination and poetry, according to a statement issued here on Saturday.

Couple Consumes
Poison Over
Family Opposition
to Love Affair

BAREILLY (UP):

A young couple here allegedly consumed poison and died on Saturday after their families opposed their relationship and plans to marry, police said. The incident took place in Makrandapur village under Bhojipura police station area. The woman died at the spot, while the man succumbed during treatment later in the day, officials said.

Spirituality and yoga play vital role in
achieving balance for stress-free life:CM

Every citizen's responsibility to preserve India's culture and values and pass them on to future generations:CM
Baba Ramdev praises Chandrababu Naidu as a Karma Yogi.. Yoga to be integrated in Sanjeevani health programme:CM

Amaravati : Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said that India's culture and values have elevated the country to the position of a global spiritual leader and stressed that it is the responsibility of every citizen to preserve these values and pass them on to future generations. He said both technology and spirituality should go together.

As part of the Yogandhra programme, the Chief Minister attended a special yoga session conducted by yoga guru Baba Ramdev at the historic Undavalli Caves today. Wearing a Yogandhra-themed shirt, the Chief Minister witnessed various yoga demonstrations of youth led by Baba Ramdev, who explained and showcased several advanced asanas.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said Baba Ramdev has taken yoga to the masses and thousands voluntarily come to learn yoga

from him. He said Technology should be used without addiction and spirituality and yoga can play a vital role in achieving this balance for a stress-free life. The Chief Minister thanked Baba Ramdev for his efforts to promote yoga through sessions across Amaravati and Vijayawada. He requested Baba Ramdev to help develop Andhra Pradesh into a spiritual hub for the nation. If the present generation adopts yoga as a way of life, we can ensure a wonderful future. He said while promoting yoga, the state government organising Yogandhra programmes at various spiritual and tourist destinations across the state. Conducting yoga at the historic Undavalli Caves is particularly significant. These caves, dating back to the 6th and 7th centuries, possess immense historical and spiritual importance, and Lord Padmanabha resides here," he said.



The Chief Minister said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has brought global recognition to yoga, with nearly 190 countries now observing International Yoga Day. Prime Minister Modi deserves credit for showcasing India's rich cultural heritage. We must preserve these values and pass them on to future generations. The Chief Minister further stated that the government is taking measures to increase the state's green cover to 50 percent and is actively promoting natural farming, with

nearly 20 lakh farmers transitioning towards chemical-free agriculture. "We are implementing the Sanjeevani project to improve public health. Yoga and Pranayam will also form part of this initiative. In Sanjeevani, we are giving greater importance to disease prevention rather than merely treating diseases," he said.

Highlighting the government's vision for Amaravati, the Chief Minister said Amaravati will be developed as a pollution-free, net-zero capital city. Along with development, equal importance will be given to spirituality and tourism. Amaravati is being developed as a highly liveable city and is truly the city of the future. Addressing the gathering, Baba Ramdev praised Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu for his initiatives for promoting yoga and added that Yoga is a matter of pride for our country. Stating that Chandrababu Naidu as a vi-

sionary leader committed to development," he said. "Chief Minister Chandrababu is working in line with Prime Minister Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat.

Baba Ramdev said If every Chief Minister works in the same manner as Chandrababu, the goal of Viksit Bharat 2047 can be achieved much earlier. He further remarked, "Amaravati, the people's capital, has now become a yoga capital. The city is being developed amidst greenery. The beauty of Amaravati is comparable to Switzerland. I visited Lord Padmanabha at the Undavalli Caves. Baba Ramdev said Chief Minister Chandrababu is promoting natural farming. He is a lover of nature, culture, yoga and humanity. Chandrababu is a Yogi and a Karma Yogi, he added. Minister for Health Satya Kumar Yadav and officials participated in the programme.



TVK ally IUMML ends 60-year
alliance with DMK, backs
Vijay's party for local polls

IUMML has quit the DMK-led alliance in Tamil Nadu and joined Vijay's TVK for the local body polls. The shift ends a nearly six-decade partnership and resets alliance equations ahead of the elections.

The Indian Union Muslim League (IUMML) has formally ended its decades-long association with the DMK-led alliance in Tamil Nadu and expressed confidence in its new partnership with Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), party leaders said at the IUMML State General Council meeting held on Friday.

Addressing the meeting, IUMML National President KM Kader Mohideen said 481 members participated in the General Council, during which 14 resolutions were passed. He described the decision to realign politically in Tamil Nadu as one of the most significant resolutions adopted by the party.

"Respecting the mandate given by the people in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly election, the Indian Union Muslim League (IUMML) extended its support for the formation of the TVK government and is currently a part of the administration led by Joseph Vijay. In the present political circumstances, it is not possible for us to continue our association with the DMK alliance," said Mohideen in the meeting. He also added that the IUMML meeting ensured that a decision regarding the electoral alliance will be taken once the by-elections and local body elections are officially an-

nounced.

'THE WHISTLE WAS BLOWN EVERYONE'

Mohideen highlighted the party's electoral performance, noting that IUMML had contested 28 constituencies in Kerala and won 22 of them. In Tamil Nadu, he said, the party had secured victories in two constituencies as part of the DMK-led Secular Progressive Front with the support of the DMK and its allies. Recalling the party's long-standing ties with the DMK, Mohideen said IUMML had remained a part of the alliance for more than 60 years and had contested and won local body, Assembly and parliamentary elections under that banner. He said the party had strongly supported the formation of the current Dravidian Model government and worked towards MK Stalin becoming Chief Minister. However, he indicated that changing political circumstances had prompted a shift in strategy. Referring to actor-politician Vijay's emergence in state politics, Mohideen said, "The whistle was blown everywhere and Vijay made history." He noted that while the DMK-led alliance was known as the Secular Progressive Front, the new TVK-led alliance is yet to be formally named. Once a name is announced, IUMML will officially use it. Mohideen also said the party would seek opportunities to contest future by-elections if they arise. Looking ahead to the local body polls, he expressed confidence that IUMML would secure a greater share of representation in areas with significant Muslim populations as part of its alliance with TVK.

Sabarimala may get AI-based pilgrim
management system this season

The Travancore Devaswom Board is preparing an AI-based system to manage pilgrims at Sabarimala from the coming season. The move aims to predict crowding early, improve safety and support a cleaner shrine.

The Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) is considering introducing an AI-based pilgrim management system at the Sabarimala temple from the coming pilgrimage season, its president K Jayakumar said on Saturday.

The proposal is aimed at improving crowd management and safety at the Lord Ayyappa temple, with the board planning to bring in at least some of the critical parts of the system during this season. Speaking after a meeting with experts from different parts of the country, Jayakumar said the AI initiative was part of the larger Vision Sabarimala project, which has already been placed before and accepted by the Kerala High Court. Senior police officers, including ADGP Manoj Abraham and Pathanamthitta District Police Chief R Anand, also attended the discussions on the proposed system.

Jayakumar said more consultations would be held with the police before the project requirements are finalised and a Request



for Proposal (RFP) or Expression of Interest (EoI) is issued. "There are several stages involved. We have to invite proposals, assess the technical and financial capabilities of applicants through an expert committee and then award the work," he said. He added that the authorities were aiming to complete the preliminary procedures by August. "We intend to move towards AI-enabled pilgrim management during this season itself," he said.

Explaining the proposal, Abraham said the platform would combine high-resolution cameras, infrared sensors, drones, GPS mapping and predictive analytics to track pilgrim movement and identify possible congestion before it develops.

He said the system would study data from surveillance systems along the Sabarimala pilgrimage route and flag places where crowding was likely. "The

objective is to predict crowd build-up before it becomes critical and provide real-time guidance on measures required to regulate pilgrim flow and ensure safety," Abraham said.

He said the entire pilgrimage network could be digitally mapped and linked to live camera feeds and sensor data to give officials a real-time picture of movement on the route, allowing preventive action before bottlenecks emerge. "The AI system will be capable of generating operational recommendations and communicating them to officials in real time, including during situations such as heavy rain, lightning or sudden crowd surges," he said. He added that the platform could also give pilgrims real-time updates on crowd levels, waiting times and route conditions. "Just as navigation applications guide motorists, pilgrims should be able to receive

timely information on crowd conditions and expected waiting times at various locations," he said. According to Abraham, the system could reduce dependence on large-scale police deployment during the annual pilgrimage season and help maintain continuity in crowd-management practices even when personnel change from one season to another. Anand said facial-recognition technology was also being considered to help trace missing pilgrims and improve security. "With AI-enabled facial-recognition cameras, photographs of missing persons can be uploaded and matched across the camera network to help locate them within minutes," he said. He added that the technology could be especially useful in tracing missing children and elderly pilgrims during the peak season, and could also identify people flagged in authorised databases and alert authorities where needed. Jayakumar said the technology plan was linked to the broader Vision Sabarimala project, which also focuses on sanitation and waste management. "This is not an isolated project. It is part of the larger Vision Sabarimala plan. Our goal is a clean and green Sabarimala with better sanitation, scientific waste management and active participation from all stakeholders," he said.

He said new sanitation and waste-management protocols were being prepared with the Suchitwa Mission. "Shops, hotels and other establishments are among the major generators of waste. Their agreements and tender conditions will include clear responsibilities relating to waste management and sanitation," he said. He said the authorities were working towards a "Clean Sabarimala, Green Sabarimala" model with better sanitation, scientific waste disposal and lower plastic use. Stressing the need for behavioural change among pilgrims, Jayakumar said awareness campaigns would be stepped up in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, from where most pilgrims travel. "Nearly 75 per cent of pilgrims come from these states. Any meaningful change will require awareness campaigns in those states as well," he said.

He added that information on pilgrimage guidelines, environmental responsibilities and dos and don'ts at Sabarimala would be shared through publications, social media and other outreach efforts in multiple languages.

"The goal is to make Sabarimala safer, cleaner and more pilgrim-friendly through the use of technology, better planning and the participation of all stakeholders," he said.

Karnataka seeks only Cauvery share,
says Mekedatu will help both states

Karnataka said it wants only its allotted Cauvery water and defended the Mekedatu reservoir project. The state argued the storage dam would support Bengaluru, aid downstream releases and is best resolved through talks.

Karnataka Water Resources Minister Ramalinga Reddy on Saturday reiterated that the state was seeking only the share of Cauvery river water allocated to it and was not demanding any additional allocation from Tamil Nadu. Responding to Tamil Nadu's renewed opposition to the proposed Mekedatu Balancing Reservoir project, Reddy argued that the initiative would benefit not only Karnataka but also farmers in the neighbouring state.

Speaking to reporters, Reddy stressed that Karnataka's position remained consistent and based on existing water-sharing arrangements.

He said the state had no intention of claiming "even a



single drop" beyond what had already been allotted to it under established mechanisms.

Referring to recent interactions with the Union Water Resources Ministry on interstate river matters, he said Karnataka was only pursuing its legitimate entitlement.

Defending the Mekedatu project, Reddy claimed that the reservoir would improve water management during periods of low rainfall.

According to him, if the dam had already been operational, Karnataka could have stored water and continued releasing supplies to Tamil

Nadu even during difficult seasons. He maintained that such storage capacity would help ensure drinking water availability while also supporting the scheduled release of water downstream, ultimately benefiting Tamil Nadu's agricultural sector.

Reddy criticised opposition to the project, suggesting that resistance could adversely affect farmers who depend on regulated river flows. He maintained that the proposal was not intended to alter existing allocations but to improve storage and distribution efficiency. The minister also

provided an update on the project's administrative status. He said Karnataka had already submitted the Detailed Project Report (DPR) for Mekedatu to the Cauvery Water Regulation Commission. Certain modifications had been suggested by the authorities, and the state government was currently making those changes. Once the required approvals are obtained, Karnataka intends to proceed further with implementation.

Emphasising the nature of the proposal, Reddy clarified that Mekedatu is designed as a storage reservoir rather than an irrigation project.

He said its primary objective is to provide Bengaluru with approximately 4.75 TMC of drinking water. In addition, the project is expected to generate around 400 MW of electricity. He argued that neighbouring states should work together to find practical and cooperative solutions to shared water concerns.

On current water availability, Reddy said Karnataka's Cauvery-linked reservoirs

were under pressure due to limited storage. He stated that only around 16 TMC of water remained across the Krishnaraja Sagar and Kabini reservoirs. According to him, Karnataka had already released two TMC of water by June 18, 2026, and after meeting drinking water requirements and ensuring river flow, only about three TMC remained available. Addressing Tamil Nadu's recent Assembly resolution opposing Mekedatu, Reddy said earlier legal efforts against the project had not succeeded. He claimed Tamil Nadu's miscellaneous application filed in 2018 and a subsequent review petition were both rejected. Instead of prolonged litigation, he advocated dialogue as the preferred route for resolution, warning that court disputes over water sharing often continue for decades.

Reddy concluded by urging political unity across parties in Karnataka to secure the state's interests and ensure its rightful share of water resources.

India rejects Pak President
Zardari's remarks on Kashmir

NEW DELHI: (Jun 20) India on Saturday trashed certain remarks on Kashmir by Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari and asserted that he has no locus standi to comment on internal matters of the country. "India categorically rejects the unwarranted comments made by the President of Pakistan.

He has, in any case, no locus standi to comment on matters that are internal to India," External Affairs Ministry spokesman Randhir Jaiswal said. "These comments are particularly absurd given Pakistan's own abysmal record on human rights, which is a matter of global commentary."



EDITORIAL.

The Price of
Silencing the
Network

NDIA Government’s decision to temporarily block the messaging platform Telegram ahead of tomorrow’s National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET-UG) re-examination represents a worrying escalation in how state authority is deployed to combat administrative failure. Ostensibly implemented to prevent the digital leak of question papers and curb the influence of exam fraud syndicates, the blanket restriction instead penalizes millions of ordinary users while exposing a deeper, systemic inability to secure the country’s high-stakes testing infrastructure. By choosing to turn off the digital tap rather than modernizing the vault, the administration has resorted to a blunt-force tactic that treats an entire communication network as a hostile entity, confusing a symptom of technological vulnerability for its root cause.

This heavy-handed approach mirrors the familiar, counterproductive strategy of regional internet shutdowns frequently used during local civic unrest or state-level recruitments. However, projecting this method onto a major global platform on the eve of a nationwide medical entrance test signals a broader, more troubling admission of institutional weakness. It reveals that the National Testing Agency and the Ministry of Education remain deeply insecure about their internal leak-prevention mechanisms, choosing to isolate the public rather than guaranteeing the integrity of their own chains of custody. Shutting down an app does not dissolve the underground syndicates or the corrupt networks that traffic in stolen data; it merely pushes them toward alternative, encrypted digital pathways or virtual private networks, leaving the underlying rot untouched.

Furthermore, the collateral damage of such sweeping digital bans cannot be dismissed as mere inconvenience. In a modern economy, messaging applications serve as essential infrastructure for independent businesses, student study groups, professional communication, and daily commerce. Disbursing a nationwide block sets a dangerous precedent where any systemic administrative failure can be used to justify the arbitrary restriction of digital freedom and access to information. If the state must blindfold the public every time it conducts a critical examination, it is not demonstrating strength, but rather exposing the fragile state of its institutional credibility.

True reform demands that the government direct its energy toward the actual source of the crisis: the rigorous overhaul of examination logistics, strict accountability for printing presses and distribution centers, and severe penalties for the institutional insiders who enable leaks. The integrity of India’s educational testing system cannot be restored through digital blackouts or by shifting the burden of security onto the citizen’s smartphone. Tomorrow’s candidates deserve an examination environment defined by absolute procedural competence, not one achieved by turning off the lights on the national digital square.

THE LAST SCENT OF
EARTH

When the last field is sold, what remains of a nation?
They said,
“The bargain is sealed.
The future is bright.
This is no longer farmland
it is a mine of fortune.”
I smiled,
for I had searched that land
with cracked hands,
sunburnt dreams,
and an empty stomach
for half a lifetime.
In Kharif,
I sowed cotton into waiting
clouds.
In Rabi,
I planted rice into whispered
prayers.
The rains forgot my name.
The harvest forgot my door.
Yet every dawn,
the soil remembered
the language of my footsteps.
They searched beneath the earth
for buried riches.
I searched upon the earth
for my father’s footprints,
my mother’s lullabies,
my grandfather’s sweat
still shining
in the dust of memory.
They discovered numbers.
I discovered eternity.
Then came
a single signature.
One stroke of ink
severed
a century of roots.
The field was gone.
Only boundaries remained.
The plough became silence.
The oxen became merchandise.
The scarecrow stood alone,
guarding
a harvest
that would never return.
Slowly,
green surrendered to grey.
Birdsong yielded to engines.
The wind carried cement
instead of pollen.
And even the sky,
for the first time,
looked homeless.
Yet whenever

the first monsoon rain
touches the waiting earth,
a fragrance rises
older than language,
deeper than history,
truer than wealth.
It enters my breath
and quietly asks,
without anger,
without accusation,
without judgment
“Did you sell the land...
or did you sell
the roots that made you human?”
I stand speechless.
For gold cannot grow.
Concrete cannot bloom.
Money cannot remember.
But soil
soil remembers
every footprint,
every tear,
every seed,
every prayer,
every forgotten name.
The earth
is not an inheritance
received from our ancestors.
It is a sacred promise
borrowed
from our children.
So before
the last furrow
becomes a highway,
before
the last bird
forgets its nest,
before
the last farmer
forgets
the fragrance of rain
listen.
The greatest treasure
was never hidden
beneath the soil.
It was the soil itself.
And the day
we exchange
its fragrance
for its price,
we shall discover,
far too late,
that a nation without fields
may become wealthier
but it can never become greater.

... Dr. Peruka Raju ...
National Poet
7810032847



OPINION
SIDEWALKS AND SHADE-GIVING
TREES OF A BYGONE ERA

In crowded urban areas, sidewalks built along roads and trees lining long routes, providing greenery and shade to travelers, have become things of the past. Sidewalks have been encroached upon by shopkeepers, while trees have fallen victim to road-widening projects and so-called development. In its judgment dated June 19, 2026, the Supreme Court declared the safe use of sidewalks by pedestrians to be their fundamental right. A bench comprising Justice P.S. Narasimha and Justice A.S. Chandurkar issued this direction while enhancing compensation in the case of the death of a five-year-old child who was on his way to school and lost his life in a road accident. There was a time when Hazratganj in Lucknow, Godowlia in Varanasi, and the road-sides of many other small towns had wide and clean sidewalks. Dense tamarind, neem, and peepal trees stood along them, spreading their shade. In the scorching afternoon heat, a weary laborer could rest there for a while, schoolchildren walked carefree along those sidewalks, and elderly people could take evening walks without fearing the traffic on the roads. That India now exists only in old photographs. The reality today is that sidewalks have turned into storage spaces for shops, trees have been sacrificed at the altar of development, and the common pedestrian has become a stranger on his own road.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the Supreme Court did not state anything in its June 19 judgment that was not already written in our Constitution, but the question is: who will take action against those who violate the law? The situation is such that, over the past few decades, large traders first encroached upon sidewalks and later extended their encroachments onto the roads themselves. Wealthy businessmen, often referred to as “Dhanna Seths,” silence the system with money and keep political parties satisfied through donations. This is the condition of encroachment across the entire state. Municipal corporations and development authorities often take action against homeowners in anti-encroachment drives, but they are rarely seen removing encroachments from marketplaces. They turn a blind eye to land mafias. The question remains: if this right was already guaranteed in the Constitution, why did the court need to declare it? The answer lies in those streets where sidewalks are occupied by vegetable



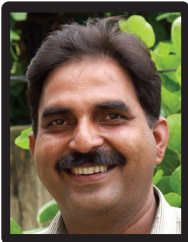
carts, clothing stalls, mobile repair tables, and beyond them lies a darkness where no space is left for pedestrians.

Recently, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath narrated the story of a senior police officer who was about to retire. The officer informed the Chief Minister that a mafia had occupied 120 acres of land in a posh area of Lucknow. If the land were freed, a State Forensic Institute could be established there. Yogi got the land vacated, but one wonders how many such plots are still under illegal occupation, where mafias have built colonies or settlements. Unfortunately, action against encroachment is taken only where it can please the government or where the encroachers are weak and vulnerable.

Coming back to sidewalks, there was a time when pedestrians could comfortably and safely travel on them, protected from traffic, heat, and rain. But that was nearly fifty years ago. Over the last five decades, governments have spent lavishly in the name of sidewalks, yet pedestrians have gained little benefit. In the 1970s and 1980s, when cities were smaller and population pressure was lower, sidewalks were built and trees were planted along them. Municipal bodies maintained them. Gradually, cities expanded, populations increased, and the number of vehicles on the roads grew exponentially. Alongside this growth emerged a system in which wealthy traders first placed their goods at a corner of the sidewalk, then occupied the entire sidewalk, and eventually became

Governments came and went, plans continued to be drafted, and crores of rupees from the public treasury were spent in the name of sidewalks. Sometimes sidewalks were covered with new stones, sometimes decorated with colorful tiles, and sometimes lined with iron railings and lamp posts. Yet none of these efforts created space for pedestrians. The tiles came loose within months, the lamp posts disappeared into darkness, and the sidewalks were once again occupied by shops and carts. The entire exercise remained nothing more than a paper formality. Departments responsible for urban planning, which once reserved space for pedestrians, gradually changed their priorities. New roads now feature multiple lanes for vehicles, but sidewalks are either absent or so narrow that two people cannot walk side by side. This mentality reflects the fact that urban planners consider pedestrians to be second-class citizens. Meanwhile, courts continue to deliver judgments in favor of pedestrians, but these often fall victim to bureaucratic red tape.

The bottom line is that the Supreme Court’s judgment declaring the use of sidewalks as a fundamental right of pedestrians may hold municipal corporations, state governments, and various authorities accountable. It may state that officials responsible for allowing encroachments should be held liable and that traders who treat public roads as private warehouses should face strict action. Yet the reality is that much time has already been lost. The greatest obstacle is that whenever a government attempts to remove encroachments from roads and clear sidewalks, organized voters often respond by democratically voting that government out of power. This, unfortunately, has become the nation’s fate, and it is not something that can be changed easily.

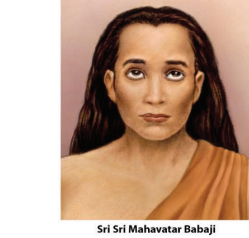


SANJAY SAXENA
Senior Journalist
Lucknow

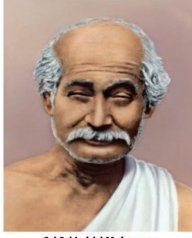
Special on International Yoga Day

The highest goal of
yoga practice is to attain God

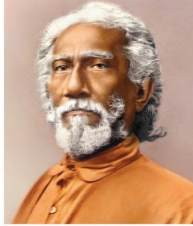
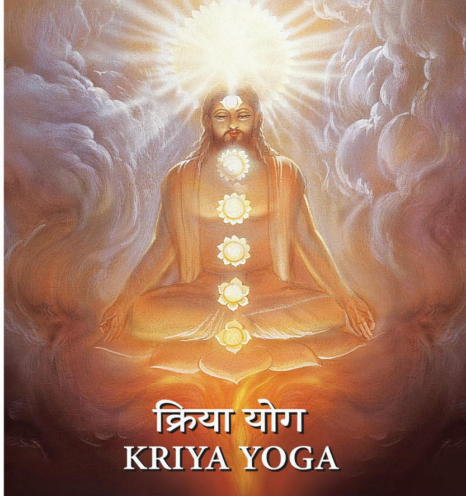
On June 21, 2026, we are celebrating the 12th International Yoga Day. International Yoga Day is celebrated on June 21 because this day is the longest day of the year (Summer Sankranti) in the Northern Hemisphere and yoga also provides a long and healthy life to man. Moreover, from a spiritual and mythological point of view, it was on this day that Lord Shiva (Adi Yogi) started imparting the knowledge of yoga to his disciples. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had proposed to celebrate International Yoga Day at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2014. The resolution received the support of a record 177 member countries. Subsequently, in December 2014, the United Nations officially declared June 21 as International Yoga Day. The first International Yoga Day was celebrated on 21 June 2015, with two Guinness World Records set in New Delhi. The main objective of the day is to raise awareness globally about the physical, mental and spiritual benefits of yoga. This year’s theme is Yoga for Wellness, Conscience and World Peace. The science of yoga, which was explored by the ancient sages of India, is the heritage of the entire human race. Today the world is accepting that yoga is not limited to just physical exercise, but it is a complete science of the complete development of the capabilities of body, mind and soul, the highest goal of which is God-realisation. The ancient method of Kriya Yoga, as explained by Yogananda, works directly on life force,



Sri Sri Mahavatar Babaji



Sri Sri Lahiri Mahasaya



Sri Sri Swami Sri Yukteswar Giri



Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda

slows down physical decay and accelerates spiritual growth.

Swami Ishwarananda Giri, the sanniyasi of Yogda Satsang Ashram, says that yoga is the name of combining the limited human consciousness of oneself with the infinite consciousness of God. One who has achieved yoga practice, has achieved the basic goal of his life. Yoga is a continuous process. It’s the whole way of life. By following which, the body, mind and soul are all satisfied. Yoga is not a religion, but a science. As much as meditation will be practised. You will continue to be closer to God. Because the unity of the soul with God is yoga. When we do yoga, we become one in God, from this we achieve the nature of God. What is that nature? In fact, the nature of God is stable peace and steady joy.

It is necessary to have a healthy body and a healthy mind for practising yoga. For this, we should do yoga and exercise as people all

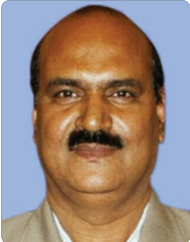
over the world do collectively on every yoga day. This is essential for a healthy body. But we should not forget that the only purpose of life is the attainment of joy and peace and both can be achieved through meditation. When we overcome the fickleness of our mind, the soul automatically illuminates and we are immersed in joy. This is what yoga science teaches. You can stay in the centre of joy, no matter what is happening to you. With this, you can not only benefit yourself but also others. The yogi remains calmly active and actively calm. Paramahansa Yogananda used to say that you cannot buy peace. For this, you have to adopt the technique of yoga-precise. Through pranayama and yoga practice, we conquer the fickleness of the mind. When the vitality and the fickleness of the mind subside, we know the nature of the soul.

Paramahansa Yogananda writes in his world-famous book Yogi Kathamrit that Maha-

vatar Babaji had told his disciple Yogavatar Lahiri Mahasaya that the knowledge of many people of the western countries keeps coming towards me like a flood. I see many people in America and Europe who are eligible to become saints, who are not too late to be awakened. That is why he gave Kriya Yoga to the whole world through Lahiri Mahasaya. At present, through which people who want to attain God are achieving self-realisation. For the propagation of this Kriya Yoga, Mahavatar Babaji had chosen Paramahansa Yogananda, which Mahavatar Babaji had given the responsibility of training to Gyanavatar Swami Shriyukteshwar. Paramahansa Yogananda carried forward the guru-disciple tradition. In 1917, Paramahansa Yogananda founded the Yogda Satsang Society of India (YSS) and disseminated the ancient science of Kriya Yoga taught by Lahiri Mahasaya. These institutions are spreading

the teachings of Yogananda, assumed at the feet of his divine guru, in the tradition of Yogavatar itself. Providing guidance to the true seekers for realisation with God through the daily practice of meditation, the highest goal of life.

Even today, YSS has been doing this as a living medium of blessings from those gurus, providing guidance to true seekers to realise with God, through the daily practice of life’s highest goal meditation. At present, it has more than 200 meditation centres and circles, five ashrams and many retreat centres throughout India. Not only this, Yogananda established the Self-Realisation Fellowship (SRF) in Los Angeles City, USA in 1920 for the worldwide dissemination of Kriya Yoga. And as a result of this, today the whole world is being attracted towards India for progress in the field of spirituality. There are followers of Paramahansa Yogananda all over the world who are happy in God’s experience by following the path of Raja Yoga indicated by him. That is why Yogananda is respected as the father of yoga in the Western world.



SACHCHIDANANDA
VERMA
(The writer is an independent journalist and columnist)





Sunara Woman Gets ₹4 Lakh PM Insurance Payout

BY SUNIL THAPLIYAL

Barkot, Uttarkashi, June 20: In a significant example of the effectiveness of the Central Government's social security initiatives, Uttarakhand Gramin Bank's Naugaon branch provided an insurance benefit of ₹4 lakh to a beneficiary family under the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) and Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY).

During a programme held on Saturday, June 20, 2026, Mrs. Radhika Devi, mother of late Jagdeep Rawat and a resident of Sunara village under Naugaon post office in Uttarkashi district, was handed over a total insurance claim amount of ₹4,00,000 under the two schemes.

According to bank officials, late Jagdeep Rawat had enrolled himself under both PMSBY and PMJJBY during his lifetime. He passed away on October 20, 2025. Following the completion of the prescribed claim procedures, the insurance amount was released to his mother, Mrs. Radhika Devi.

Branch Manager Amit Dubey of Uttarakhand Gramin Bank, Naugaon branch, handed over the cheque to the beneficiary and stated that these flagship insurance schemes of the Central Government are proving to be a strong source of financial security for common citizens and provide much-needed support to families during difficult times.

He said that the case reflects the usefulness, reliability and social security benefits offered by the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana and the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana. Bank officials also appealed to people to enroll under these schemes so that more families can avail themselves of their benefits in times of need.



CM Adityanath directs officials to take stringent action against illegal mining, cattle smuggling

JHANSI (UP): (JUN 20)

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday directed officials to take stringent action against illegal mining, cattle smuggling and various mafia networks. He was reviewing the law and order situation and development work in the Jhansi district.

Chairing a meeting at the Commissioner Auditorium here, the chief minister assessed ongoing efforts to strengthen law and order and sought details of measures being undertaken by the administration.

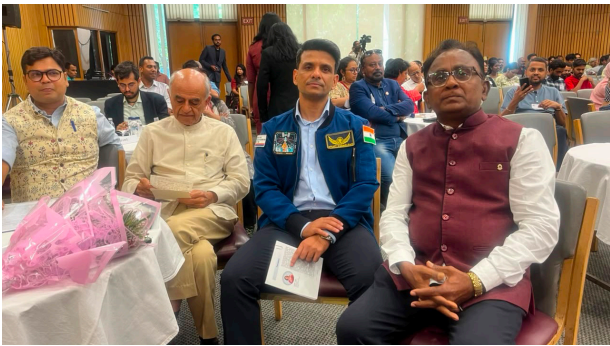
According to an official statement, Adityanath issued a directive for strict action against illegal mining operators, cattle smugglers, land mafia and liquor mafia. He said illegal mining should be stopped at its source and instructed officials to use CCTV surveillance for effective monitoring of such activities.

India's First Astronaut to Visit the International Space Station

NEW DELHI | JUNE 19, 2026:

India's first astronaut to visit the International Space Station (ISS), Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, today launched the Ease of Operating Schools (EoS) Index 2026 at the Reforming India's School Education (RISE) for Viksit Bharat conclave, organised by the Centre for Civil Society (CCS) at the India International Centre, New Delhi.

The EoS Index is India's first comprehensive assessment of the regulatory environment governing private schools across 28 states and 2 Union Territories. The report examines how laws, rules, and regulations affect schools' ability to establish, operate, expand, sustain themselves, and exercise institutional autonomy. The launch was followed by a panel discussion on the future of school education reform in India, moderated by noted author and public intellectual Gurcharan Das. The panel featured Indrani Bhaduri, CEO and Head, NCERT-PARAKH; Shailendra Sharma, Former Principal Advisor, Directorate of Edu-



cation, Government of Delhi; Dr. Taneya Singh, School Education Consultant, NITI Aayog; Vardan Kabra, Co-founder of Fountainhead Schools and Senior Vice President, ARISE Governing Body; and Sunita Johar, Principal, Army Public School. The panel reflected on the experiences of the last 75 years of independent India and highlighted the urgency of implementing reforms to harness the demographic dividend and achieve the vision of a developed India by 2047.

Speaking at the launch, Captain Shubhanshu Shukla said, "The ability to navigate the gap between what our children already know and what they need to do is a crucial skill. We need to prepare children with problem-solv-

ing abilities to explore uncharted territories, including space. Education is the single most important factor in determining whether India becomes a developed nation by 2047." Dr. Amit Chandra, Chief Executive Officer, Centre for Civil Society, said, "The human capital expected in 2047 is sitting in Grade 1 classrooms today. We need to act fast to serve them. All schools, teachers, and parents must work together for every child, irrespective of affiliation or categorisation."

Gurcharan Das observed, "India has succeeded on many fronts, but education is not one of them. The average child in India receives a poor education. We need to attract more idealistic people into this

field, and that is what the Ease of Operating Schools seeks to achieve." Addressing the gathering, Sadula Madhusudhan, President of the Telangana Recognised School Managements Association (TRSMA), emphasized that governments should avoid discriminatory regulations between government and private schools. He advocated for outcome-based standards rather than excessive infrastructure-based regulations, stating that overregulation often leads to corruption and hampers educational innovation. Dr. Komatireddy Gopal Reddy, eminent educationist, environmentalist, and National Advisor of TRSMA, pointed out that unaided private schools are educating nearly 50 percent of the country's students without imposing any financial burden on the government, while providing employment to lakhs of teachers across India. He urged both the Central and State Governments to encourage and support private schools in their mission of delivering quality education to the next generation. Dr. Gopal Reddy further advocated for the in-

roduction of common Board Examinations for Classes V and VIII across all states to ensure learning outcomes and standards. He also stressed the importance of strengthening teacher education and maintaining strict quality standards in B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes through rigorous training and regulatory oversight. The RISE for Viksit Bharat conclave brought together policymakers, education leaders, school practitioners, researchers, and civil society representatives to deliberate on building a school education ecosystem that balances accountability with autonomy, innovation, institutional sustainability, and quality learning opportunities for every child.

About Centre for Civil Society

The Centre for Civil Society (CCS) is India's leading public policy think tank dedicated to advancing social change through public policy. Through research, advocacy, and capacity building, CCS works to improve education, livelihoods, governance, and citizen empowerment across India.

Home Minister Govindas Konthoujam Stresses Inclusion at Purple Fest 2026 in Bishnupur

Bishnupur, June 20, 2026 – Home Minister Govindas Konthoujam today called for greater inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities, stating that they possess unique abilities and can make significant contributions to society when provided with equal opportunities. He was speaking at Purple Fest 2026 held at Ningthoukhong Higher Secondary School in Bishnupur district. The event was organised under the administrative control of the Swami Vivekanand National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research, SVNIRTAR, Cuttack, Odisha, in collaboration with the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, and the Composite Regional Centre for Skill Development, Rehabilitation and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, CRCSDRE, Imphal. Addressing the gathering, Govindas Konthoujam said the world is progressing rapidly and persons with disabilities



should be active participants in this process of development. He noted that every individual is endowed with unique strengths and talents, and society should recognise ability rather than focus on disability. The Minister observed that opportunities for education and social participation for persons with disabilities have improved significantly over the years. He stressed the need to further strengthen support systems so that differently-abled persons can pursue their aspirations and contribute meaningfully to society. He urged the public to uphold dignity for all and actively build a more inclusive society where no one is left behind.

Fake CBI Team Loots Trader; Akola Police Crack Case in 12 Hours

Two men allegedly posed as CBI officers and robbed a trader of Rs 25 lakh at Balapur bus stand. Police arrested them within 12 hours, recovered the cash and began checking its source.



In a swift breakthrough, the Akola Local Crime Branch (LCB) arrested two men within 12 hours of their allegedly posing as Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) officers and robbing an elderly trader of Rs 25 lakh in Maharashtra's Akola district. Police recovered the entire stolen amount along with other valuables. According to police, the incident took place on June 19 between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. when a nearly 70-year-old businessman from Khamgaon, who operates a Pico call centre, boarded a bus at the Balapur bus stand. Investigators said one of the accused, who was already acquainted with the victim, identified him and executed a pre-planned scheme. The accused allegedly used Google to create a fake CBI identity card and approached the trader posing as a CBI officer.

Claiming that the businessman was involved in illegal financial transactions, the accused allegedly threatened him with legal action and demanded that he hand over his mobile phone and a bag containing cash. The victim was also told to accompany them to a police station. To make the operation appear genuine, the first accused called his accomplice to the spot and pretended that the trader was being taken for official questioning. However, as soon as the victim got off the bus, the two men fled with the cash and mobile phone. Initially unaware that he had been deceived, the trader waited at the bus stand for a police vehicle that never arrived. Realising he had been duped, he later filed a complaint at Balapur Police Station. Given the seriousness of the case, Akola Su-

perintendent of Police Archit Chandak constituted a special investigation team. Under the leadership of Police Inspector Nitin Levarkar, a team comprising three officers and 20 personnel launched an intensive probe. The investigators examined footage from nearly 50 CCTV cameras installed along the Khamgaon-Balapur route. Using technical analysis and confidential inputs, they identified the suspects and subsequently arrested them in Khamgaon. The accused have been identified as Hardik Manoj Kumar Gurbani, 22, and Sahil Nandkishore Natthani, 25. Police said they recovered Rs 25 lakh in cash, the victim's mobile phone valued at around Rs 90,000, two motorcycles and other items, totalling the total value of seized property to approximately Rs 27.5 lakh.

NFR Leads Green Initiative at Sairang Railway Station

in Collaboration with Government of Mizoram

Maligaon, 20 June, 2026: In a significant initiative aimed at promoting environmental sustainability, enhancing passenger amenities and fostering community participation, Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) in collaboration with the Department of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Mizoram and Clean & Green Revolution Mizoram, organised a tree plantation, beautification and cleanliness drive at Sairang Railway Station recently. The programme reflects the shared commitment of all stakeholders towards creating cleaner, greener and more passenger-friendly railway stations while contributing to environmental conservation and sustainable development. As part of the initiative, tree plantation activities, flower garden develop-



ment and a comprehensive cleanliness campaign were carried out within and around the station premises, enhancing its aesthetic appeal and ecological value. The Department of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Mizoram, extended valuable support by providing 50 April tree saplings and 50 Chawnpui tree saplings for plantation. These plantations are expected to

strengthen the green cover around the station, improve the local environment, support biodiversity and contribute to a healthier and more pleasant atmosphere for passengers, railway employees and nearby residents.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chairperson of Clean & Green Revolution Mizoram, Mrs. Lalmalsawmi, highlighted the organisa-

tion's vision of transforming Sairang Railway Station into one of the cleanest, greenest and most beautiful railway stations in India. She appreciated the support and cooperation extended by NFR and the Government of Mizoram in undertaking beautification measures that will further enhance the station environment and create a welcoming experience for passengers and visitors.

The programme was attended by Shri Agni Mitra, Conservator (Planning) Department of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Mizoram, Pu JK Dawngzuala, Chairman, Zo Highways and Agriculture Development Company Limited and senior officials of Lumding Division of NFR. The dignitaries appreciated the initiative and highlighted the importance of collective efforts in promoting

environmental conservation and sustainable development. The campaign witnessed enthusiastic participation from members of the Self-Help Group, Sihhmui, the Commercial Vehicle Union, Sairang, local residents and railway officials, demonstrating a strong sense of collective responsibility towards environmental stewardship and community well-being.

Northeast Frontier Railway continues to promote environmental sustainability through collaborative initiatives with government agencies, local organisations and communities. Such efforts contribute to creating cleaner, greener and more passenger-friendly railway environments while fostering greater awareness towards environmental conservation and sustainable development.



Chief Minister Dr. Yadav and Union Minister Manohar Lal visited Shri Mahakal Mahalok

DR. BHUPENDRA VIKAL

Bhopal: Chief Minister DrMohan Yadav and Union Housing and Urban Development Minister Manohar Lal visited Shri Mahakal Mahalok located in the Shri Mahakaleshwar Temple complex. Divisional Commissioner Ashish Singh gave information about the killing of Tripurasur by Lord Shiva and other statues installed in Mahakal Lok. After this, Chief Minister DrYadav, Union Minister Manohar Lal and other public representatives watched the light and sound show organized in Rudra Sagar.

As soon as the guests reached the stage built on the banks of Rudra Sagar of Shri Mahakal Mahalok, the members of Shri Mahakal Band run by Shri Mahakaleshwar Temple Management Committee gave a musical presentation of the song "Mahakal Sarkar Mere Mahakal Sarkar". After this, in the light and sound show, the mythological stories of

Baba Mahakal, Maa Shipra and the ancient Avantika city (Ujjain) were depicted in a very captivating manner through laser light, water screen and spectacular sound effects. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav informed Union Minister Manohar Lal about Mahakal Lok. After watching the light and sound laser show, while visiting Shri Mahakal Mahalok in an e-cart, Chief Minister Dr. Yadav informed Union Minister Manohar Lal about the various statues installed in Shri Mahakal Mahalok. During this, Urban Development and Housing Minister Kailash Vijayvargiya, Minister of State Mrs. Pratima Bagri, MLA Anil Jain Kaluhera, Municipal Corporation Chairman Mrs. Kalavati Yadav, Ujjain Development Authority Chairman Ravi Solanki, Sanjay Aggarwal, Additional Chief Secretary Sanjay Dubey, Commissioner Urban Administration Sanket Bhondve and public representativesSenior officials were present.

Relief from court in land dispute

There was a conspiracy to implicate me: Shivkumar Gautam

Shivpuri : School director and socio-political activist Shivkumar Gautam held a press conference yesterday and presented his side in detail regarding the land dispute issue which has been in the news for the past few days. While providing the journalists with copies of the order passed by the District and Sessions Court, Shivpuri on June 18, 2026, he said that the Sessions Court has canceled the order for registering the FIR against him given by the Chief Judicial Magistrate Court. Shivkumar Gautam said that the court has accepted in its order that on the basis of available facts and documents, prima facie no cognizable offense appears to be made out against him. The Court also noted that the order was passed by the Chief Judicial Magistrate without properly following the procedure prescribed under Section 175(3) of the Indian Civil Defense Code, due to which the said order was set aside. During the press conference, Shivkumar Gautam said that a duly signed contract was made in his favor in the year 2023 regarding the concerned land and on the basis of the same, he later made another contract regarding his share of the land. He said that in this entire matter, a civil suit for specific compliance of the contract is already pending in the court and the dispute should be resolved through legal process. Shivkumar Gautam alleged that every year during the admission session of the schools run by him, efforts are being made to tarnish his personal and institution-



al image. He said that in the past too, attempts have been made to affect the reputation of his school through various types of allegations and controversies, but every time the truth has come out. He said that he has become active in public life and politics in recent years and it is possible that some people, uncomfortable with his increasing activism, may have become his opponents. He expressed apprehension that some such elements are systematically trying to create an environment against him. However, he refrained from naming any particular person and said that he has full faith in the judiciary and will continue to respect the legal process in every situation. Shivkumar Gautam said that his main objective is to work in the field of education and social service and he is continuously striving for a better future of children through his schools. He appealed to the parents, students and people of the society not to believe any kind of rumors and form any opinion only after understanding the facts. At the end of the press conference, Shivkumar Gautam said that his faith in truth and justice is as unwavering as before and in the future also he will continue to present his side within the legal and democratic limits.

Uttarakhand govt orders probe into Karnaprayag incident involving Nihang Sikh pilgrims

DEHRADUN: (Jun 20) The Uttarakhand government on Saturday ordered an inquiry into the recent dispute in Karnaprayag, Chamoli district, between Nihang Sikh pilgrims returning from Hemkund and local residents, officials said. State Home Secretary Shailesh Bagauli said here that instructions have been issued to the

inspector general of police (Garhwal) to conduct a fair and transparent investigation into the matter. He said that action would be taken based on facts after hearing all parties involved. Bagauli mentioned that a status report on the entire incident has also been sought from the additional director general of police (law and order).



Bolivian president declares state of emergency to restore road traffic



LA PAZ

Bolivian President Rodrigo Paz announced early Saturday the implementation of a state of emergency aimed at restoring road traffic across the country after weeks of nationwide blockades related to protests.

Since early May, road blockades in several parts of Bolivia have disrupted the transportation of fuel, food and medical supplies, causing shortages in some cities and dealing a heavy blow to economic activity, Xinhua news agency reported.

In a message posted on social media, Paz said Bolivians could no longer remain "hostages" to road blockades that prevent people from working, studying, receiving medical care, obtaining essential goods and supporting their families. "This state of emergency is not intended to take away normality, but to restore it," the president said.

Paz also stressed that the government's doors would remain open to all those willing to engage in good-faith dialogue. "Meanwhile, Bolivia needs to recover its roads, guarantee supplies and return to normality," he said.

On Thursday, the Bolivian government signed an agreement with the trade union federation Bolivian Workers' Central, a key participant in the protest movement, committing both sides to address pending demands through dialogue.

Seven killed, three injured in two explosions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

ISLAMABAD

At least seven people were killed and three others injured in two explosions on Saturday in Bannu district of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The two explosions occurred in Marka Bera, a semi-tribal mountainous area of Bannu's Wazir sub-division, local media reported.

According to the Bannu District Police Officer (DPO) Yasir Afridi, a total of seven people were killed, and three others injured in the two blasts, leading Pakistani daily Dawn reported. He also said that security forces have reached the area, started the investigation into the incidents and collected evidence. The police said in a statement that the two vehicles were targeted in "remote-controlled blasts" in the Phang Musa Khel area. A vehicle travelling towards Domel was targeted first, where five people were killed in the blast, while the vehicle was completely destroyed. According to the eyewitnesses, a second blast occurred nearly a kilometre away from the first blast, which killed two people and destroyed the vehicle they were in.

Donald Trump Says Meloni Sought Photo Repeatedly, Claims Her Popularity is Slipping

WASHINGTON

A once-close political partnership between US President Donald Trump and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has erupted into a public feud after Trump claimed the Italian leader repeatedly sought a photograph with him at the G7 summit in France, an allegation Meloni has forcefully rejected.

The latest exchange marked a sharp deterioration in ties between the two leaders, who had long been viewed as ideological allies on issues including immigration and national sovereignty. In a post on Truth Social, Trump renewed comments he first made in a telephone interview with Italy's La7 television network, accusing Meloni of seeking publicity from her association with him.

"Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni asked, over and over, for a picture with me during the G-7 meeting in France," Trump wrote.

Trump suggested Meloni's actions were linked to domestic



politics, saying she was "doing poorly in Italy with her level of popularity".

He also criticised her stance on Iran, writing that she had "turned down the United States of America, a country that truly loves and protects Italy, when it came to denying Iran from obtaining or developing a nuclear weapon".

Trump further alleged that Rome "wouldn't even let us use Italy's landing strips or runways, a great logistical inconvenience", despite what he de-

scribed as substantial US contributions towards the defence of Italy and other NATO allies.

"Now, after the United States defeated Iran militarily, she wants to be friends again in order to get her 'numbers up.' No thanks!!!" Trump wrote.

The comments echoed remarks made during Trump's interview with La7 following the G7 gathering in France.

Asked about his interaction with Meloni during the summit, Trump said: "She's probably glad I spoke to her! I wasn't

obliged to speak to her!"

He then added: "I don't know what to tell you! She begged me to take a picture with her! She wanted a photo with me so badly, I might not have done it otherwise, but I felt sorry for her!" Meloni responded publicly to the earlier remarks, rejecting Trump's characterisation of their meeting and accusing him of targeting allies.

"The statements by Donald Trump are completely invented. They are frankly astonishing. I don't know why the president of the United States behaves like this with his own allies," she said. She added: "It's a shame that he doesn't have the same determination toward the enemies of the West, the enemies of the United States, toward whose leadership he instead shows himself to be more accommodating."

In her strongest rebuke, Meloni said: "I and Italy never beg." The dispute has also taken a toll on the diplomatic engagement between Washington and Rome. The State Department had announced this week that Secretary of State Marco Rubio will

travel to Miami on June 22 to participate in the Italy-US Business, Investment, Science and Innovation Forum. According to the department, Rubio was supposed to meet Italian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani to advance bilateral cooperation on economic security and critical minerals.

However, Tajani on Friday announced the cancellation of his planned visit to Miami over Trump's "offensive" comments on Meloni. "The serious and offensive words of President Trump towards Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni offend all of Italy. For this reason, I have decided to cancel my visit to the United States scheduled for the next 21 and 22 June," Tajani wrote on X. Trump and Meloni had until recently maintained one of the warmest relationships between the US President and a major European leader. Meloni was often described as one of Trump's closest political allies in Europe, and the two leaders frequently exchanged public praise.

Deadly unrest pushes PoK into its severest crisis in years: Report

LONDON

As turmoil grips Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), daily life has come to a standstill following weeks of deadly unrest that has claimed dozens of lives and plunged the region into its most severe crisis in years, a report has stated.

The escalating confrontation between local authorities and the recently banned Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) poses a significant challenge for Islamabad. The unrest began ahead of a June 9 strike organised by the JAAC to oppose the reservation of 12 seats in the July 27 polls in the region.

The situation deteriorated swiftly, with officials reporting at least 20 civilian fatalities and dozens of injuries between June 6 and 14.

Iran closes Strait of Hormuz again, cites MoU violation by US and Israel

TEHRAN

Iran on Saturday announced the closure of the Strait of Hormuz once again, citing alleged violations of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) by the US and Israel, local media reported.

Just days after announcing an agreement lifting naval blockades, Iran's top joint military command, Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, said the closure comes in response to the "explicit breach" of the first clause of the post-war MoU by the US and Israel and "ongoing violations" of the ceasefire in southern Lebanon, Iran's semi-official Mehr news agency reported.

The headquarters said that in light of the US' clear breach of its commitments regarding the first article of the MoU on ending the war and Israel's attacks in Lebanon, it is announcing that the Strait of Hormuz will be



closed to vessel traffic. The MoU between Iran and the US was signed on June 18 by Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and US President Donald Trump through a simultaneous digital process without an in-person ceremony.

"The agreement's first article provides for the immediate and permanent termination of military operations between Iran, the US, and their respective al-

lies across all fronts, including Lebanon, and commits the parties to refrain from future military action or threats of force," the report by Mehr noted.

Iran on Friday introduced new regulations for vessels transiting the Strait of Hormuz, requiring ships to register in advance and obtain permits and insurance before entering one of the world's most critical energy shipping routes, after the earlier

reopening of the waterway under a US-Iran agreement.

The new requirements were announced by Iran's newly established Persian Gulf Strait Authority (PGSA), which was created as part of the framework agreed between Washington and Tehran to restore commercial shipping through the strategic passage after more than three months of conflict.

The US forces lifted the blockade on all maritime traffic entering and exiting Iranian ports and coastal areas, the US Central Command said.

"American forces are not impeding the transit of vessels to or from Iranian ports. All US military blockade enforcement efforts have ceased," the command wrote on X.

US warships "will remain in the general area to make sure that all aspects of the agreement are adhered to, obeyed and in full force and effect," it added.

Reforms in Pakistan were never designed to succeed amid IMF bailouts: Report

NEW DELHI

Pakistan has seen several International Monetary Fund (IMF) programmes to improve its economy in the past but reforms have failed and the country stares at a bigger economic crisis. The question isn't why reform failed but whether it was ever designed to succeed, argues a new report.

The report in Dawn laments that each IMF programme reaches the same diagnosis — the tax base is too narrow, distortions are too many, and institutions are too weak.

"The IMF prescribes, Pakistan implements, and the programme ends. And then, after a brief interval, another programme begins with the same diagnosis and the same prescription," says the report. Economist Daron Acemoglu offers the clearest framework for this sort of question.

"In his theory, the puzzle of persistent underdevelopment dissolves once you accept the premise that groups holding political power choose policies, not to maximise aggregate welfare, but to transfer resources from the rest of society to themselves," the report cites the economist as saying. The set of rules that manage are inefficient by de-



sign, because the groups that benefit from inefficiency are precisely the groups with the power to shape these rules. Pakistan, examined through this lens, is a classic case study, the report says.

The petroleum levy has become the Pakistan government's main revenue instrument, with the IMF now targeting Rs 1.7 trillion for the 2026 budget. More alarmingly, this target is in the year when the IMF itself reports the effective tax rate on petroleum products in Pakistan is 166 per cent.

"Two things about this levy deserve more attention than they receive. First, unlike income tax or sales tax, the petroleum levy does not enter the divisible pool, meaning provinces and the populations they serve receive no share of its proceeds.

This is a structural choice that concentrates fiscal resources at the federal centre while the costs are borne by everyone who buys fuel, which is everyone.

India's balanced approach to Myanmar gains strategic importance



ATHENS

The recent visit of Myanmar's President U Min Aung Hlaing to India carried significance beyond diplomatic protocol. It reflected Myanmar's search for a balancing strategy, gave India an opportunity to engage with a volatile neighbour whose instability directly impacts the Northeast, and served as a reminder for China that influence does not necessarily translate into trust.

"India does not offer Myanmar the same scale of money, infrastructure, or coercive leverage that China does. But India offers something China cannot easily provide: A relationship less burdened by domination," a report in the 'Greek City Times' stated.

According to the report, unlike China, India has not been deeply involved with armed border actors in Myanmar; instead New Delhi draws religious and spiritual links — reflected in President Aung Hlaing's visit to Bodhi Gaya, which he has undertaken during his previous visits as well.

The report noted that India has no interest in pursuing indirect influence through ethnic groups but is rather focused on

a stable, sovereign Myanmar given that instability in the Southeast Asian nation directly affects India's Northeast.

India and Myanmar share a 1,643-km land border across Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, and Mizoram, with communities on both sides linked by kinship, clan, tribal, linguistic, and religious ties.

"Instability in Chin, Sagaing, Kachin, or Rakhine (states bordering or in the immediate vicinity of India) does not remain confined to Myanmar. It spills into Mizoram, Manipur, and Nagaland through refugee flows, arms trafficking, narcotics, insurgent movements, and social tensions. India is said to have carried out a few drone-based attacks in Myanmar territory against Indian insurgent groups. It shows the importance of having the Myanmar military on board," the report detailed. "For India, Myanmar is, therefore, not an optional diplomatic theatre. It is central to internal security. The violence in Manipur since 2023, refugee inflows into Mizoram, the presence of Indian insurgent groups in Myanmar's borderlands, and the flow of weapons and narcotics.

India-Germany Submarine Deal Signals Indo-Pacific Shift

ATHENS

The proposed India-Germany submarine partnership extends far beyond a conventional defence procurement deal, reflecting a convergence of strategic interests, industrial cooperation and regional security priorities amid a rapidly evolving balance of power across Asia.

For India, the deal creates a framework for greater naval self-reliance and enhanced deterrence against regional adversaries. For Germany, it presents an opportunity to expand its strategic footprint beyond Europe, while emerging as a key security partner in the Indo-Pacific, a report in Ath-

ens-based 'Directus' stated.

"The proposed submarine partnership involves far more than simply purchasing military hardware. Under the current plan, the Type 214 submarines would be built at Mumbai's Mazagon Dock Shipyard by Indian engineers trained by German specialists. This technology-transfer component is one of the most strategically significant aspects of the agreement," the report detailed.

"India's objective is clear: develop domestic expertise, strengthen indigenous shipbuilding capabilities, and reduce dependence on foreign suppliers. For Germany, however, sharing advanced submarine technology involves

difficult decisions about intellectual property, industrial secrets, and national security considerations," it added.

According to the report, the final shape of the agreement will hinge on which technologies are transferred, how production responsibilities are allocated, and the degree of access granted to Indian engineers for sensitive systems.

Citing defence analysts, it argued that technology-sharing agreements are not merely military procurement but a foundation for long-term strategic partnerships. Such industrial cooperation helps build "political trust, economic interdependence, and deeper diplomatic alignment". "For Berlin, sup-



porting India's naval modernisation represents an opportunity to establish a stronger

presence in one of the world's most strategically important regions. For New Delhi, the

agreement promises enhanced deterrence, domestic job creation, and accelerated growth

of its defence-industrial base. Both sides stand to gain from a partnership that could last decades," 'Directus' mentioned.

The report highlighted India's submarine ambitions are driven by growing security challenges posed by its two nuclear-armed rivals: China and Pakistan.

It emphasised that submarines are emerging as the most decisive weapon of modern naval power as geopolitical competition escalates across the Indo-Pacific.

"Silent, difficult to detect, and capable of threatening far larger fleets, submarines provide countries with a powerful deterrent in contested waters," the report noted.

Referring to military analysts, it said that underwater warfare is expected to play a pivotal role in future conflicts. With vital sea lanes facing rising traffic and security risks, countries are investing in advanced submarine fleets capable of operating discreetly for extended periods.

Emphasising the significance of the prospective Indo-German submarine deal, the report said, "Whether this partnership ultimately strengthens stability or fuels greater competition remains to be seen. What is clear, however, is that the future struggle for influence in the Indo-Pacific will increasingly be fought beneath the waves."



MONEY MATTERS09

RBI Cracks Down on Bank Mis-Selling Practices

The RBI has issued its strongest framework yet against mis-selling by banks and regulated entities. The regulations target dark patterns, forced bundling and unsuitable sales while shifting accountability to institutions.

A customer walks into a bank to renew a fixed deposit. Months later, they realise they are holding an insurance policy instead.

Another customer applies for a home loan and discovers that insurance has quietly become part of the transaction. Others are persuaded to buy investment products they neither understand nor need, often on the assurance that they are "safe", "guaranteed" or "just like an FD". For years, such stories were dismissed as isolated incidents. Consumer complaints kept piling up. Employee unions complained about sales pressure. Financial advisers flagged recurring patterns of unsuitable sales.

Media reports highlighted instances of customers being sold products they never intended to buy. Even Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman publicly raised concerns about mis-selling in the financial sector. Now, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has responded with its strongest framework yet to curb mis-selling by banks and regulated entities. The regulator has formally defined mis-selling, prohibited deceptive digital practices, banned forced bundling, mandated explicit consent and made institutions accountable for compensating customers when mis-selling is established. The move raises an important question: What happened in India's financial sector that made the RBI feel the need to step in so forcefully?

THE COMPLAINTS KEPT COMING

The scale of the problem offers part of the answer. Insurance Regulatory and

Development Authority of India (IRDAI) data shows that more than 1.2 lakh complaints were filed against life insurers annually over the past three years. Life insurers recorded 120,726 complaints in FY24 and 120,429 complaints in FY25. While overall complaint numbers remained broadly stable, grievances linked specifically to unfair business practices and mis-selling continued to rise. IRDAI's own annual report flagged mis-selling as a significant concern and described it as the sale of insurance products without proper disclosure of terms, conditions or suitability. Saurabh Vijayvergia, Founder and CEO of CoverSure, said the warning signs have been visible for some time. "Mis-selling complaints have surged across financial services. In insurance alone, unfair business practice grievances rose 14% year-on-year to over 26,000 in FY25. That tells you the problem is systemic, not isolated," he says. The complaints themselves often follow a familiar pattern. "The most common mis-selling is a product sold as a fixed deposit," says Shilpa Arora, Co-founder and COO of Insurance Samadhan. "The banker is aware of the money in the account and can push insurance as an FD. Besides this, mandatory insurance is often sold when a customer walks in for any kind of loan."

According to her, customers typically do not realise they have been mis-sold a product immediately. "The policyholder places trust in the bank and does not check the document given. They only realise when the renewal premium is demanded after a year," she says. **WHEN BANKS STOPPED JUST SELLING BANKING PRODUCTS**

The roots of the problem lie in how banking itself evolved.

Over the past two decades, banks have transformed from institutions that primarily accepted deposits and extended loans into financial supermar-



kets selling everything from insurance and mutual funds to credit cards and investment products. Dr Arunava Bandyopadhyay, Assistant Professor of Finance at IMI Kolkata, says the shift was driven partly by the growing importance of fee-based income.

"Over the last two decades, banks gradually evolved from relationship banking to product sellers relying increasingly on fee-based revenue," he says. The numbers illustrate the scale of this transformation. Corporate agents, including bancassurance partners, accounted for nearly 53% of private life insurers' individual new business premium in FY25. Banks alone contributed more than 49% of that premium. Banks also earned over Rs 1,700 crore in commissions in FY24 from selling financial products, largely insurance and mutual funds.

The incentive to sell became deeply embedded in the system. A 2024 survey by 1 Finance found that more than half of relationship managers surveyed admitted to mis-selling financial products to meet sales targets. Around 51% feared they would lose their jobs if they missed those targets, while more than 84% reported being under intense pressure to sell.

"The current incentive

structure is essentially set up to mis-sell by default," says Bandyopadhyay. "Cross-selling itself is not problematic. The issue arises when incentives encourage the sale of products regardless of suitability."

THE DIGITAL AGE MADE MIS-SELLING BIGGER

Mis-selling itself is not new. What changed is the scale. A decade ago, the problem was largely confined to physical branches, where relationship managers promoted unsuitable products through verbal persuasion or incomplete disclosures. Today, it increasingly occurs through digital interfaces. Manoranjan Sharma, Chief Economist at Infometric Ratings, said RBI's intervention reflects the convergence of three developments: rising customer complaints, surging digital distribution and adverse supervisory findings. "A decade ago, mis-selling was largely

branch-driven. Today, it is increasingly embedded in digital design," Sharma says.

WHEN MIS-SELLING MOVED INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

Consumer complaints, social media posts, employee concerns and media reports highlighted recurring instances of customers being sold unsuitable products through banks and financial institutions. India Today was among the publications that reported extensively on mis-selling concerns, particularly around insurance products distributed through banking channels, documenting cases where customers alleged they were sold products they neither wanted nor fully understood. The concerns eventually moved beyond consumer grievances and entered policy discussions. Vijayvergia notes that the issue gathered momentum after public remarks by policymakers and scrutiny from regulators. "The Finance Ministry spoke about it. The RBI's annual report also mentioned it. This is no longer viewed as just a training issue or the fault of a few bad agents. It is recognised as an institutional conduct issue," he says. Even bank employees began speaking publicly about sales pressure. In May 2026, the All India State Bank Officers' Federation raised concerns about aggressive insurance sales targets and pressure on frontline staff, further highlighting the structural nature of the problem.

He points to pre-ticked consent boxes, default add-ons, algorithm-driven sales journeys and cumbersome cancellation processes that can steer customers toward products they never intended to buy.

"Mis-selling has evolved from isolated sales misconduct into a systemic issue, where small interface biases

THE REAL COST OF MIS-SELLING

The damage caused by mis-selling often extends far beyond a bad financial decision. Abhishek Kumar, Sebi-registered investment adviser and founder of SahajMoney, said the biggest loss is often not financial but psychological. "People lose trust in financial products when they are mis-sold," he says.

The financial consequences, however, can be severe. "Apart from loss of

capital, it can result in liquidity issues and unexpected premium liabilities that disrupt long-term goals," Kumar says.

He points to regular-premium products such as Unit Linked Insurance Plans (ULIPs), where customers may face steep costs and surrender penalties if they exit early. "This misallocation of capital often leaves families underinsured or short on cash during emergencies,

affecting retirement planning and education goals," he says.

He says one of the biggest warning signs is when a product is sold without any meaningful assessment of a customer's needs. "When a relationship manager pitches the exact same product without evaluating your age, income requirements or risk tolerance, it indicates a commission-driven sale rather than appropriate advice," he says.

the entire distribution chain, including direct selling agents and third-party providers. Importantly, the RBI has also made it clear that a customer signature alone is not enough. According to Shilpa Arora, the new rules represent a fundamental shift in how responsibility is assigned. "A bank cannot simply say you signed the form," she says. She points out that mis-selling now includes selling products that are unsuitable for a customer's age, income, financial literacy, risk profile or needs, even if the customer signed the documents. "No insurance policy should be issued without clear and informed consent," she adds. Bandyopadhyay sees this as a broader regulatory shift. "The framework represents a move from a documentation-based approach to a suitability-based approach," he says. In other words, the question is no longer whether a customer signed a form. It is whether the product was genuinely appropriate for that customer.

RBI HAS DRAWN THE LINE. NOW CUSTOMERS MUST DO THEIR PART

Experts believe the RBI's framework has significantly strengthened consumer protections. Customers now have stronger safeguards against forced bundling, deceptive

digital practices and unsuitable product sales. The regulator has also introduced refund and compensation provisions where mis-selling is established. But experts caution that regulation alone cannot eliminate the problem.

Kumar advises customers to demand a written explanation of why a product is suitable for them, verify all charges and lock-in periods independently, and use the regulatory free-look period to review policy documents carefully. Arora says many problems arise because customers place blind trust in verbal assurances. "The policyholder places trust in the bank and often does not check the document given," she says.

That makes financial awareness as important as regulation. The RBI may have created stronger guardrails, but consumers still need to ask questions, read the fine print and understand what they are signing. For years, mis-selling thrived in the gap between trust and information. The RBI has now attempted to narrow that gap. Whether the new framework succeeds will depend not just on how banks change their sales culture, but also on how willing consumers are to become more informed buyers of financial products.

Kotak Calls for New Economic Independence Drive

NEW DELHI, JUNE 20

India needs a "new independence movement" aimed at reducing the country's dependence on foreign capital, imported energy, defense equipment and overseas technology as rising geopolitical tensions and growing protectionism reshape the global economy, according to a strategy report released by Kotak Institutional Equities. The report argues that changing global trade dynamics, increasing geopolitical conflicts, resource nationalism and tighter restrictions on technology transfers have

significantly narrowed India's ability to rely on imports and external financing. As a result, the country needs stronger domestic manufacturing capabilities and greater economic self-reliance. "India has been managing its high external dependencies through imports. However, the option of imports is becoming narrower, which necessitates more radical policy actions to reduce external dependencies," the report said. Kotak analysts noted that India's external sector remains vulnerable despite relatively stable current account balances. The country's trade deficit



averaged 6.4 per cent of GDP between FY2016 and FY2026, while the current account deficit averaged around 1 per cent during the same period. The report also highlighted emerging risks to In-

dia's services-led growth model, warning that heavy dependence on software exports and overseas remittances could become a vulnerability as artificial intelligence increasingly disrupts traditional

service industries. According to the study, expanding domestic manufacturing has become an economic necessity. Manufacturing currently contributes only about 13 per cent of India's GDP, one of the lowest shares among major economies. Increasing manufacturing capacity and boosting domestic value addition would help reduce dependence on imported goods while strengthening macroeconomic stability, the report said. Energy dependence remains another major challenge for the Indian economy. The report estimates that the country imports nearly 85 per

cent of its crude oil requirements and about half of its natural gas needs. Imported energy has accounted for more than half of India's trade deficit in recent years, making the economy vulnerable to global price shocks and supply disruptions. Kotak analysts identified renewable energy as the most viable long-term solution to reducing external dependence. The report projects that clean energy could account for 40 per cent of India's energy mix by FY2056, while the share of domestically sourced energy is expected to increase from 63 per cent to 72 per cent during the same period.

PMAY-U 2.0: 38,000 families perform grih pravesh in Madhya Pradesh

NEW DELHI, JUNE 20

Madhya Pradesh received a major housing boost under PMAY-U 2.0 on Saturday as more than 42,000 eligible beneficiaries were sanctioned houses with government assistance worth Rs 1,050 crore, while another 38,000 families entered their newly built homes across the state. The initiative was launched during a major programme held at Sanwer in Indore district, benefiting over 80,000 families through fresh sanctions and Grih Pravesh ceremonies. Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal led the event in the presence of Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav. State Urban Development and Housing Minister Kailash Vijayvergia, Minister of State for Urban Administration and Development Pratima Bagri, and other state ministers also attended the programme. Under PMAY-U 2.0, sanction letters were distributed to more than 42,000 beneficiaries, enabling them to access financial assistance for constructing or acquiring pucca houses. In addition, around 38,000 families across various districts of Madhya Pradesh performed Grih Pravesh ceremonies for their newly completed homes. Addressing the gathering, Manohar Lal congratulated the beneficiaries and said every new house represents dignity, security and hope for families. He reaffirmed the Centre's commitment to achieving the goal of Housing for All under the leadership of Prime Minis-



ter Narendra Modi.

The minister said that access to permanent housing not only ensures safe and secure living conditions but also improves access to essential services and livelihood opportunities. He noted that the housing scheme has also strengthened women's empowerment by mandating ownership in the name of the woman of the household or through joint ownership.

Madhya Pradesh has emerged as one of the best-performing states in the implementation of PMAY-U. Under PMAY-U and PMAY-U 2.0, more than 10.39 lakh houses have been sanctioned in the state, while over 9.08 lakh houses have already been completed.

The latest sanctions and house completions mark another step in expanding affordable housing coverage in the state. Under PMAY-U 2.0, the government aims to support an additional one crore EWS, LIG and MIG families across urban India by providing financial assistance of up to Rs 2.5 lakh for constructing, purchasing or renting a pucca house.

Coal gasification project to strengthen India's energy security: Kishan Reddy

JHARSUGUDA (ODISHA): (JUN 20)

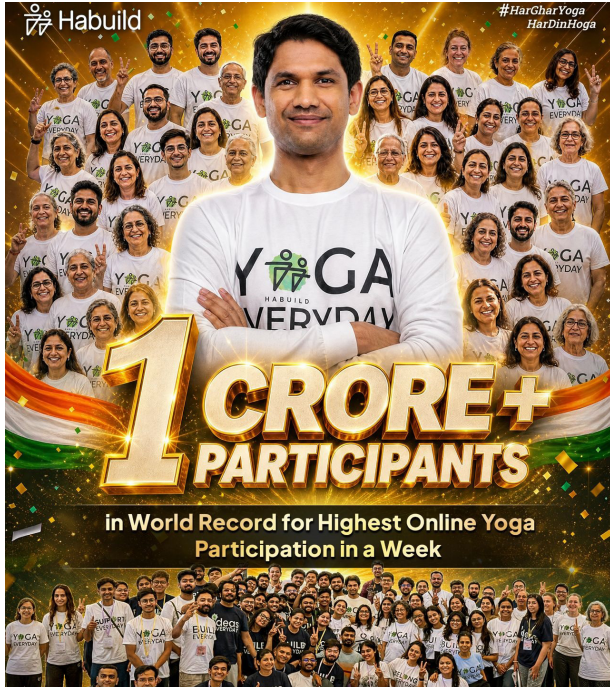
Union Coal and Mines Minister G Kishan Reddy on Saturday said the beginning of the coal gasification project marks a historic step towards converting India's abundant coal resources into value-added products, which will strengthen the country's energy security and promote import substitution. Reddy said this after Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually laid the foundation stone for the Rs 25,000 crore Coal-to-Ammonium Nitrate Project of Bharat Coal Gasification & Chemicals Limited (BCGCL) in a meeting at Rairangpur in the presence of President Droupadi Murmu. The Union minister attended the meeting by physically remaining present at the project site in Lakhanpur in Jharsuguda district.

Yoga Movement Draws 1 Crore+ Participants in a Week, Marks World Record Milestone

Yoga Movement Draws 1 Crore+ Participants in a Week, Marks World Record Milestone

INDIA, JUNE 20, 2026:

Ahead of International Yoga Day 2026, Habuild, India's habit-building wellness platform, has achieved its 10th world record, with over 1 crore people joining its yoga movement in their yoga week, marking one of the largest community-led wellness initiatives globally. The milestone was achieved as part of Habuild's nationwide initiative, 'Har Ghar Yoga. Har Din Hoga.', which encourages people to make yoga a consistent part of their everyday lives rather than limiting it to a once-a-year celebration. Aligned with this year's International Yoga Day theme, "Yoga for Healthy Ageing," the initiative highlights the role of daily yoga practice in building long-term physical health, mental wellbeing, and healthy ageing. The movement has witnessed unprecedented participation, with more than 20 lakh people attending in one day, reflecting a growing shift towards preventive



wellness and sustainable habit-building. The initiative continues to gain momentum as participants from across India and around the world come together for a week-long world record attempt culmi-

nating on International Yoga Day. Founded by Saurabh Bothra, IIT alumnus, government-certified yoga expert, and Co-founder of Habuild, the platform has built one of the world's largest wellness

communities around the belief that lasting transformation comes not from intensity, but from consistency. Commenting on the milestone, Saurabh Bothra, Co-founder of Habuild, said, "Achieving our 10th world record is not just about the numbers; it is a reflection of a growing movement of people choosing consistency over perfection. International Yoga Day reminds us of the importance of yoga, but the real transformation happens when yoga becomes part of our everyday lives. Through 'Har Ghar Yoga. Har Din Hoga.', we are helping millions build habits that support long-term health, wellbeing, and healthy ageing." As part of the initiative, participants receive access to free online yoga sessions, community-led initiatives, and habit-building support designed to make wellness simple, accessible, and sustainable. The initiative is open to individuals and families across all age groups and fitness levels. Today, Habuild's global community spans over

1.9 crore+ members across 169+ countries. Through daily live yoga, dance, strength-training, and meditation sessions, the platform continues to empower people worldwide to build healthier lifestyles through small, repeatable actions. With this 10th world record milestone, Habuild continues to advance its larger mission of making yoga a daily habit practiced in every home across India and around the world.

About Habuild

Habuild is a habit-building wellness platform helping people create sustainable healthy lifestyles through yoga, movement, mindfulness, and community. Founded by IIT alumni, Habuild serves a global community of over 1.9 crore members across 169+ countries through live daily yoga, dance, strength, and meditation sessions. The platform's unique approach focuses on consistency and habit formation, making wellness simple, accessible, and sustainable for everyone.





Taming the Fire Within

A Comprehensive Guide to Managing and Preventing Acid Reflux

For millions of people worldwide, the end of a delicious meal doesn't bring a sense of satisfied comfort, but rather a familiar, unwelcome dread. It begins as a subtle warmth behind the breast-

bone, rapidly intensifying into a sharp, burning sensation that crawls up the chest and leaves a sour, metallic taste in the mouth. This is the reality of acid reflux—a pervasive and often agonizing

condition that turns the simple pleasure of eating into a physical minefield. While occasional heartburn is a common human experience, chronic or severe acid reflux—known medically

as Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD)—can significantly diminish quality of life. It disrupts sleep, limits dietary choices, affects productivity, and, if left unaddressed over many

years, can even lead to serious esophageal complications. Fortunately, for the vast majority of sufferers, the keys to managing this fiery discomfort do not lie solely in life-long reliance on heavy

medication. Instead, sustainable relief can often be achieved through a deeper understanding of the body's mechanics and a series of targeted, practical lifestyle modifications.

Understanding the Gateway: The Lower Esophageal Sphincter

To effectively combat acid reflux, it is important to first understand the biological mechanism behind it. The human digestive system relies on a specialized ring-like muscle located at the junction where the esophagus meets the stomach. This muscle, known as the Lower Esophageal Sphincter (LES), serves as a crucial gatekeeper in the digestive process.

Under normal circumstances, the LES functions as a strict one-way valve. It relaxes briefly to allow food and liquids to pass from the esophagus into the stomach and then closes tightly to prevent the stomach's highly acidic contents from flowing back upward. This process happens seamlessly thousands of times throughout a person's life without causing discomfort.

Acid reflux develops when the LES becomes weakened, relaxes at inappropriate times, or is forced open by excessive pressure inside the abdomen. When this protective barrier fails, stomach contents containing hydrochloric acid and digestive enzymes move upward into the esophagus. Unlike the stomach, which possesses a specialized mucus-lined protective barrier capable of resisting acid damage, the esophagus lacks these defenses. As a result, even brief exposure to stomach acid can irritate and inflame the esophageal lining, producing the familiar burning sensation known as heartburn.

If left unmanaged over long periods, repeated acid exposure can lead to complications such as chronic inflammation, esophageal ulcers, narrowing of the esophagus, and in some cases, a condition known as Barrett's esophagus, which increases the risk of esophageal cancer. Understanding this underlying mechanism highlights why both prevention and treatment are so important.

Rethinking the Plate: Dietary Adjustments That Cool the Fire

The most immediate and practical battleground for managing acid reflux is diet. While triggers vary from person to person, certain foods are widely recognized

for their ability to weaken the LES, increase stomach acid production, or irritate the esophageal lining.

High-fat foods are among the most common offenders. Fatty meats, fried foods, creamy sauces, full-fat dairy products, and rich desserts slow the stomach's ability to empty its contents. This condition, known as delayed gastric emptying, keeps food in the stomach for longer periods and increases pressure against the LES. Choosing lean protein sources such as fish, skinless poultry, beans, lentils, tofu, and low-fat dairy products can significantly reduce this burden.

Acidic foods can also trigger symptoms. Citrus fruits such as oranges, lemons, grapefruits, and limes, along with tomato-based products like pasta sauces, ketchup, and salsa, may worsen irrita-

tion in individuals with sensitive esophageal tissue. While these foods are nutritious, moderation is often necessary for those struggling with frequent reflux.

Spicy foods present another challenge. Ingredients containing capsaicin can irritate the digestive tract and slow digestion, increasing the likelihood of reflux episodes. Some people tolerate spicy foods well, while others experience symptoms almost immediately, making personal ob-

servations essential.

Surprisingly, caffeine and mint are two triggers that many people overlook. Coffee, tea, energy drinks, chocolate, and peppermint products can relax the LES and make reflux more likely. For individuals who notice symptoms after consuming these items, switching to caffeine-free herbal teas such as chamomile, licorice root, or ginger tea may provide relief.

Carbonated beverages deserve special attention. Soft drinks, sparkling water, and fizzy beverages introduce gas into the digestive system, leading to bloating and increased pressure inside the stomach. This pressure can force the LES open and contribute to reflux episodes. Replacing carbonated drinks with plain water or non-acidic beverages is often beneficial.

Meal timing is equally critical. Gravity plays a major role in keeping stomach contents where they belong. Remaining upright after eating allows gravity to assist digestion and prevent acid from traveling upward. Most healthcare professionals recommend waiting at least three to four hours after eating before lying down or going to bed.

The Geometry of Digestion: Why How and When You Eat Matters

The way food is consumed can be just as important as the food itself. Modern lifestyles often encourage rushed meals, irregular eating patterns, and oversized portions, all of which can contribute to reflux. Large meals cause significant stretching of the stomach. This expansion increases pressure on the LES and raises the likelihood of stomach

contents moving upward. Eating five or six smaller meals throughout the day instead of two or three large ones helps maintain steady digestion without overwhelming the stomach.

Eating slowly also provides substantial benefits. Thorough chewing breaks food into smaller particles, making digestion easier and reducing the amount of air swallowed. Excess swallowed air contributes to bloating, which can worsen reflux symptoms.

Meal timing is equally critical. Gravity plays a major role in keeping stomach contents where they belong. Remaining upright after eating allows gravity to assist digestion and prevent acid from traveling upward. Most healthcare professionals recommend waiting at least three to four hours after eating before lying down or going to bed.

sleep disruption, chronic coughing, sore throats, hoarseness, and poor sleep quality due to acid reaching the upper esophagus.

A common mistake is attempting to relieve symptoms by stacking multiple pillows under the head. This approach bends the neck rather than elevating the upper body and may actually increase abdominal pressure.

A more effective solution is elevating the entire upper torso. Specialized wedge pillows create a gradual incline that helps keep acid in the stomach. Another option involves raising the head of the bed by six to nine inches using sturdy risers placed beneath the bedposts.

Sleep position also matters significantly. Research consistently shows that sleeping on the left side reduces acid exposure in the esophagus. Because of the

Habits: The Broader Lifestyle Equation

Acid reflux is influenced by more than just food and sleep habits. Several lifestyle factors contribute directly to abdominal pressure and LES function.

Excess body weight, particularly around the waist and abdomen, increases pressure on the stomach and digestive organs. This persistent pressure can weaken the LES and promote reflux. Research consistently demonstrates that even modest weight loss can significantly reduce symptom frequency and severity.

Clothing choices can also play a role. Tight belts, restrictive waistbands, shapewear, and snug-fitting garments compress the abdomen and increase pressure within the digestive system. Wearing loose, comfortable clothing, especially after meals, can reduce unnecessary strain on the stomach.

Smoking is another major contributor. Nicotine relaxes the LES and reduces saliva production. Saliva naturally helps neutralize acid in the esophagus and clears irritants from the digestive tract. As a result, smokers often experience more frequent and severe reflux symptoms than non-smokers. Quitting smoking benefits not only digestive health but also cardiovascular and respiratory well-being.

Stress management should not be overlooked. Although stress does not directly cause acid reflux, it can intensify symptoms and influence eating behaviors. Techniques such as meditation, yoga, deep breathing exercises, regular physical activity, and adequate sleep can help improve overall digestive health.

Navigating the Medicine Cabinet and Knowing When to Seek Help

When lifestyle modifications alone are insufficient, over-the-counter medications can provide temporary support.

Antacids work quickly by neutralizing existing stomach acid and are useful for occasional symptoms. H₂ receptor blockers reduce acid production for several hours and may help prevent symptoms before they occur. Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs) provide the strongest acid suppression by blocking acid-producing

pumps within the stomach lining, allowing inflamed tissues to heal.

While these medications can be highly effective, they are not always intended for indefinite use without medical supervision. Long-term reliance on acid-suppressing medications may affect nutrient absorption, alter gut bacteria, and potentially increase susceptibility to certain infections.

Recognizing warning signs is essential. Difficulty swallowing, painful swallowing, unexplained weight loss, persistent nausea, vomiting, black or tarry stools, and recurrent choking episodes require prompt medical evaluation. Severe chest pain should never be ignored because heart-related emergencies can closely resemble acid reflux symptoms.

Individuals who experience reflux symptoms more than twice a week, require frequent medication use, or notice worsening symptoms despite treatment should consult a gastroenterologist for a comprehensive assessment.

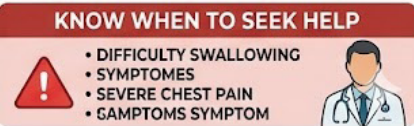
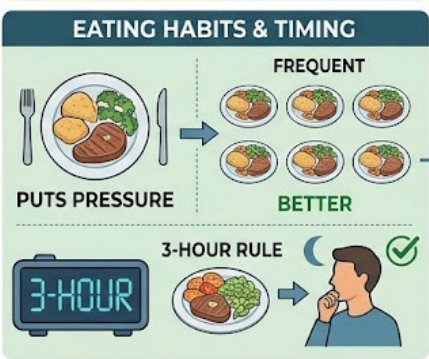
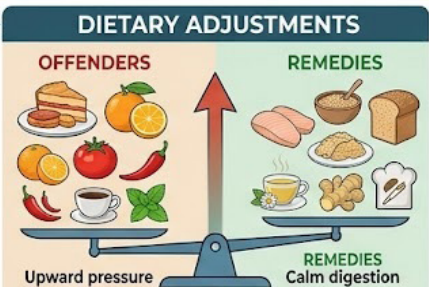
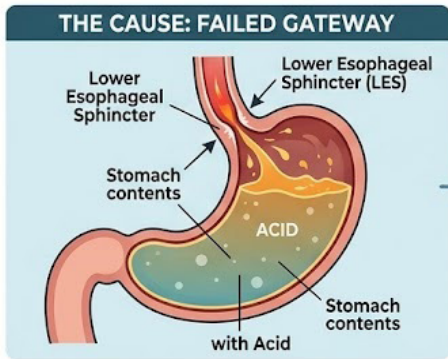
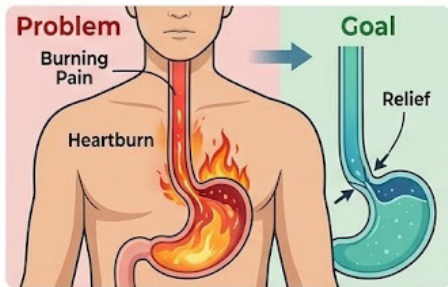
Conclusion: Building a Sustainable Strategy for Digestive Health

Managing acid reflux is rarely about finding a single miracle cure. Instead, it involves understanding the body's digestive processes and making thoughtful adjustments that work together to reduce symptoms and protect the esophagus.

By identifying trigger foods, adopting healthier eating habits, maintaining a healthy weight, improving sleep posture, reducing unnecessary abdominal pressure, and using medications appropriately when needed, most individuals can achieve significant and lasting relief. These changes may seem small individually, but collectively they can have a profound impact on digestive comfort and overall quality of life.

Ultimately, successful acid reflux management is about creating sustainable daily habits rather than relying solely on temporary treatments. With consistency, patience, and attention to the body's signals, it is entirely possible to reduce discomfort, protect long-term digestive health, and enjoy meals and daily activities without the constant fear of heartburn.

Taming the Fire Within: Managing and Preventing Acid Reflux





Indian Athletics Awards

PT Usha honoured with 'Lifetime Achievement Award'



NEW DELHI: Legendary sprinter and Indian Olympic Association (IOA) president PT Usha was conferred the Lifetime Achievement Award at the inaugural Indian Athletics Awards ceremony on Saturday. Apart from Usha, former Asian Games decathlon gold medallist Gurbachan Singh Randhawa, former national chief coach Bahadur Singh Chauhan, and World Championships bronze medallist long jumper Anju Bobby George were also presented with Lifetime Achievement Awards. Expressing her delight after receiving the honour, Usha admitted that the recognition came as a surprise.

T20 WORLD CUP

Playing Australia at a World Cup is incredible, says Babette De Leede



SOUTHAMPTON: Netherlands captain Babette de Leede described her side's Women's T20 World Cup clash against Australia as a "massive moment" for Dutch cricket despite suffering a 98-run defeat to the six-time champions. Australia piled up an imposing 219/6 after being put in to bat, with Beth Mooney leading the charge with a brilliant 74 off 42 balls and Ashleigh Gardner hammering 58 from 32 deliveries. The six-time champions then restricted the Netherlands to 121/3, although the Dutch side earned praise for their spirited batting display. For De Leede, the match carried added significance as she and teammate Robine Rijke both celebrated their 100th T20 International appearances.

Prasidh, Jaiswal Power India to 3-0 Sweep Over Afghanistan

CHENNAI

Fast bowler Prasidh Krishna's maiden five-wicket haul and Yashasvi Jaiswal's fluent unbeaten century powered India to a commanding nine-wicket victory over Afghanistan in the third ODI and sealed a 3-0 series sweep at the MA Chidambaram Stadium on Saturday.

Prasidh's sensational figures of 5-23 in nine overs, including taking four scalps in the power-play with his pace, bounce, and swing, helped India bowl out Afghanistan for 218 in 44.2 overs, despite skipper Hashmatullah Shahidi hitting 102 – his first ODI century.

In reply, Jaiswal and Rohit Sharma, who hit 79, shared a 170-run opening partnership, with five of them being penalty runs. Jaiswal then marched forward to hit an unbeaten 110 off 86 balls, with his second ODI ton in three innings laced with 14 boundaries and three sixes, as India wrapped up the chase with 128 balls remaining. The win also meant India got its first series victory under Shubman Gill as ODI captain.

India began positively as Rohit and Jaiswal negotiated the early movement and found boundaries through crisp drives and cuts to reach 42 without loss at the end of the fifth over. Jaiswal pressed on the accelerator pedal by hitting a flurry of boundaries off Fareed Ahmad in the seventh over. More strike rotation and boundaries ensured that India reached 86 without loss at the end of the Power-play.

With Afghanistan not posing many questions, Jaiswal and Rohit continued to press, with the former reaching his fifty off 38 balls in the 11th over with a confident drive to long-off. Rohit, too, found rhythm and brought up his own fifty off 47 balls in the 16th over.

Afghanistan introduced spinners Rashid Khan and Mohammad Nabi to



stem the flow, but Rohit and Jaiswal rotated strike and punished loose balls, despite a mix-up almost ending in a run-out. Jaiswal's timing and placement were particularly impressive, while Rohit provided the customary support at the other end after enduring a scratchy start.

Nabi struck in the 23rd over by removing Rohit for a well-made 79 after he pulled to deep mid-wicket. It brought Shreyas Iyer to the crease, even as Jaiswal continued to dominate. With the required rate negligible, Jaiswal and Iyer rotated the strike and punished anything short. Afghanistan's bowlers toiled hard for breakthroughs, but fielding lapses and misfields cost them. As the finish loomed, Jaiswal shifted gears and got his century off 83 balls with a fantastic inside-out drive over extra cover off Nabi, before sweeping and lofting the final delivery over long-on to end the chase in

emphatic fashion. Previously, Prasidh's sharp new-ball burst and a stubborn hundred from Hashmatullah Shahidi dominated the hot afternoon at the MA Chidambaram Stadium. Put into bowling first by Afghanistan, Prasidh tore through the Afghanistan top order with raw pace, bounce, and late movement to collect four wickets for just six runs and later returned to dismiss Shahidi with a short, angled delivery that was pulled flat to deep mid-wicket to complete his maiden five-for.

Afghanistan's innings had threatened to end quickly after they slumped to 36/4, but Shahidi and Azmatullah Omarzai mounted a determined recovery. The pair added 105 runs for the fifth wicket, with Omarzai hitting an enterprising fifty off 56 balls before falling to Prince Yadav.

Shahidi, battling cramps and discomfort, dug in to compile a gritty 102 - a

128-ball hundred that underlined his resolve even as physical issues hampered his running between the wickets. But Afghanistan's lower order folded in a heap, losing five wickets for 20 runs as India applied pressure through a combination of sharp bowling and fielding.

Two run-outs in quick succession, both effected by India captain Shubman Gill's direct hits, hastened the collapse and swung momentum decisively back in India's favour, who had another day of ruthless display in ODIs to clinch a clean sweep in the first bilateral series between the two teams.

Brief Scores: Afghanistan 218 in 44.2 overs (Hashmatullah Shahidi 102, Azmatullah Omarzai 50; Prasidh Krishna 5-23, Harsh Dubey 1-38) lost to India 224/1 in 28.4 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 110 not out, Rohit Sharma 79; Mohammad Nabi 1-47) by nine wickets



Rugby Premier League: Mumbai Dreamers continue undefeated run in Season 2

HYDERABAD

The fifth day of the Rugby Premier League Season 2 witnessed Mumbai Dreamers continue their undefeated run, and Chennai Bulls (women) defeat the table toppers at the Ganti Mohana Chandra Balayogi Athletic Stadium, Gachibowli, Hyderabad on Saturday. In the first match in the men's RPL, Mumbai Dreamers produced a dominant display as they continued their onward march by beating Chennai Bulls 26-7.

Mumbai Dreamers recovered from an early setback to defeat Chennai Bulls. Filipe Sauturaga opened the scoring for the Bulls late in the first quarter, but Demetri Patterson took charge in the second, scoring two tries to put the Dreamers ahead, alongside a penalty try. Mumbai continued to dominate after the break, with Kaleem Baretto extending the lead in the third quarter. Despite Chennai's efforts in the final period, the Dreamers remained resolute to secure a convincing victory. In the women's section, Chennai Bulls edge Kolkata Banga Tigers 33-28 on the fifth day of the competition.

Savannah Bauder continued her impressive form with an early try, while Larah Wright added another to give Chennai Bulls a strong start against the table-topping Kolkata Banga Tigers. Nia Toliver kept Kolkata in the contest with two brilliant individual tries before Sofia Gonzalez levelled the scores in a fiercely contested third quarter. Amandeep Kaur restored Chennai's lead, but Toliver struck again early in the final period. Adia Pye responded almost immediately, and the Bulls held firm in a tense finish to secure a hard-fought victory.

It feels like a full-circle moment, says Alex Freeman on his memorable breakthrough

SEATTLE

USA defender Alex Freeman described his maiden FIFA World Cup goal as an emotional and unforgettable moment after helping his side secure a 2-0 victory over Australia and seal top spot in Group D in Seattle on Saturday. Freeman thought his celebrations had been cut short when the assistant referee raised the offside flag after he found the net in the second half at Seattle Stadium. However, a VAR review overturned the decision, sparking jubilant celebrations among the home players and supporters.

"It was a really emotional moment for me when the goal went in. I was going to celebrate somewhere else, but Cristian Roldan and the lads on the bench encouraged me to go and celebrate in that corner. I think this moment shows just how hard I've worked to get myself here, belting out the national anthem in front of a fantastic crowd like



today's. I'm incredibly grateful for all of this. I'm absolutely over the moon," Freeman said after the match.

The Villarreal defender has emerged as one of the standout performers for Mauricio Pochettino's side at the tournament. After providing an assist in the USA's opening 4-1 victory over Paraguay, Freeman followed it up with a goal against Australia to continue his impressive World Cup campaign.

The 21-year-old also reflected on the influence of his father, Antonio Freeman, a former NFL star who won Super Bowl XXXI with the Green Bay Packers. "It feels like a full circle moment for me and my family," Freeman said. "It's amazing to have a father who has been so successful and such a great mentor to me. He taught me to be ready for moments like these and to believe that I can write my own story too."

Women's T20 WC: 'Netherlands played really well,' says Molineux after Australia's dominant win

SOUTHAMPTON

Australia captain Sophie Molineux praised the Netherlands for their fighting display despite her side cruising to a 98-run victory in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup, saying the Dutch batters made life difficult for the defending champions after they had posted a daunting total.

Australia continued their unbeaten run in the tournament with a commanding performance at the Rose Bowl, piling up 219/6 before restricting the Netherlands to 121/3.

Beth Mooney started with the bat, smashing 74 off 42 deliveries to earn the Player of the Match award, while Ashleigh Gardner chipped in with a rapid 58 from 32 balls as Australia registered one of the



highest totals of the competition. Despite the one-sided result, Molineux reserved special praise for the Dutch side, particularly Sterre Kalis and captain Babette de Leede, whose unbeaten partnership frustrated Australia's bowlers during the chase. "It was a good win. I thought the Netherlands

played really well, especially Sterre, but we just couldn't get a wicket. So full credit to them. They played really well, but I was really pleased that we could make a big score, and yeah, it was really enjoyable to be out here and play against them," Molineux said after the match. After racing to a mas-

sive total, Australia looked set to wrap up the chase quickly but found it difficult to break through as De Leede and Kalis dug in to guide the Netherlands past the 100-run mark and ensure they batted out their full quota of overs.

Molineux said Australia's wealth of bowling resources remains one of the team's greatest strengths, even if they were unable to find a breakthrough for long periods against the resilient Dutch pair. "I don't see it as a problem. I think it's just a little bit of trying to find the right fit at the right time. But yeah, we couldn't get a breakthrough there for a long time," she said. "I think the beauty of having a lot of different options is you can sort of cycle through them and see what works," she added.

Women's T20 WC: Shorna, Sanjida and Nahida star as Bangladesh beat Pakistan in low-scoring thriller

SOUTHAMPTON

Left-arm spinners Sanjida Akter Meghla and Nahida Akter claimed three wickets apiece as Bangladesh scripted memorable fightbacks both with the bat and ball to hand Pakistan a 23-run defeat in a low-scoring thriller in a Group A clash in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup at the Hampshire Bowl in Southampton on Saturday.

Bangladesh were reduced to 48/4 in the 10th over after electing to bat first. But skipper Nigar Sultana (36) and Shorna Akter (39 not out) struck crucial knocks to help them post a modest 123/6.

Chasing 124, Pakistan raced to 41 for no loss and were cruising at 58/1 at the halfway stage with the experienced Muneeba Ali at the crease. Muneeba scored 25 from 30 balls while Gull Feroza made 23 from 18 balls to give Pakistan a good start.

However, with Nigar Sultana marshalling her bowlers superbly, Bangladesh launched a brilliant fightback, and Pakistan's innings unravelled as they lost six wickets in the space of 14 runs in just over five overs. They eventually ended with 100/8 in 20 overs, scripting a memorable victory with Sanjida Akter Meghla claiming 3-21 while fellow left-arm spinner Nahida Akter claimed 3-18 in four overs. This is Bangladesh's first win in two



matches over Pakistan in the T20 World Cup and their fourth in a row over Fatima Sana's side. Bangladesh thus moved to four points from two matches while Pakistan have lost all three matches they have played so far.

Earlier, Bangladesh looked in trouble as a brilliant bowling effort led by skipper Fatima Sana (2-18) and some superlative fielding effort helped Pakistan restrict them to a modest

123/6 in the must-win Group A clash. Skipper Fatima struck a double-blow in the second over as Bangladesh lost three wickets in the Power-play. However, captain Nigar Sultana (36 off 38, 5x4) and Shorna Akter (39 not out off 22, 5x4) produced fighting efforts that helped them reach 123 on a wicket on which the spinners ruled the roost despite there being no turn for them.

After Nigar Sultana elected to bat first on what looks like a good batting wicket, the Pakistan bowlers applied early pressure and had their opponents in a spot of bother at 23/3 at the end of the Power-play, Fatima Sana started the carnage for Pakistan by claiming the wickets of Dilara Akter (5) and Sharmin Akhter (0) in the second and fifth ball of her first over, the second of the innings. Juairiya Ferdous (7) fell to Tasnia Rubab, and Bangladesh were in real trouble.

Skipper Nigar Sultana and Sobhana Mostary steadied the innings a bit with a 35-run partnership. But Mostary fell leg before wicket to Nashra Sundhu while the Bangladesh captain was caught by Saira Jabeen off Sadia Iqbal for 36 as their woes continued.

A late flourish by Shorna Akter lifted Bangladesh to 123/6 as the experienced Shorna struck some fine shots at the back end of the innings, slamming 14 runs in the penultimate over. Shorna's knock has given Bangladesh bowlers a total to defend and a fighting chance in the match that they have to win to bounce back from a poor start in the tournament.

Brief scores:

Bangladesh 123/6 in 20 overs (Shorna Akter 39 not out, Nigar Sultana 36; Fatima Sana 2-18) beat Pakistan 100/8 in 20 overs (Muneeba Ali 25; Sanjida Akter Meghla 3-21, Nahida Akter 3-18) by 23 runs

Happy with my performance in Doha: Neeraj Chopra on finishing fourth on return from injury

NEW DELHI

A day after returning to action with a fourth-place finish in the Wanda Diamond League event in Doha, India's legendary javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra expressed satisfaction with his performance and said he is looking forward to the remaining season.

Speaking at the inaugural Indian Athletics Awards in New Delhi, Chopra expressed happiness at achieving the qualification mark for the upcoming Commonwealth Games.

"I am very happy with my performance because I was returning from an injury and competed after a long time. I am pleased with how I performed. This was my first competition of the year, and the rest of the season is still ahead of me," said Chopra, who made history by becoming the first Indian athlete to win a gold medal in the Tokyo Olympics, told IANS on Saturday.

After his encouraging performance on return, Chopra is looking forward to the remaining events in the season. "The momentum takes time to develop. Some throws were good, and some were not good due to distance. So I was fouling them. But as my sessions will



be harder and I will work with Javelin more, I will be able to follow those things better," said Chopra.

In the final of the Diamond League event in Doha, Neeraj Chopra produced a best throw of 85.69 metres to finish fourth behind Sri Lanka's Rumesh Tharanga Pathirage (88.96 m), former Olympic champion Anderson Peters of Granada (86.38), and Curtis Thompson of the United States, who ended third with a throw of 85.99m.

Chopra also expressed his elation over the Athletics Federation of India honouring athletes, current and past, coaches,

mentors, and administrators for their contribution to the sport in the Indian Athletics Awards on Saturday.

"I am very happy that the Athletics Federation of India has given such an opportunity to everyone. It was very nice to meet the old athletes and new talents. I enjoyed it a lot," said Neeraj Chopra.

On Saturday, the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) presented the Indian Athletics Awards, felicitating legendary athlete and current President of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), PT Usha, with the Lifetime Achievement Award.



Ranveer Silent Mode

Bollywood star Ranveer Singh is reportedly planning a long break from media interactions. Industry reports suggest that the actor has decided to avoid interviews and public appearances for the next 18 months. The decision comes amid the ongoing Don 3 controversy, with Ranveer choosing to stay completely silent despite the buzz surrounding the project. A trade journalist who recently met the actor claimed that Ranveer made it clear he does not wish to comment on the issue. If reports are true, the actor's next major public appearance could be during the release of his upcoming film Pralay. Until then, Ranveer is expected to maintain a low profile. Apart from films, the actor is reportedly focusing on his family life with wife Deepika Padukone and spending quality time at home. Industry insiders feel that staying away from media attention may help Ranveer avoid unnecessary controversies and concentrate on his career and personal life.

Kayadu Takes a Digital Detox!

Rising actress Kayadu Lohar has decided to hit the pause button on social media, leaving her fans both surprised and concerned. The young beauty, who has been winning hearts in Tamil cinema and steadily building her presence in Telugu films, announced that she is taking a temporary break from the online world. Kayadu, who recently appeared alongside Vishwak Sen in Funky, is currently working on the much-awaited The Paradise, where she stars opposite Nani. With her popularity soaring and fan following growing rapidly, her decision to step away from social media has become a talking point among movie lovers. Sharing an emotional note, the actress revealed that she wants to slow down and reconnect with herself. She said that just as the body needs rest, the mind too deserves time to heal, recharge, and find balance. The actress expressed heartfelt gratitude to her fans, thanking them

for their endless love, encouraging messages, and unwavering support throughout her journey. According to Kayadu, their affection has always been her biggest strength. Though she may be away from social media for now, the actress assured fans that updates about her films and professional commitments will continue to be shared through her team. As she signs off for a while, Kayadu left her followers with a simple message — spread peace, happiness, and kindness. Meanwhile, fans eagerly await both her return to social media and her upcoming big-screen appearances.

FORGET THE PAST, EMBRACE TOMORROW

Actress Sobhita Dhulipala may be enjoying a happy phase after her marriage to Akkineni Naga Chaitanya, but her latest personal revelation has become the talk of social media. The talented actress, who recently impressed audiences with the web series Cheekatilo, is currently busy shooting for director Pa. Ranjith's ambitious sci-fi drama Vettuvam. During a recent interview, Sobhita was asked a rather personal question: "What is one thing in your life that you would like to completely forget?" Her answer left everyone stunned.

Without a moment's hesitation, the actress said that she would like to erase every memory and every incident from her past. The statement immediately grabbed attention and sparked widespread discussion online. Explaining her thoughts, Sobhita said that people often view forgetfulness as a weakness or a disorder, but she sees it differently. According to her, forgetting painful experiences can sometimes be a blessing. She believes that only by letting go of hurt, disappointment, and painful memories can a person truly move forward in life.

The actress also stressed the importance of not getting trapped in old memories. Instead, she encouraged people to focus on the future with a positive mindset and leave behind emotional baggage that prevents growth. While her comments have triggered several interpretations among fans, Sobhita's message appears to be simple — sometimes, the best way to embrace tomorrow is to let go of yesterday.

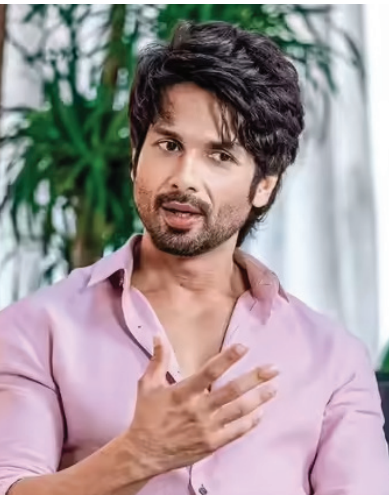
DESA SANCHARI GOES RETRO

As Rao Bahadur gears up for its July 3 release, the makers have unveiled the film's second single, "Desa Sanchari." The retro-themed song takes audiences back to the golden era of nightclub entertainment with its catchy composition by Smaran Sai and vocals by Hemachandra and Priyanka Gajanan. Featuring dazzling visuals, elegant costumes, and vibrant choreography, the song showcases Satya Dev in a stylish retro avatar, while Heidi Carola adds glamour with her graceful presence. With its nostalgic appeal and energetic presentation, Desa Sanchari is poised to become a popular chart-buster.

Shahid Kapoor: "Why an 'A' Certificate?"

Bollywood heartthrob Shahid Kapoor is not hiding his disappointment over the censor certification of his latest film Cocktail 2. The much-talked-about romantic drama, featuring Rashmika Mandanna and Kriti Sanon as the female leads, recently hit theatres amid huge expectations. However, the film received an 'A' certificate from the censor board, leaving both the team and fans surprised.

Reacting to the decision, Shahid openly expressed his disappointment during an interaction with fans. The actor said he



could not understand the reasoning behind the adult certification for a film that, according to him, contains no objectionable or bold content.

Shahid stated that Cocktail 2 is essentially an emotional drama revolving around the lives of three individuals and is designed to be enjoyed by families together. He emphasized that there are no scenes in the film that would justify an 'A' rating and admitted that he still finds the decision difficult to understand.

The actor's comments have sparked discussions on social media, with many fans also questioning the certification given to the film. Despite the controversy, Cocktail 2 appears to have struck a chord with audiences at the box office.

Ignoring mixed reviews, the film reportedly opened to impressive numbers and collected around ₹13 crore worldwide on its first day. Trade analysts believe the collections could witness a significant jump over the weekend, giving the romantic entertainer a strong run at the box office.

Playing Hanuman Is My Biggest Pride': Sunny Deol

The buzz surrounding Ramayana is only getting bigger, and Bollywood action star Sunny Deol has now added to the excitement with his heartfelt comments about the magnum opus. Being mounted on a staggering ₹4,000 crore budget, director



the Ramayana. He praised the makers for bringing India's timeless epic to the big screen on such a grand scale and believes the film will offer audiences a never-before-seen cinematic experience.

The actor expressed confidence that the visual spectacle and emotional depth of the film would connect with both Indian audiences and movie lovers across the globe. According to him, watching Ramayana in theatres will be a truly next-level experience.

Talking about his own character, Sunny became emotional and revealed that portraying Hanuman, a deity worshipped by millions, is a matter of immense pride for him. He added that he is just as excited as the audience to witness the film on the big screen.

The makers are planning to release



Back-to-Back Announcements... Will RT Bounce Back This Time?

Mass Maharaja Ravi Teja is known for his unstoppable energy and rapid-fire lineup of films. But with recent releases failing to make a strong impact at the box office, the actor is now gearing up for a solid comeback with two exciting projects in quick succession.

Mass Entertainer with Dil Raju

According to industry buzz, Ravi Teja's next film under producer Dil Raju's banner is expected to go on floors in August. The makers are reportedly designing a full-fledged commercial

entertainer that showcases the actor in his trademark mass avatar.

Surprise Combo with Vivek Athreya

Just two months later, Ravi Teja is likely to begin another ambitious project backed by Mythri Movie Makers and directed by Vivek Athreya. The director, known for his content-driven films, is said to be preparing a unique mix of action, comedy, and emotions tailored to the Mass Maharaja's image.

Market Still Strong Despite Setbacks

Though his recent films failed to impress at the box office, Ravi Teja's popularity among the masses remains intact. Top producers and directors continue to place their faith in the actor, hoping that these back-to-back projects will bring him back to winning ways. With two promising films in the pipeline, fans are now eagerly waiting to see whether the Mass Maharaja can reclaim his box-office throne.