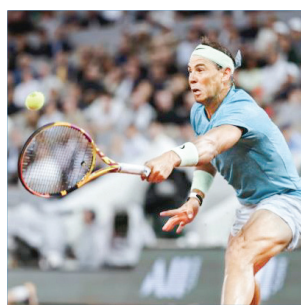




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HAILSTORM-HIT INDIGO FLIGHT DENIED ENTRY TO PAK AIRSPACE

The aircraft encountered autopilot failure, stall warnings, and rapid descent up to 8,500 feet per minute, according to a DGCA probe

TDG NETWORK / AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Friday confirmed that an IndiGo flight from Delhi to Srinagar that was caught in a hailstorm on Wednesday was denied entry into Pakistani airspace which was sought by the pilot to avoid turbulence.

In a detailed statement about the incident, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said there was no injury to any passengers who were on the flight and that the aircraft's "nose radome" was damaged.

The incident of the aircraft encountering turbulence is being probed by the DGCA.



PHOTO: XIG WEATHER MONITOR

On Wednesday, IndiGo's A321 neo aircraft operating flight 6E 2142 encountered hailstorm and severe turbulence near Pathankot. "As per crew statement, they requested Northern control (IAF) for deviation

towards left (International Border) due to weather on the route, however, it was not approved.

"Later, the crew contacted Lahore to enter into their airspace to avoid the weather but the same was refused too," DGCA said.

light pilot's request to use the Pakistani airspace to avoid turbulence.

Indian Air Force (IAF) sources said the Northern Area Control advised the IndiGo crew within the frame of the NOTAM, ensuring safety of aircraft and passengers.

Pakistan civil aviation authorities have issued the NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) shutting the country's airspace for Indian aircraft.

The sources said the

'West supported military regime in Pakistan'

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

No one has supported the military regime and undermined democracy in Pakistan in so many ways as much as the West, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said. He described the threat of terrorism as a major "collective challenge" facing the world alongside climate change and growing poverty.

In an interview to Danish daily Politiken, Jaishankar criticised Europe for backing Pakistan when it was under military dictatorship.

"Our borders have been



violated by Pakistan in Kashmir ever since our independence in 1947. And what have we seen in the eight decades since then," he asked.

"That large, democratic Europe, to use your own term, has stood side by side with military dictatorships in the region."

P3

North-East progressing rapidly, says PM Modi

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The North-eastern region, once synonymous with "bombs, guns and blockades", is now witnessing unprecedented progress, with the government determined to accelerate its growth story, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday.

Addressing the Rising North East Investors Summit here, the PM Modi said diversity of the North-East is its biggest strength, and every state in the region is declaring its readiness for investment and leadership. "The North-East is emerging as a key destination for two strategic sectors -- energy and semiconductors," he said and added that the role of Assam is growing in strengthening India's semiconductor ecosystem.

He said the first Made in India chip from a Northeast-based semiconductor plant will soon be introduced, signalling a major milestone for the region that will unlock



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the gathering at the inaugural ceremony of the 'Rising North East Summit', in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

opportunities for cutting-edge technology and solidify the region's position in India's high-tech industrial growth.

The Prime Minister said peace and law and order are the most crucial factors for any region's development.

He said the North-East was once associated with "bombs, guns and blockades" that severely impacted opportunities for its youth.

"Our government has a zero-tolerance policy against terrorism and insurgency," he said.

The government's consis-

tent efforts towards peace agreements resulted in 10,000 young individuals abandoning arms to embrace peace over the past 10-11 years, PM Modi said.

He said this shift has unlocked new employment and entrepreneurial opportunities within the region.

The Prime Minister said the government has made extensive investments in hydropower and solar power across all Northeastern states, with several thousand crore worth of projects already approved.

P3

'Make iPhones in US, not India or face 25% duty'

TDG NETWORK
WASHINGTON

Former President Donald Trump has escalated his trade rhetoric, threatening Apple with a 25% tariff on iPhones imported into the United States unless the company shifts its manufacturing operations to the U.S. In a post on Truth Social, Trump criticized Apple CEO Tim Cook for plans to produce iPhones in India, stating, "If that is not the case, a Tariff of at least 25% must be paid by Apple to the

TRUMP TARIFF

- Reason: Push for U.S.-based iPhone manufacturing.
- Target: Apple's plan to shift production to India.
- Market size: U.S. buys 60M iPhones/year.
- Current output: 97.6% of India-made iPhones go to U.S.



- Price impact: U.S.-made iPhones could cost \$3,500.
- Apple investment: \$500B in U.S. facilities (not for iPhones).
- Stock impact: Apple shares fell 3% pre-market.
- Broader issue: Trade policy vs. global supply chains.

U.S."

This move is part of Trump's broader strategy to encourage domestic manufacturing and reduce reliance on overseas production. The U.S. has long been a significant market for Apple, with over 60 million iPhones sold annually. Currently, none of these devices are produced domestically.

In response to previous tariffs on Chinese imports, Apple has been diversifying its supply chain, in-

P3

NITI Aayog meet today to focus on Viksit Bharat

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will chair the 10th meeting of the NITI Aayog Governing Council on May 24, bringing together Chief Ministers, Lieutenant Governors, and Administrators from across the country to deliberate on the roadmap for achieving 'Viksit Rajya, Viksit Bharat @2047' - a developed India by 2047, as per sources. The high-level meeting, scheduled to be held at Bharat Mandapam. The meeting's central



theme, 'Viksit Rajya for Viksit Bharat,' will underscore the critical role of state governments in achieving India's development aspirations by 2047.

Deliberations will focus on 'Promoting Entrepreneurship, Employment and Skilling - Leveraging the Demographic Dividend.'

DETAILS P3

BJP slams Rahul, says LoP 'jeopardising' nation's security

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Friday launched a scathing attack at Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and asked him to stop "undermining" the Indian Armed Forces' valour and "jeopardising" the country's security by making "irresponsible remarks" about Operation Sindoor.

Calling Gandhi "Nishan-e-Pakistan", BJP national spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia accused the Congress leader of carrying forward the "agenda of countries inimical to India" and said his remarks on the India-Pakistan conflict were being used by Islamabad to "defame" India.

"Rahul Gandhi, you decide which side you are on. You have to decide whether you are India's leader of opposition or Pakistan's Nishan-e-Pakistan," Bhatia

P3

MBBS student gang-raped by two classmates

AGENCIES
MUMBAI

A third-year MBBS student was allegedly raped in Maharashtra's Sangli district by her two classmates and one of their friends after they spiked her drink, police said on Friday.

Police have arrested the three accused persons, who are from Pune, Solapur and Sangli. A court has remanded them in police custody till May 27, an official said.

The 22-year-old medical student was allegedly targeted on May 18, when she and the accused had planned

to watch a movie in a theatre around 10 pm. Before that, the accused took her to a flat for a brief halt. The accused, who were under the influence of alcohol, offered her a spiked drink. She felt giddy after consuming, the survivor told the police.

The trio, aged between 20 and 22, then allegedly sexually assaulted her and threatened her with dire consequences if she spoke about it, the official said.

The survivor, originally from Belagavi in Karnataka, later narrated the incident to her parents, following which they approached the police.

RBI board approves record Rs 2.69 lakh cr dividend to Centre

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) central board has approved a record Rs 2.69 lakh crore surplus transfer to the central government for 2024-25.

A decision in this regard was taken in the 616th meeting of the Central Board of the Reserve Bank of India on Friday.

This is the highest-ever surplus transfer by the RBI to the government.

The RBI in the financial

SURPLUS TRANSFER

- Record dividend helps exchequer tide over challenges posed by US tariffs and increased spending on defence
- RBI had transferred Rs 2.1 lakh crore dividend to the government for the 2023-24
- The payout was Rs 87,416 crore for 2022-23



The government has estimated Rs 2.56 lakh crore as dividend/surplus for FY26 from the Reserve Bank of India, nationalised banks and financial institutions.

Kerala set to become poverty-free on November 1: CM

AGENCIES
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Stressing that the state is continually advancing by blending people-centric policies with forward-looking industrial strategies, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said on Friday that the state will become a poverty-free state by November 1 this year.

Speaking at a public event here to mark his gov-

ernment's (LDF) fourth anniversary, CM Vijayan said: "Kerala continues to have the lowest poverty levels in the country. We've been able to achieve this through a strong and efficient public distribution system, which we've consistently strengthened over the years."

"That's how Kerala continues to advance, by blending people-centric policies with forward-



looking industrial strategies. Kerala is the state with the lowest inflation

in the country. By November 1, Kerala will become a poverty-free state," the

Kerala CM emphasised.

Chief Minister Vijayan recalled that when the LDF government assumed office in 2016, one of the key concerns was transforming Kerala's investment climate.

"We engaged in detailed discussions with industrialists and stakeholders to understand their concerns and incorporated their feedback into poli-

P3



A bale of turtles seen within their enclosure, eating, at Sarthana Nature Park in Surat on Friday. May 23rd is observed as World Turtle Day. ANI

INDIA THANKS IMF FOR CONDITIONS ON PAKISTAN, QUESTIONS BAILOUT TIMING

India flagged concerns over the timing of the bailout, hinting it may fuel Pak’s defence spending.

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

India has said it is “thankful” for the 11 additional conditions imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Pakistan, while clarifying that it is not opposed to financial assistance meant for genuine developmental purposes. At the same time, it raised serious concerns over the timing of the recent bailout package, suggesting that the funds may have indirectly supported Pakistan’s rising defence spending.

“We are thankful for the additional 11 conditions imposed by the IMF on Pakistan. However, we are not against any financial assistance provided for genuine developmental agendas. We have raised questions regarding the timing of the recent bailout package giv-



en to Pakistan by the IMF,” government sources said. “All these arms and ammunition are then used by Pakistan against India,” the sources added, citing IMF data.

Sources, also citing public data, told ANI that, “Pakistan spends on average around 18 per cent of its general budget on defence affairs and services, while even conflict-affected countries spend far less, averaging 10-14 per cent of their

general budget expenditure. Furthermore, Pakistan’s arms imports increased dramatically from 1980 to 2023, by over 20 per cent on average in the years when it received IMF disbursements compared to years when it did not.”

Meanwhile, Indian multi-party delegations are visiting various countries to expose Pakistan’s support for terrorism and highlight India’s zero-tolerance policy towards it.

India to push for bringing Pak on FATF grey list

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

India is expected to approach the Financial Action Task Force, global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog, to add Pakistan to its grey list during its next meeting, Reuters reported, citing a top government source.

The ‘grey list’ of the FATF accounts for jurisdictions that are under increased monitoring. When a country is placed under this list, it means that it has “committed to resolve swiftly the identified strategic deficiencies within agreed timeframes and is subject to increased monitoring”. At present, as many as 25 countries are listed under FATF’s “jurisdictions under increased monitoring”,

i.e., “grey list”. In 2022, Pakistan was taken off the FATF grey list, boosting the country’s reputation among its lenders, a position necessary for a crisis-hit economy. The source reportedly also said that India will oppose the upcoming World Bank funding for Pakistan.

The move comes in the backdrop of the recently heightened tensions between the two nuclear-armed neighbours.

Meanwhile, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) justified its \$1 billion bailout to Pakistan and said that Islamabad “met all the required targets” to receive the latest loan instalment.

Under the Extended Fund Facility programme, which was approved in September 2024, Pakistan has received around \$2.1 billion.

Op Sindoor exposed Pakistan sponsoring terrorism in India: Shah

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Operation Sindoor undertaken by the Indian armed forces in retaliation for the Pahalgam terror attack has “completely exposed” the fact that terrorism in India is sponsored by Pakistan, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Friday.

Shah also said that the operation showed the “firm” political will of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the “precise” intelligence inputs from agencies, and the “lethal” capabilities of the armed forces.

India hit as deep as ‘100-km’ inside Pakistan after they dared to target a few Indian civilian and military setups following Operation Sindoor (on May 7), when



nine terrorist camps were decimated, he said.

Shah made the remarks while delivering the annual Rustamji Memorial Lecture organised by the Border Security Force (BSF) alongside its 22nd investiture ceremony.

Raised in 1965, the BSF guards the over 6,000-km-long Indian borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh. K F Rustamji was the founding chief of the BSF.

“The terrorists undertook an extreme attack in Pahalgam as they selectively chose innocents, asked their religion and killed them brutally in front of their families, including women and children,” Shah said, adding that this “sin” was committed by Pakistan-sponsored terrorists.

“India’s response under Operation Sindoor was different,” he said.

Op Sindoor: Mamata urges Centre to convene special session of Parliament

TDG NETWORK
KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday urged the Union Government to convene a special session of the Parliament upon the safe return of the delegation, believing that people of this great nation have the foremost right to be informed about the recent conflict, referring to the military confrontation between India and Pakistan.

In a post on social media platform X on Friday, CM Mamata Banerjee said, “I am glad to see all-party delegation visiting various countries as part of India’s global outreach against terrorism. As I have consistently maintained, the AITC stands firmly behind any step the



Union takes in the national interest and in defence of our sovereignty”.

“I urge the Union Government to convene a special session of Parliament upon the safe return of the delegation, as I believe the people of this great nation have the foremost right to be informed about the recent conflict and the evolving developments - BEFORE ANYONE ELSE,” Mamata added in her post.

This initiative follows the April 22 attack in Pahalgam, Jammu & Kashmir, where 26 tourists - 25 Indian and one Nepali - were killed in an assault carried out by terrorists who, according to Indian authorities, came from Pakistan.

The all-party delegation projects India’s national consensus and resolute approach to combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It will convey to the world the country’s strong message of zero tolerance for terrorism.

India had launched Operation Sindoor in response to the Pahalgam terror attack. India launched precision strikes on terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

J&K: Kishtwar encounter enters second day as security forces clash with terrorists

TDG NETWORK
KISHTWAR

Encounter between Security forces and terrorists in Singhpora area of Chatroo continued for the second day in Jammu and Kashmir’s Kishtwar.

One jawan lost his life in the line of duty during the ongoing operation, as per Army officials.

In an official statement on X, White Knight Corps said, “During the ongoing operation, fierce gunfight is continuing. One of our Brave hearts sustained grievous injuries in the exchange of fire and has succumbed despite best medical efforts. Operation is in progress.

“The encounter began in the early hours after security forces established contact with terrorists in the Chhatru area. The Jammu and Kashmir Police

also confirmed the exchange of fire in the area.

“Exchange of fire started between Security Forces and terrorists in the Singhpora area of Chhatru in Kishtwar,” the Jammu and Kashmir Police said in a brief statement.

Earlier, Army officials confirmed that additional troops have been deployed to the region to support the ongoing counter-terrorism operation, which aims to neutralise the hiding militants.

Security forces have cordoned off the area and intensified search operations, with reinforcements ensuring that containment protocols are maintained.

Further details on the number of terrorists involved and the current status of the operation are awaited.

Rahul to visit Poonch tomorrow, to meet victim families

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi will be visiting Jammu and Kashmir’s Poonch and meet the victim families affected by Pakistani shelling.

This is the second visit of the Congress leader to Jammu and Kashmir post April 22 Pahalgam terror attack in which 27 tourists had died and first after the announcement of ceasefire between India and Pakistan following Operation Sindoor conducted by India on nine terror camps in Pakistan on May 7. In a post on X, Congress general sec-

In a post on X, Congress general secretary and communication in-charge Jairam Ramesh announced the C9ngress leader’s travel plans.

retary and communication in-charge Jairam Ramesh announced the C9ngress leader’s travel plans.

He said, “Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi will be visiting Poonch tomorrow May 24th to meet the families bereaved during the shelling by Pakistan very recently.” “Earlier he had visited Srinagar on

April 25th to meet with those injured during the brutal Pahalgam terror attack and many other stakeholders. He had also met with the LG and the CM then,” he said.

During his last visit to Srinagar, the Gandhi scion had condemned the Pahalgam terror attack and said that such attacks are aimed to divide the people.

TN CM Stalin meets Sonia, Rahul in Delhi

ANAND SINGH
NEW DELHI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K.Stalin on Friday called on Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi here, two days after the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha backed the DMK’s leader saying that the Modi government is misusing Governors to stifle those voices and obstruct elected governments and dubbed it a dangerous assault on federalism and it must be resisted.

Stalin, who arrived in the national capital to attend the Niti Ayyog meeting scheduled on Saturday, arrived at the residence of Congress leaders at 10 Janpath.

Both the parties dubbed the meeting between the three leaders as a courtesy meeting. However, the meeting holds prominence as Rahul Gandhi had two days ago backed Stalin and in a post on X said, “India’s strength lies in its diversity — a Union of States, each with its own voice.”

He said, “The Modi govern-

ment is misusing Governors to stifle those voices and obstruct elected state governments. This is a dangerous assault on federalism and it must be resisted.”

He made the remarks while responding to the post of Stalin that he had put on May 15 saying while condemning the Union Government’s Presidential reference, which attempts to subvert the Constitutional position already settled by the Hon’ble Supreme Court in the Tamil Nadu Governor’s case and other precedents.

Centre, Haryana join hands to boost organic farming

TDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

In a big step to support organic farming in Haryana, Union Minister of State for Cooperation Krishan Pal Gurjar and Haryana Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare Minister Shyam Singh Rana held a meeting recently.

The main focus of the meeting was to ensure that organic farmers in Haryana get a fair price for their produce. It was decided that the Haryana Agriculture Department

will work closely with the National Cooperative Organics Limited (NCOL) to help these farmers.

This cooperation will help organic farmers sell their products under the “Bharat Organics” brand. This brand aims to connect farmers with buyers not only across India but also in other countries.

The move is part of a larger vision by Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah to promote “Prosperity through Cooperation”.

Govt does not see additional defence budget requirements in FY26

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

The Government does not see any additional defence budget allocations for the current fiscal despite Operation Sindoor under which the country’s armed forces destroyed 9 terror camps to avenge Pahalgam terror attack, a Government source said on Friday.

“We have provided defence budget to be adequate, I don’t see an additional demand. Even if it is needed, India’s strategic requirement will never be left wanting,” a Government source said.



The Government in Budget for 2025-26 had set aside over Rs 6.81 lakh crore as defence outlay, up from Rs 6.22

lakh crore in FY25, amid the military’s push for modernisation in the face of security challenges from China and

Pakistan. An attack by Pakistan-trained terrorists killed 26 people in Pahalgam, Kashmir, on April 22.

Jagdish Singh Jhinda named as new head of Haryana Sikh Gurdwara committee

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

Amid protests by a group of members, Sardar Jagdish Singh Jhinda has been declared the President of the Haryana Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (HSGMC). The decision was announced in a meeting held at the Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi in Kurukshetra, where it was stated that Jhinda was unanimously elected as the new president of the committee.

The meeting was held four months after the HSGMC conducted its first elections on January 19 this year.



Jhinda represents the As-sandh ward of Karnal district and was among the leaders who played a crucial role in the formation of the Haryana Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (ad-hoc), formed by the outgoing Bhupinder Singh Hooda-led Congress government in 2014.

Other office bearers picked in the meeting are: Gurmeet Singh Mitta as Senior Vice President, Gurbir Singh as Vice President, Angrez Singh as General Secretary, and Balwinder Singh as Joint Secretary.

Apart from them, Karnail Singh, Palwinder Singh, Kuldeep Singh Multani, Rupinder Singh, Jagtar Singh Maan, and T.P. Singh were chosen as members of the committee. However, a section of Sikh community leaders objected to Jhinda’s election, alleging government interference, as leaders Uttarahdikhari Singh Navi, Baldev Singh Kampura, and Prakash Singh Sahuvala op-

posed Jhinda’s appointment, calling it a “murder of democracy.”

The opposing leaders claimed that interim president Sardar Jog Singh received an anonymous phone call, after which Jhinda was forcibly declared president without holding any elections.

The meeting started around 12 noon in the Diwan Hall of the Gurdwara and went on for nearly two hours. All present members discussed the appointments, and a consensus was reached in favour of Jagdish Singh Jhinda. Joga Singh was elected as the Prottem Chairman to lead the session.

WAR WITH PAK FAR FROM OVER: FORMER NSA NARAYANAN

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The former National Security Adviser (NSA) MK Narayanan says the war with Pakistan has only just begun. “Our war with Pakistan is far from over. It is only the beginning,” Narayanan said at an event organised by the Indian Chamber of Commerce in Kolkata. “Operation Sindoor was an example of what we can do. It was not the end.”

He further expressed confidence in the Indian armed forces, saying that India could have “done many more things” than just targeting terror bases. “We could have done many more things, lots of lives could have been lost, but what we are demonstrating

is that we are a responsible and big power, and we are not frightened, and we will hit back,” he said.

Earlier in the day, Narayanan attended an ICC event, titled “Global and Regional Geopolitics, Security and Economics-in a World of Uncertainty”.

The 91-year old Narayanan, who had served as the NSA from 2005 to 2010 and as the Governor of West Bengal (2010-14), said India should be cautious about the rise of Asim Munir, Pakistan’s chief of army staff.

“Pakistan is a country which is at war with itself. Troubles in Balochistan and elsewhere are getting stronger while new flash-points are emerging. The spectre of military rule in the country again is looming. The political strength in the country is

with the army. The military influence has been Pakistan’s bane for several decades,” Narayanan said.

A week before the attack in Pahalgam, Munir had stressed on the differences between India and Pakistan at a speech in Islamabad, which Narayanan believes should set the alarm bells ringing in India.

“He had said, our religion is different, our customs are different and our traditions are different. He poses a direct threat to us. Pakistan is an implacable foe for India. No everlasting peace is possible in the region. The army chief who is the de facto leader of the country is expressing his views in no uncertain terms. We cannot lower our guards,” Narayanan said.

Reminding of India’s prin-



cipled stand on “No first use” of nuclear arsenal, Narayanan said: “Any nuclear confrontation with Pakistan would be catastrophic, unleashing devastation on a scale that would transcend borders and generations.”

The former NSA believes China is more of a civilisational threat for India.

“We are two great civilisations. We can’t afford a war

with China. I believe China does not want a war. Rather it wants acknowledgment as the major civilisation in this part of the world. We can manage that situation,” he said. “China, propelled by civilizational imperatives, engages in calibrated provocation rather than overt hostility. India needs a diplomatic strategy that blends resolve, prudence,

and confidence in the depth of our civilizational ethos.

Narayanan feels Sheikh Hasina’s forced ouster from Bangladesh was a setback for India.

“The eclipse of Sheikh Hasina’s regime is a major setback. I believe Bangladesh is an integral part of India. Bangladesh is a microcosm of India. We cannot afford to lose Bangladesh. In whatever way we can, we have to keep Bangladesh. That side has a more vibrant history than this part of Bengal. Their voice needs to be attended to. Everyone has problems with neighbours, and it is for the bigger countries like India to show a degree of magnitude,” he said. Hasina fled Bangladesh last August and has been in exile in India, while Bangladesh is administered by an

interim Government. The chief adviser Mohammad Yunus, according to reports in Bangladesh media, has expressed his desire to quit. Yunus and the interim Government is under pressure from both the political parties and the Bangladesh Army to hold national elections by the end of this year.

Narayanan was also critical of Israel’s continued engagement in Gaza, which he said should be called out.

“You cannot accept the pogrom going on in Gaza. India’s greatness lies in the fact that we do not want people to be killed. Therefore, no hesitation in saying Israel is committing genocide. Israel’s domination cannot be at the cost of human lives,” he said. “How India is going to maintain its friendship with Israel on one hand and the

West Asian countries on the other, is a question that will torment us for some time.”

Narayanan said in the present times, the international order is in great danger.

“The US is no longer a bulwark of democracy. Europe is wallowing in self-pity. Europe is in shambles and cannot protect itself. Europe wants the vestiges of power without the strength,” Narayanan said.

Narayanan said the advent of AI had altered the nature of war and the role of the military.

“Into a blind darkness they enter who are devoted to ignorance; but into a greater darkness they enter who engage in knowledge of deity alone,” Narayanan signed off quoting from the Isa-Upanishad.

NITI Aayog meet today to focus on Viksit Bharat

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will chair the 10th meeting of the NITI Aayog Governing Council on May 24, bringing together Chief Ministers, Lieutenant Governors, and Administrators from across the country to deliberate on the roadmap for achieving ‘Viksit Rajya, Viksit Bharat @2047’ – a developed India by 2047, as per sources.

The high-level meeting, scheduled to be held at Bharat Mandapam.

The meeting’s central theme, ‘Viksit Rajya for Viksit Bharat,’ will underscore the critical role of state



governments in achieving India’s development aspirations by 2047. The Prime Minister is expected to emphasise how state-level progress will be instrumental in realising the vision of a developed India.

A significant portion of the deliberations will focus on ‘Promoting Entrepreneurship, Employment and Skilling – Leveraging the Demographic Dividend.’

With India’s young population representing a massive opportunity, discussions are expected to centre on three key areas:

Manufacturing and Services Ecosystem: Leaders will explore strategies for creating enabling environments beyond metropolitan centres, with particular emphasis on developing Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities as new growth engines. The discus-

sions are likely to highlight the need for infrastructure development, skill training, and policy support to attract investments to these emerging urban centres.

MSME and Informal Employment: Recognising that micro, small, and medium enterprises form the backbone of India’s economy, the meeting will address rural non-farm employment opportunities and urban informal sector challenges. Chief Ministers are expected to share state-specific initiatives and best practices for supporting MSMEs and creating sustainable livelihood opportunities.

Green Economy Opportunities: In line with India’s

commitment to sustainable development, extensive discussions will be held on opportunities in renewable energy and the circular economy. States are expected to present their renewable energy targets and strategies for transitioning to green technologies while creating employment opportunities in emerging sectors.

In this meeting, Chief Ministers, Governors, and Administrators will share their perspectives and experiences on the agenda items. The interactive format allowed for rich exchanges of ideas and collaborative problem-solving approaches.

Flight with Indian MPs on board circles Moscow sky

This follows drone attack on Russian capital

AGENCIES
CHENNAI

The flight carrying a delegation of Indian MPs to Moscow, led by DMK leader Kanimozhi, had to circle in the sky for some time due to a drone attack on the Russian city but the aircraft later landed safely.

Kanimozhi was leading the delegation of MPs deputed by the Centre as part of an international outreach post Operation



Samajwadi Party MP Rajeev Rai meets Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Andrey Rudenko during a meeting for Operation Sindoor global outreach, in Moscow on Friday. DMK MP Kanimozhi Karunanidhi also seen. ANI

Sindoor, a military offensive aimed at terror launch pads in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir.

Sources close to Kanimozhi, a Lok Sabha member, said the flight had to circle mid-air.

‘West supported military in Pak’

CONTINUED FROM P1

“No one has supported the military regime - and undermined democracy in Pakistan in so many ways - as much as the West,” he said.

The external affairs minister was in Copenhagen as part of his three-nation tour of the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany.

Jaishankar emphasised that India supports countries’ sovereignty and internationally recognised borders.

“But my worldview and my view of Europe are shaped by my own experiences. You talk about the inviolability of borders -- well, why don’t we start with the inviolability of my borders?”

“That’s where my world begins. But we’ve always been told that we had to solve that ourselves,” he said.

Jaishankar’s remarks came when asked about “democratic” India’s support to authoritarian Russia in terms of its large oil purchases when Moscow has been waging a war against Ukraine.

RBI board approves dividend

CONTINUED FROM P1

year ending March 2024 transferred Rs 2.1 lakh crore to the centre.

The RBI said in a statement: “The Board thereafter approved the transfer of Rs 2,68,590.07 crore as surplus to the Central Government for the accounting year 2024-25.”

During accounting years 2018-19 to 2021-22, owing to the prevailing macroeconomic conditions and the onslaught of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Central Board had decided to maintain the CRB at 5.50 per cent of the Reserve Bank’s balance sheet size to support growth and overall economic activity.

The CRB was increased to 6.00 per cent for FY 2022-23 and to 6.50 per cent for FY 2023-24.

“Based on the revised ECF and taking into consideration the macroeconomic assessment, the Central Board decided to further increase the CRB to 7.50 per cent,” the RBI statement added.

In its statement, the RBI added that the Central Board at the 616th Meeting reviewed the global and domestic economic scenario, including risks to the outlook.

The Board also discussed the working of the Reserve Bank during the year April 2024 - March 2025 and approved the Reserve Bank’s Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year 2024-25.

Kerala set to become poverty-free

CONTINUED FROM P1

cymaking. As a result, we amended laws, revised regulations, and introduced several structural reforms to enhance the ease of doing business in the state,” he said.

“Beyond policy changes, we also recognised the

need to shift societal attitudes toward entrepreneurship. That’s why we launched the ‘Year of Entrepreneurship’ initiative in Kerala. The Government of India itself acknowledged this initiative as a national model,” CM Vijayan said.

The Chief Minister also

slammed the Centre, accusing it of denying the State its rightful entitlement in the tax devolution.

The Chief Minister said that if the tax share had been allocated fairly, Kerala would have received an additional Rs 2,282 crore in 2022-23 and Rs 2,071 crore in 2023-24, respectively.

IndiGo flight denied entry to Pak airspace

CONTINUED FROM P1

IndiGo aircraft was immediately assisted in coordinating their route diversion by contacting Delhi Area and passing required contact frequencies of Lahore control for overflight weather diversion request.

Once Lahore refused overflight clearance, and the aircraft proceeded towards Srinagar, the flight was subsequently professionally assisted till a safe-landing at Srinagar airfield

by giving control vectors and groundspeed readouts, the sources said.

According to the DGCA, the IndiGo flight crew initially attempted to return but as they were close to the thunderstorm cloud, they decided to penetrate the weather.

“Subsequently, they encountered hailstorm and severe turbulence. Crew chose to continue at the same heading to exit the weather by the shortest route towards Srinagar,” the statement said.

While in a thunderstorm cloud, the regulator said warnings of Angle of Attack fault, Alternate Law protection lost, backup Speed scale unreliable were triggered.

“Due to updraft and downdraft encountered by the aircraft the Autopilot tripped and aircraft speed had wide variations. As a result, Maximum Operating Speed/Maximum operating Mach (VMO/MMO) warnings and repeated stall warnings were triggered,” the statement

said.

During this period, DGCA said the aircraft rate of descent reached 8,500 fpm (feet per minute) and crew flew the aircraft manually till they exited the hailstorm.

“After carrying out all checklist actions (ECAM actions), the crew declared ‘PAN PAN’ to Srinagar ATC and requested for RADAR vectors and made a safe landing with Auto Thrust operating normally,” the statement said.

Generally, ‘PAN PAN’ re-

fers to an emergency situation. The regulator said the matter is under investigation and that there was no injury to any of the passengers on-board the flight.

“Post-flight walk around revealed damage to the Nose radome,” the statement said.

On Thursday, IndiGo, in a statement, said the aircraft was undergoing necessary inspection and maintenance in Srinagar and will resume operations once all clearances have been secured.

‘Make iPhones in US, not India or face 25% duty’

CONTINUED FROM P1

creasing production in India. As of March 2025, 97.6% of iPhones exported from India were destined for the U.S., a significant increase from previous months.

Analysts, however, question the feasibility of shifting iPhone production to the U.S. Dan Ives of Wedbush Securities estimates that moving just 10% of Apple’s supply chain to the U.S. would cost approximately \$30 billion and take at least three years. He further notes that such a move could result in iPhone prices soaring to around \$3,500, more than triple the current average price.

Despite these challenges, Apple has committed to a \$500 billion investment in U.S. facilities over four years, though this investment does not specifically include iPhone manufacturing. The company continues to explore ways to balance domestic production with its global supply chain needs.

Trump’s latest threat has already had an impact on Apple’s stock, which dropped by 3% in pre-market trading following the announcement.

The situation underscores the complexities of balancing global supply chains with national economic policies.

North-East progressing rapidly

CONTINUED FROM P1

He said beyond investment opportunities in plants and infrastructure, there is significant potential in manufacturing, including solar modules, cells, storage solutions and research.

Modi said the Northeast is synonymous with a thriving bio-economy and bamboo industry, tea production and petroleum, sports and skill, as well as an emerging hub for ecotourism.

Underlining that the Northeast embodies the essence of Ashtalakshmi, bringing prosperity and opportunity, he said the region is paving the way for organic products and stands as a powerhouse of energy and “is emerging as the frontrunner of growth.”

“The Northeast is witnessing unprecedented progress. We are determined to accelerate its growth story,” he said while inaugurating the two-day event, which is being attended by chief ministers of the region, Union ministers, bureaucrats and diplomats, among others.

Top industry leaders Mukesh Ambani, Gautam Adani and Anil Agarwal, among others, attended the inaugural session. “For us, EAST is not just a

direction but a vision -- Empower, Act, Strengthen and Transform -- which defines the policy framework for the region,” he said and added that this approach has placed Eastern India, particularly the Northeast, at the centre stage of India’s growth trajectory.

The prime minister said the government has adopted a proactive approach from Look East to Act East, stating that this proactive approach is yielding visible results.

“While the Northeast was once regarded merely as a frontier region, it is now emerging as a frontrunner in India’s growth story,” he added.

The summit is being organised with an aim of highlighting the Northeast as a land of opportunity, attracting global and domestic investment and bringing together key stakeholders, investors and policymakers on a single platform, officials said.

The event is the culmination of various pre-summit activities, such as a series of roadshows and states’ roundtables, including ambassadors’ meet and bilateral chambers meet organised by the central government with active support from the state

governments of the North-eastern region.

The summit will include ministerial sessions, business-to-government sessions, business-to-business meetings, start-ups and exhibitions of policy and related initiatives taken by state governments and central ministries for investment promotion, the officials said.

The main focus sectors of investment promotion include tourism and hospitality, agro-food processing and allied sectors, textiles, handloom and handicraft, health care, education and skill development, information technology and information technology enabled services, infrastructure and logistics, energy, entertainment and sports.

PM Modi said the government’s engagement with the region goes beyond policy measures, fostering a heartfelt connection with its people.

He said more than 700 visits have been made by Union ministers to the Northeast, demonstrating their commitment to understanding the land, witnessing the aspirations in people’s eyes, and translating that trust into development policies.

BJP slams Rahul, says LoP ‘jeopardising’ nation’s security

CONTINUED FROM P1

said at a press conference.

The BJP’s charge came a day after Gandhi accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of having “compromised” India’s “prestige” and asked him why he sacrificed the nation’s interests by agreeing to halt military

hostilities against Pakistan.

“Rahul Gandhi, stop undermining the valour and commitment of our brave armed forces, stop asking questions which shouldn’t be asked. They jeopardise national security,” Bhatia urged the Congress leader.

He said Gandhi’s remarks could not be dismissed as

“juvenile behaviour”.

“It has been the core character of Rahul Gandhi to intentionally ask such questions, taking forward the agenda of nations which are inimical to our country,” he alleged.

The BJP spokesperson also lashed out at Gandhi over his remarks that In-

dia’s foreign policy had “collapsed” and asked him if the joint statement of then prime minister Manmohan Singh and his Pakistani counterpart Syed Yusuf Raza in Sharm el Sheikh after the 2008 Mumbai terror attack that Pakistan was also a victim terror was the Congress’

diplomacy.

Terming the Sharm el Sheikh joint statement as “irresponsible behaviour” of the erstwhile Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government, Bhatia said it was made against the “established policy” of India and asked Gandhi if he had forgotten it.

NAIDU SEEKS CENTRE'S HELP TO DEVELOP ANDHRA AS DEFENCE MANUFACTURING HUB

Andhra CM also seeks assistance from Centre for state's renewable energy initiatives and water transfer project

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Friday met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and presented a strategic vision to position Andhra Pradesh as a national hub for defence manufacturing and aerospace innovation, an official statement said. The proposals include development of integrated defence facilities, revival of critical manufacturing units, support for indigenous aviation programmes, establishment of testing and training centres, and creation of thematic defence hubs, it said. "We discussed a comprehensive roadmap for Andhra Pradesh to emerge as a cornerstone of India's

CM MEETS THREE UNION MINISTERS

- Naidu also held discussions with Dr Jitendra Singh, Minister of State for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences for transform Andhra Pradesh into a pivotal hub for space manufacturing and innovation.
- In his meeting with Union New and Renewable Energy Minister Prahlad Joshi, Naidu requested for the allocation of rooftop solar capacity under the Pradhan Mantri Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana



defence and aerospace future. With proposals ranging from thematic defence hubs and DRDO-linked Centres of Excellence to strategic infrastructure and policy innovations, Andhra Pradesh is fully geared to contribute to Aatmanirbhar Bharat. Grateful for his

encouraging response and assurance of full support," the chief minister said in a post on X after meeting the defence minister.

Andhra CM also sought the Centre's support for the state's renewable energy initiatives, a major water transfer project.

In his meeting with Union New and Renewable Energy Minister Prahlad Joshi, Naidu requested for the allocation of rooftop solar capacity under the Pradhan Mantri Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana and urged expediting approval of the proposals

YSRCP MP writes to Union Min for action on alleged Illegal quartz mining

TDG NETWORK
AMARAVATI

Yuvajana Sramika Rythu (YSR) Congress Party MP from Tirupati, Maddila Gurumoorthy, has urged the Union Ministry of Mines to take immediate action against illegal quartz mining activities allegedly taking place in Sydapuram Mandal of S.P.S.R. Nellore district in Andhra Pradesh.

In a letter dated May 22 addressed to Union Mines Minister G. Kishan Reddy, Gurumoorthy raised alarm over alleged "rampant violations" of mining laws and Supreme Court directions. He alleged that mining operations are continuing at several locations despite lease expirations and accused operators of misusing permits under the pretext of stock clearance while carrying out fresh, unauthorised extraction.



The MP also expressed concern over the use of explosives and detonators near residential areas, claiming that such practices are putting local villagers at serious risk and creating widespread fear. Gurumoorthy specifically named a number of mines, which he alleged were functioning without valid environmental clearances. He further accused certain officials of facilitating the illegal operations through forged or backdated permits.

Calling for strict accountability, the MP demanded the suspension and investigation of such officials. He urged the central government to launch a high-level probe into the matter, cancel all alleged illegal permits, initiate criminal proceedings against violators, and ensure the safety of local residents, whistleblowers, and journalists reporting on the issue.

He also sought coordinated action between the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and the Andhra Pradesh government to enforce legal and environmental compliance in the region. To support his claims, Gurumoorthy submitted photographic evidence of the ongoing violations and stressed the severe impact of unchecked mining on both ecological balance and public trust in governance.

'Prepared to meet PM Modi '50 times' to secure funds for state'

AGENCIES
HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Friday said he was prepared to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi up to "50 times" to secure necessary funds and project permissions for the state.

Addressing a gathering at Zaheerabad in Sangareddy district Reddy emphasised the importance of cooperation from both the Centre and the opposition for attracting investments and fostering development in the state. He also urged Leader of Opposition in the Assembly, K Chandrasekhar Rao to attend the House and engage in discussions on pertinent issues. "Politics are done only during election time. My aim is to develop this region after the elections. We will take the Centre's support. We will



"Politics are done only during election time. My aim is to develop this region after the elections."

meet Narendra Modi not once, even 50 times. We will secure the funds that should come to us. We will get the permissions required," Reddy said. Revanth Reddy accused KCR of "neglecting" the state's development during his tenure and being

confined to his farmhouse. He stressed the need to boost the state's income and create wealth by setting up industrial parks besides strengthening the Pharma and IT sectors.

The Chief Minister recalled the association of Medak district with former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, who contested the Lok Sabha seat from there in 1980. "Medak district and Indira Gandhi are inseparable. She sacrificed her life for this country while representing this constituency," he said. He alleged that the work at the NIMZ (National Investment and Manufacturing Zone), Zaheerabad slowed down during the previous BRS regime.

Reddy assured that over 5,000 houses under Indiramma housing scheme, will be allotted to those who lost their lands during the land acquisition for NIMZ.

Tammannah Bhatia appointment as KSDL ambassador sparks row in K'taka

TDG NETWORK
BENGALURU

Workers of Pro Kannada organisations staged protest in Bengaluru demanding the removal of actress Tammannah Bhatia as the brand ambassador from Karnataka Soaps and detergents limited (KSDL). The actress has been offered an amount of Rs 6.2 crore to work the brand.

Meanwhile, Karnataka Large and medium Industries Minister MB Patil stated that the locals of Karnataka were extremely unhappy with the appointment of actress Tammannah Bhatia as an ambassador of the KSDL products. Addressing a press conference, Patil said that the matter was not of language, but of earning global and national reputation through work. "I am a person who has a lot



of respect for Kannada identity. This is trade, business... and should be promoted to the world and across India," Patil told the media.

He further stated that Bhatia had been chosen as the brand ambassador because she had 2.8 crore followers and was the only suitable option, as Rashmika Mandanna had signed elsewhere, while actresses Pooja Hegde and Kiara Advani were not possible and Deepika Padukone would not fit in the budget of KSDL.

33 Naxalites surrender in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region

AGENCIES
BIJAPUR/DANTEWADA

As many as 33 Naxalites, among them 24 carrying a cumulative bounty of Rs 91 lakh, surrendered before security forces in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region on Friday, police said.

The surrender came days after security forces gunned down Nambala Keshav Rao alias Basavaraju, the general secretary of the Communist Party of India (Maoist), and 26 other cadres in a fierce encounter in the forest of Abhujmad along the Bijapur-Narayanpur inter-district border on Wednesday. Twenty-four Naxalites, including nine women, turned themselves in before senior police and CRPF officials in Bijapur, citing disappointment with "inhuman" Maoist ideology, atrocities on local tribals by outlaws, and growing differences within the banned outfit, Bijapur Superintendent of Police Jitendra Kumar Yadav said.



4 Maoists neutralised in encounter in Gadchiroli

AGENCIES
GADCHIROLI (MAHARASHTRA)

Four hardcore Maoists were neutralised in an intense exchange of fire with Gadchiroli Police and CRPF personnel near the Maharashtra-Chhattisgarh border on Friday morning, following a targeted anti-Naxal operation launched based on credible intelligence. According to the release, the operation, led by Additional SP Ramesh, involved 12 C60 commando teams,

comprising around 300 personnel, and a CRPF unit. The operation was initiated on Thursday at noon from Kawande and Nelgunda, moving towards the Indravati riverbank near the recently opened Forward Operating Base (FOB) Kawande, despite heavy rainfall in the area. On Friday morning, while laying a cordon and searching the riverbank, Maoists opened indiscriminate fire on the C60 commandos, prompting effective retaliation.

Shivakumar admits Rs 25 lakh donation to National Herald

TDG NETWORK
VIJAYAPURA

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Friday admitted that he had donated Rs 25 lakh to the National Herald, which he said was a newspaper run by his party. "I donated Rs 25 lakh to the National Herald. It is a newspaper run by my party. My brother and I have given money to the publication. We have also given donations from our trust. We have given our hard-earned money; there is nothing to conceal," Shivakumar told reporters. The National Herald news-



paper remains under the scanner of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in relation to an ongoing investigation by the central investigative agency. The investigation involves top Congress leaders, including Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi. Shivakumar's reaction comes after his brother DK Suresh and Telangana CM

Revanth Reddy were named in the chargesheet filed by ED in connection with the National Herald case. Meanwhile, Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) on Friday, alleged that Telangana has become an "ATM for Scamgress" (Congress), with Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy implicated in corrupt practices. Taking to X, sharing screenshots of newspaper reports related to National Herald case, he wrote, "Telangana has become an ATM for Scamgress and it's been now corroborated by agencies As the ED charge sheets Telan-

gana "Bag Man" in National Herald case, he is trying his best to distract the people's attention from his corrupt practices. The million dollar question is whether the NDA Govt will act this time or pardon Revant Reddy as they've done in the case of Amrut Scam, RR Tax and Civil supplies scam" On Wednesday, the ED presented its opening arguments before Delhi's Rouse Avenue Court regarding the cognisance of its complaint against Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, and others in connection with a money laundering case linked to the National Herald.

Kerala on alert after 273 Covid cases in May

AGENCIES
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Health Minister Veena George on Friday urged all districts in the southern state to increase Covid-19 surveillance, following an increase in cases across Southeast Asia.

George said health officials must closely monitor for any increase in infections and take quick action.

She made the comments during a meeting with district medical and surveillance officers here.

In May, Kerala reported 273 Covid-19 cases, the minister said. The highest number was in Kottayam with 82 cases, followed by Thiruvananthapuram with 73, Ernakulam with 49, Pathanamthitta with 30, and Thrissur with 26. George stressed the importance of early reporting and said self-care was key to controlling the virus.

MGNREGA 'scam': Cong seeks probe, Gujarat Min's resignation

AGENCIES
AHMEDABAD

The Congress on Friday demanded a court-monitored CBI probe and resignation of Gujarat minister Bachubhai Khabad after two of his sons were arrested in an alleged Rs 71 crore MGNREGA scam in Dahod district of the state.

With Prime Minister Narendra Modi scheduled to visit Dahod on May 26, the opposition party wants to meet him and hand over proof of "corruption" under the BJP government in Gujarat, said state Congress president Shaktisinh Gohil here. Police have arrested Khabad's sons Balvant and Kiran for alleged involvement in a Rs 71 crore scam related to the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act schemes. It is alleged that some con-



tracting agencies including those run by the Khabad duo received payments from the government without supplying any goods or carrying out any work in tribal-dominated Dahod district.

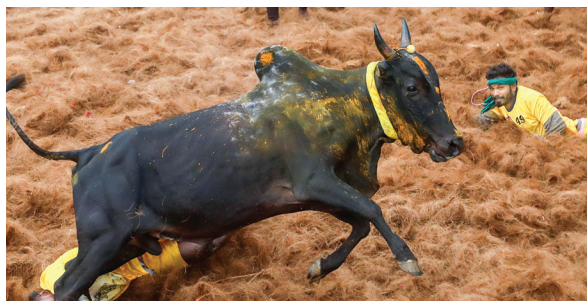
Bachubhai Khabad represents the Devgad Baria constituency and is a Minister of State for Panchayat and Agriculture. Speaking at a press conference here, Gohil claimed the amount involved in the scam would exceed Rs 400 crore if investigation was done properly.

Grand Jallikattu event with 750 bulls held in Tamil Nadu's Pudukkottai

TDG NETWORK
PUDUKKOTTAI

As part of the annual festival of Sri Pidari Amman Temple in Thiruvankulam near Pudukkottai in Tamil Nadu, a spectacular Jallikattu event was organised, drawing massive crowds and enthusiastic participants. The event saw the participation of 750 bulls and 300 tam-

ers from various districts across Tamil Nadu. The event, held with great fervour, showcased the bravery and skill of the participants as they attempted to hold on to the humps of the charging bulls. The spectators cheered loudly as the bulls, adorned with colourful decorations, displayed their strength and agility. Jallikattu, a symbol of Tamil heritage, continues



to be a major attraction during the Pongal season and temple festivals. The bull-taming event is one

of the ancient sports played as a part of the harvest festival, Pongal, in several parts of Tamil Nadu. It is a

traditional event in which a bull is released into a crowd of people, and multiple human participants attempt to grab the large hump on the bull's back trying to tame it. In Jallikattu, a bull is released into a crowd of people, and participants in the event try to grab the large hump on the bull's back, attempting to bring the bull to a stop. In January this year, the

world-renowned three-day Jallikattu event in Tamil Nadu's Madurai kicked off with Avaniyapuram village holding its first-day event which features 1,100 bulls and 900 bull-tamers. The best bull was awarded a tractor worth Rs 11 lakhs, while the best bull-tamer received a car worth Rs 8 lakhs, alongside other prizes. The other two Jallikattu events in Madu-

rai were held at Palamedu and Alanganallur. Strict rules and security measures are in place for the conduct of the events. According to the directions issued by the Madurai district administration, each bull could participate only in one of the three jallikattu competitions in the district. Each bull was to be accompanied only by its owner and a trainer fa-

miliar with the bull. Bull tamers and owners of the bulls were asked to register through the official district administration website. The Jallikattu events of Madurai, particularly those in Alanganallur, are internationally recognized as a vibrant celebration of Tamil heritage and rural valour. This year's competitions attracted significant participation and global attention.

ASSEMBLY ISSUES NOTICES TO ATISHI, OTHER AAP MLAS

The BJP MLAs in the complaint claimed “the very fact that the deliberations of the Committee were disclosed” is itself a “serious issue of breach of privilege”.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Assembly has issued notices to former chief minister Atishi and other Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLAs for allegedly “disclosing” deliberations of the recently held General Purposes Committee meeting.

The notices issued on Thursday comes following a complaint of “contempt and breach of privilege” by the BJP members.

A row had erupted after the meeting as the AAP had claimed that its MLAs, who are members of the panel, had proposed that Mata Savitribai Phule’s portrait be also installed on the Delhi Assembly premises.

They alleged that the BJP members did not allow the proposal to be passed.



The assembly officials, however, said that no written proposal was submitted and the issue was raised verbally.

In a complaint addressed to Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta on May 22, Deputy Speaker Mohan Singh Bisht, BJP chief whip Abhay Verma and party leaders Raj Kumar Bhatia and Tilak Ram Gupta al-

leged that the AAP members during the deliberations in the General Purposes Committee (GPC) meeting made a passing suggestion that Savitribai Phule’s portrait can also be installed.

“However, we were shocked to find out that the members of the AAP had twisted the facts and declared in a press conference that the ruling party mem-

bers had opposed their proposal and not allowed for the portrait of Mata Savitribai Phule to be installed,” read the complaint.

The Assembly Secretariat has following the complaint issued notices to Leader of Opposition Atishi and AAP MLAs Kuldeep Kumar, Veer Singh Dhangra and Zubair Ahmad for disclosing the details of proceedings of the GPC and also for disclosing it in a false and twisted manner,” they said.

They accused the AAP MLAs of “disclosing the deliberation” with “political and mischievous agenda” and also claimed that the opposition leaders “deliberately twisted the facts and have presented an entirely false picture before the public”.

The proceedings of the meeting will prove that nothing as alleged by the AAP members transpired in the meeting, they said in the complaint and stressed that their informal suggestion was recorded in the meetings for a suitable decision.

PWD starts working on project to digitise city Assembly

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Public Works Department (PWD) has started working on the project to digitize the Delhi Assembly, officials said on Friday.

Earlier in March this year, Speaker Vijender Gupta had convened a meeting with officers from the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs to discuss the implementation of the National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) in the Delhi Assembly.

“All the components for end-to-end digitization of the Delhi Assembly, like an audiovisual system and networking dashboard, will be installed under the NeVA project, including setting up hardware for high-speed data



networking. A tender has been floated for the implementation of the project,” said a PWD official. NeVA aims to serve as a unified digital platform for all legislative functions, including the submission of notices, ministerial replies, legislative business, discussions, committee reports and access to a digital library.

27 state legislative assemblies across the country have implemented this

digital workflow system. “With NeVA’s implementation, the Delhi Assembly will take a significant step towards a fully digitized and paperless governance model, enhancing operational efficiency and public access to legislative proceedings,” Gupta had said earlier. According to officials, the cost of this project is Rs 15 crore with a timeline of 50 days from the day the work is awarded.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday allowed the Delhi government to withdraw seven cases filed by the erstwhile AAP government against the Centre and Lieutenant Governor over issues including the control over services in the capital.

A bench comprising Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih took note of the submissions of Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the BJP-led government, and allowed the plea.

After a lawyer raised the issue of non-payment of dues to advocates representing the previous government, Bhati assured the bench that it would be taken care of.

On May 22, the seven bit-



Another such case was against a decision of the NGT, which was stayed in July 2023 by the top court.

terly-contested cases filed by the erstwhile AAP-led Delhi government against the Centre and the LG were sought to be withdrawn from a bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh.

Bhati referred to the plea saying the seven cases pending in the top court challenged the authority of LG in several committees, including solid waste manage-

Health Minister directs covid-19 readiness measures amid rise in cases

TIKAM SHARMA
NEW DELHI

Health Minister Dr. Pankaj Kumar Singh reviewed the current COVID-19 situation in the capital. According to the latest reports, 23 cases have been detected in Delhi as of Thursday. The government is presently verifying the specifics of these cases to ascertain whether the affected individuals are city residents or have traveled from other regions.

Minister Singh reassured the public that there is no need for alarm. “The Delhi government is fully equipped and prepared to handle any eventuality,” he stated. “We have established coordination with all hospital medical superintendents, doctors, and their respective teams throughout Delhi.”

Hospitals and healthcare institutions have been put on alert, and all essential resources are being mobilized to ensure prompt medical response and



Minister Singh reassured the public that there is no need for alarm.

quality care. The Health Department remains vigilant, actively monitoring the situation, and has committed to providing timely updates to the citizens. People are urged to adhere to health and safety norms and extend cooperation to authorities when required.

In line with the directions issued by Hon’ble Health Minister Dr. Pankaj Kumar Singh, the Delhi Health Department has released an official advisory to all gov-

ernment-run hospitals in Delhi in response to the recent rise in COVID-19 cases. The advisory issued by the Delhi Health Department outlines a comprehensive preparedness plan for all hospitals in light of the recent surge in COVID-19 cases. It instructs hospitals to ensure complete readiness in terms of bed availability, oxygen supply, stock of antibiotics and other essential medications, as well as vaccines. All crucial medical equipment, including ventilators, Bi-PAP machines, oxygen concentrators, and PSA units, must be maintained in fully functional condition. Hospitals are also advised to conduct refresher training sessions for their dedicated medical and support staff without delay. Additionally, the advisory mandates daily reporting of Influenza-like Illness (ILI) and Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI) cases from both OPD and IPD departments through the Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP) portal.

Sood orders to implement 'Summer Action Plan' in Delhi Fire Services meet

TIKAM SHARMA
NEW DELHI

Delhi Home Minister Ashish Sood chaired a crucial meeting of the Delhi Fire Service at the Delhi Secretariat today. The session was attended by the Principal Secretary of the Home Department, the Director of Delhi Fire Service, and other senior officials. The discussions focused extensively on the department’s operations and future development strategies. Sood instructed officials to diligently implement the existing Summer Action Plan.

Following the meeting, the Minister stated that comprehensive discussions were held on the



administrative and financial frameworks of the department, with particular emphasis on the need to expand manpower. He also highlighted ongoing efforts to modernize the force with advanced technology and the procurement of new fire engines that will feature a combination of indigenous and international technologies.

The Director of the Delhi Fire Service briefed the Minister on the department’s current infrastructure, noting that Delhi has 65 fire stations, 311 fire units, and a total workforce of 2,420 personnel. He added that steps are being taken to reduce staff working hours to improve overall efficiency and productivity.

Minister Sood also revealed that the meeting addressed the proposed signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Directorate General of Civil Defence & Fire Services (Ministry of Home Affairs), the National Centre for Good Governance,

and the Delhi Fire Service. This agreement aims to upgrade the service through technological integration, amendments to the Fire Services Act, and the adoption of globally recognized facilities.

Recognizing Delhi’s growing population, the Minister emphasized the need to incorporate modern fire-fighting technologies.

He stressed the importance of deploying smaller fire vehicles in densely populated areas and bustling markets to ensure quick access during emergencies. A rapid response mechanism is essential to reduce casualties during fire incidents, he added.

121 Bangladeshi nationals residing illegally in Delhi to be deported

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has detained 121 Bangladeshi nationals for allegedly residing unlawfully in India with their deportation process being initiated through the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO), an official said on Friday.

The illegal immigrants were rounded up in a week, the official further stated, adding that five Indians were interrogated in the case.

“A case has also been registered at the Narela Industrial Area police station to probe a suspected syndicate allegedly involved in faci-



tating the illegal entry and stay of foreign nationals in the country,” Deputy Commissioner of Police (outer north) Nidhin Valsan said.

Five Indians have been interrogated in connection with the case, one of whom has been served a notice under Section 35(3) of the Bharatiya Nagarik

Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), he added.

A police team carried out an extensive verification drive over the last week, during which documents of 831 suspected Bangladeshi nationals were scrutinised. “As many as 121 individuals were found residing in the country without valid docu-

mentation,” the DCP said. A case has been registered under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), along with Sections 14 (penalty for contravention of provisions of the Act, etc.) and 14C (penalty for abetment) of the Foreigners Act, 1946, to investigate the syndicate responsible for facilitating illegal entry and residence of immigrants, the officer added.

A Special Investigation Team (SIT) is probing the matter.

Preliminary investigations revealed that the five Indians involved were renting properties to the undocumented immigrants, the police said.

Four teenage cousins drown in Delhi’s Munak canal

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Four teenage cousin brothers drowned after being swept away by strong water currents while they were sitting on the side of Munak canal in outer north Delhi, an official said on Friday.

The incident occurred around 12 pm on Thursday in the Munak canal, which carries water from Haryana to Delhi, he said, adding that the bodies of all four teenage boys have been recovered. The official said that the



boys were aged between 13 and 18 years.

“Today around 12 pm near Munak canal, which flows from Haryana to Delhi, Waqil came to collect fodder

for the gaushala. He was accompanied by six children: his two sons, his brother-in-law’s son, his brother’s son and two other children,” said Deputy Commissioner

of Police (Outer North) Nidhin Valsan on Thursday.

While the police earlier said that the boys had entered the canal for a swim, they later stated that it was an accident. Four of them, including Waqil’s two sons, his brother-in-law’s son and his brother’s son, were sitting on the side of the canal when one of them got swept away, a police source said. The remaining three jumped in to rescue him, but all four were carried away by the strong currents, he added. Earlier on Thursday,

two bodies were recovered while efforts were on to locate the remaining boys.

“Two more bodies were recovered today by the rescue teams, including personnel from the fire brigade, local police and disaster response units. Two bodies had already been recovered on Thursday,” the officer said, adding that the bodies have been sent for post-mortem examination.

A case under relevant sections has been registered and further inquiries are underway, police said.

Delhi Govt to deploy anti-smog gun trucks across industrial areas

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Aiming to improve the city’s air quality, the Delhi Government is set to deploy eight GPS-enabled hydraulic anti-smog gun vehicles across key industrial areas of the national capital, with the initiative to continue for ten months, excluding the monsoon period, officials said Friday.

The programme will run for 10 months, excluding the monsoon period, with the goal to significantly reduce airborne particulate matter and improve the air quality.

Each CNG-operated truck is equipped with an advanced anti-smog gun capable of spray-



ing a fine mist over a horizontal distance of 30 meters and rotating 330 degrees, allowing comprehensive dust suppression, Delhi Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa said. He added that the vehicles also feature horizontal sprinklers along their width to spray water directly onto roads, consuming at least 1,500 litres of water per hour.

INDIAN ARMY GLORY BUZZING IN STREETS OF PAKISTAN: BJP ON RAHUL’S ATTACK

Highlighting India’s growing strength and resolve under PM Modi’s leadership, the BJP leader stated that the “new India” knows how to show its ‘Rudra’ form, penetrate hundreds of kilometres, and destroy terror bases: Chugh

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

After Congress MP and Lok Sabha Leader of the Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his recent speech, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) National General Secretary Tarun Chugh hit back, saying that the whole world knows how the glory of the Indian army is buzzing in the streets and homes of Pakistan. Chugh lauded the Indian Army’s recent counter-terror operations carried out under Operation Sindoor. “The whole world knows Rahul ji. Today, the glory of



the Indian army is buzzing in the streets of Pakistan and in the homes of Pakistan. Those who set out to erase the ‘sindoor’ of unarmed innocents, our brave Forces razed them to the ground. Those who used to shed the blood of In-

dia are being made to pay for it... The account is being taken... Those who were proud of their weapons, we have razed them to the ground, and they have become part of the rubble,” Chugh told ANI. Highlighting India’s growing strength and resolve under PM Modi’s leadership, the BJP leader stated that the “new India” knows how to show its ‘Rudra’ form, penetrate hundreds of kilometres, and destroy terror bases. He exhorted that “this is new India; this is Narendra Modi’s India.” Chugh stated, “This is New India, which knows how to show its ‘Rudra’ form and knows how to penetrate hundreds of kilometres and

destroy terror bases. This is new India... This is Narendra Modi’s India... This is the new India. This operation, sindoor, is not just an approach; this is the spirit of the whole of India, which our army has shown today. And 140 crore citizens of India are proud of the valour and bravery of their army.” Earlier on Thursday, Congress MP and Lok Sabha Leader of the Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi and posed a series of questions about terrorism, Pakistan’s statement, and US President Donald Trump’s claims of mediation between India and Pakistan. In a post targeting the Prime

Minister, Rahul Gandhi posted, “Modiji, stop giving hollow speeches. Just tell me, why did you believe Pakistan’s statement on terrorism? Why did you sacrifice India’s interests by bowing to Trump? Why does your blood boil only in front of cameras? You have compromised the honour of India!” Earlier, Congress General Secretary Jairam Ramesh criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi after his public rally in Rajasthan on Thursday and said that instead of delivering “grand-sounding but hollow film-style” dialogues to the public, he should answer the questions being raised at him.

Karnataka BJP to protest demanding Priyank’s removal from Cabinet



TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Karnataka BJP will hold a massive protest in Kalaburagi on Saturday, May 24, demanding the removal of State Minister Priyank Kharge from the cabinet, BJP leader Rajkumar Patil said on Friday. Patil accused Kharge of misusing his official position to settle personal political scores, particularly targeting the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, Chavadi Narayanswamy. He alleged that BJP leaders, including Narayanswamy, were deliberately harassed during a peaceful Satyagraha protest in Chittapur, and claimed Congress-backed individuals attacked Narayanswamy’s car and attempted to assault him.

Urging Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to take immediate action, Patil said, “CM has to take strict action... all those police officers have to be suspended, and those who messed up the Darna Dutt Satyagraha there. He did the work of attacking him here, taking a case under hooligan law and arresting all those people inside.” He also criticised the Congress-led state government for failing to act on multiple complaints filed against Priyank Kharge. The BJP demanded that those involved in the attack be booked under the Gunda Act and arrested without delay. Patil accused the Congress leadership of shielding Kharge and enabling illegal activities in Kalaburagi. “Only those who are there with the Congress and their

support have been done. Some Congress is working here, and some under the constitution, nothing works here; the entire illegal activity is going on here,” he said. He further alleged that even ministers and common citizens were afraid to speak out due to Kharge’s influence. “Some ministers are scared to come here, people are afraid that Priyanka Karge has kept some people under control. Those people come and do such things as Dharna Satyagraha,” he added. “Until Priyank resigns or is removed from the community, Siddaramaiah ji will not do the job of removing him... We will continue protesting,” said Patil. “Unless Siddaramaiah acts and removes Priyank, we will not back down,” he added.

ECI to provide mobile deposit facility for voters at polling stations

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

In line with various initiatives aimed at enhancing voter convenience and streamlining poll day arrangements, the Election Commission has issued two more comprehensive instructions for providing mobile deposit facility for voters just outside the polling stations and rationalising norms for canvassing, according to an official statement. The instructions are in line with the relevant provisions of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961. Recognising the increasing coverage and usage of mobile phones in both urban and rural areas and the challenges faced not only by the voters at large but also by senior citizens, women, and PwD electors



in managing mobile phones on the poll day, the Commission has decided to allow a mobile deposit facility just outside the polling stations. Only mobile phones shall be allowed within 100 meters of the polling station and that too in switched-off mode, the release said. As per the release, very simple pigeonhole boxes or jute bags shall be provided near the entrance door of the polling station where the voters would be required to deposit their mobile phones. Mobile phones shall not be allowed to be carried inside the poll-

ing station by the voter. However, certain Polling Stations can be exempted from this provision based on adverse local circumstances by the Returning Officer. Rule 49M of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, which ensures secrecy of voting within the polling station, will continue to be strictly enforced. Further, in a move aimed at improving election day facilitation, the Commission has rationalised the permissible norms for canvassing in line with the electoral laws to 100 meters from the entrance of the polling station.

Jharkhand: Three workers die after river water floods illegal coal mine

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Three workers lost their lives after river water entered an illegal coal mine in the Bariatu Khawa area of Jharkhand’s Hazaribagh district. The incident occurred around 6:30 am on Thursday morning, when officials noticed the workers were missing. According to authorities, water from the Khawa River breached into an illegal mining pit, trapping the workers inside. The mine is believed to have been dug unlawfully, without any safety precautions, which ultimately led to the flooding. Circle Officer (CO) Ram Ratan Barnwal said, “We received information late in the evening that 3 work-

ers were swept away in the Khawa river. When we reached around 6:30 am yesterday morning, we saw that they were missing. We saw a pit here and felt that illegal mining must have been going on here earlier... We have brought a machine here and are pumping out water...” A search operation was launched immediately and is still underway. Meanwhile, in a similar incident in Tamil Nadu, five workers lost their lives and one was seriously injured following a rockslide at a stone quarry operated by Mega Blue Metal in Mallakottai near S S Kottai in Sivaganga district. The tragedy occurred on Tuesday morning at the privately operated quarry when a sudden rockslide struck, burying several workers.



Over 75 000 commuters use parcel locker service at 226 Delhi Metro stations

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Parcel locker service installed at 226 metro stations has been used by over 75,000 commuters since its launch in November 2023, said an official of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC). The digital lockers allow passengers to temporarily store personal items and courier packages during their commute and currently around 19,200 lockers have been installed across these stations, with each location featuring a grid of 83 to 90 lockers managed through a central digital console, said DMRC Principal Executive Director Anuj Dayal. Dayal said the lockers come in three sizes -- small, medium and large -- and can be rented at Rs 20, Rs 30 and Rs 40 per hour respectively. The DMRC has collaborat-

ed with AutoPe Payment Solutions for this service. “Commuters can store anything that fits the locker and clears security, from bags and tiffin boxes to e-commerce parcels and partner courier agencies handle delivery, removing the need for visits to post offices or courier counters,” he added. Dayal said the facility is completely digital with no physical locks or keys. The users book lockers via the Momentum 2.0 app, which generates a PIN code for secure drop and pick-up. Lockers can be rented for one to six hours and a penalty is charged for exceeding the booked duration, he added. Dayal further said “this service is similar to the cloakroom system in the Indian Railways, but driven by a digital platform aimed at enhancing commuter convenience”.

‘Education must be given in children’s mother tongue in the initial years’

TDG NETWORK
DHENKANAL (ODISHA)

In a step toward strengthening foundational education, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated a temporary building for Kendriya Vidyalaya (KV) on Friday and laid the foundation stone for its permanent campus in Dhenkanal, Odisha. The occasion also reaffirmed the government’s commitment to implementing the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 across all states. Pradhan emphasised the NEP’s focus on regional languages in early education. “Under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, we have decided that in all the states of India--in the foundational and preparatory stages, in Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN), and in the NIPUN Bharat

Mission--education must be provided in the children’s mother tongue in the initial years,” he said. He noted that the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has already issued a circular directing schools across the country to commence school education in regional languages. “This move aligns with NEP’s vision to make learning more inclusive and effective for young students,” Pradhan stated. “To take our country’s new generation to the global level, we must fully implement the National Education Policy,” Pradhan added, underlining the importance of culturally rooted yet globally competitive education. Earlier in the day, Dharmendra Pradhan also inaugurated the newly constructed auditorium at the Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) in the Chiplima

region of Sambalpur district. According to his post on the social media platform X, Rs 10.5 crores were invested to upgrade the auditorium. “OUAT, Chiplima will be a bridge between ‘Developed Odisha’ and ‘Developed India’. I am happy to inaugurate the new state-of-the-art auditorium of OUAT Chiplima Agricultural College in Sambalpur. This auditorium will be of great help in the intellectual development of the students and in enhancing the skills of the farmers of Sambalpur and the surrounding districts. I thank the Chief Minister @MohanMODisha for taking steps to upgrade this auditorium with an investment of about Rs 10.5 crore,” Pradhan post on X read. He also thanked Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi for his efforts in facilitating the auditorium’s development. (ANI)

NIA Court sends key Bishnoi gang associate to remand

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has secured the remand of Rahul Sarkar, a pivotal operative in the Lawrence Bishnoi crime syndicate, who was allegedly responsible for procuring forged passports to help gang members evade law enforcement. The Special Court at Patiala House, New Delhi, has granted NIA custody for further interrogation, intensifying the agency’s crackdown on organised crime networks. Rahul Sarkar, who managed the gang’s passport operations, played a critical role in forging documents that allowed crimi-



nals to flee the country after committing offences. Among those he assisted was Sachin Thapan, a prime suspect in the 2022 murder of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala. His arrest is part of NIA’s ongoing investigation into the case, registered in August 2022 under directives from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The probe centres on criminal syndicates conspiring to generate funds and recruit individuals for unlawful activities. The case, filed under Section 120-B of the IPC and Sections 17, 18 & 18-B of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, remains active as authorities continue dismantling organised crime operations.

No more arbitrary tree pruning: Delhi Govt’s SOP on balancing infrastructure with ecology

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

In a move directed towards balancing Delhi’s infrastructure needs with ecological responsibility, the Delhi government has rolled out an SOP ensuring a stricter vetting process to prevent the arbitrary cutting of tree branches, an official said on Friday. The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), dated May 2, outlines when and how trees can be pruned,



particularly in high-footfall areas such as roads, parks, and residential colonies. The guidelines were issued to ensure public safety and the scientific management of trees, for which on-line applications and photographic evidence were mandated.

Any individual, government agency, civic body, RWA, or organisation seeking to prune tree branches with a girth of 15.7 cm or more must now apply through the e-Forest portal. For light pruning, where the branch girth is less than 15.7 cm, no prior permission is required. However, the pruning agency must upload before-and-after photographs on the portal for documentation, the SOP states.

Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel inaugurates 'Dharoi Adventure Fest'

TDG NETWORK
GANDHINAGAR (GUJARAT)

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel inaugurated the country’s longest and Gujarat’s first-ever ‘Dharoi Adventure Fest’ at the iconic Dharoi Dam, situated on the border of Mehsana and Sabarkantha districts. He inaugurated the Adventure Zone and also experienced the thrill of a speedboat ride. Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, along with Tourism Minister Mulubhai Bera and other dignitaries, visited the adventure activity site, witnessed various rides including paramotoring, and inaugurated and visited the tent city. Inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the

Dharoi Dam area is being transformed into a world-class, sustainable tourism and pilgrimage destination. The development of the Dharoi region will take place in three phases, enhancing tourism through spiritual, adventure, eco, and recreational activities. This initiative will not only boost visitor engagement but also generate local employment and promote the ‘Vocal for Local’ mission. Under the leadership of CM Patel, Dharoi is poised to be developed as an ‘Iconic Place,’ on par with other major tourist destinations across Gujarat. In addition, under the leadership of the Chief Minister, the state government is actively engaged in future planning to develop

a tourism circuit by enhancing key tourist destinations and pilgrimage sites in North Gujarat, including Polo Forest, Taranga, Vadnagar, and Ambaji. Speaking to the media about the Adventure Fest, Tourism Secretary Dr. Rajender Kumar shared that the Dharoi Adventure Fest will span approximately 45 days, featuring a wide range of land-based, water-based and air-based adventure activities for tourists to experience and enjoy. To accommodate visitors, a tent city has been constructed at Dharoi. It includes a total of 21 various types of tents and an air-conditioned dormitory facility with more than 100 beds. These facilities have been made available. (ANI)

GLOBAL OEMs SOURCE OVER \$2 BN IN AEROSPACE COMPONENTS, SERVICES YEARLY FROM INDIA

India is emerging as a hub for maintenance, repair, overhaul (MRO), reducing airline costs fro airlines, creating jobs

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Global original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) are sourcing aerospace components and services worth over USD 2 billion annually, a senior government official said on Friday.

Highlighting the opportunities in the Indian aviation and aerospace areas, Civil Aviation Secretary Samir Kumar Sinha also said the country is becoming a destination for MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul) activities that will help with lower costs for airlines, generate more jobs and enhance service capabilities.

India is one of the world's fastest-growing civil aviation markets and carriers have placed significant aircraft orders as they expand their fleets as well as networks to cater to rising air travel demand.

Sinha said global OEMs (original equipment manu-



facturers) source more than USD 2 billion worth aerospace components and services from India annually.

He also emphasised the need to scale up responsibly with focus on sustainability while speaking at the curtain raiser event for the Wings India 2026, an aviation conference to be held in January 2026 in Hyderabad.

Meanwhile, the global avionics and advanced electronics systems market is expected to reach USD 63.34 billion by 2030, nearly doubling from USD 34.9 billion in 2020, according to a

report by financial advisory firm Anand Rath.

The maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) sector plays a critical role in ensuring aircraft safety and airworthiness and is projected to reach USD 110 billion globally by 2028.

Samir Bahl, CEO of Investment Banking at Anand Rath Advisors Limited, stated, "With the rapid expansion of the global fleet, advanced manufacturing, and a flourishing MRO sector, India is on track to becoming a global aerospace powerhouse."

He added, "As the industry embraces precision engineering, digital transformation, and automation, India's aerospace ecosystem is primed for innovation and growth. With global OEMs, private investors, and capital markets fuelling investment, the nation is set to redefine the skies. The future isn't just above us - it's being built right here!"

Aerostructures represent the largest segment of the aerospace market, accounting for approximately 40 per cent of the total aircraft cost.

This segment is expected to maintain its dominance through 2028, driven by advancements in materials science, dual sourcing, after-market services, and additive manufacturing techniques.

The global aircraft engine market exceeds USD 100 billion in value, with engines constituting nearly 20 per cent of an aircraft's total cost.

Factors such as rising passenger numbers, continu-

ous R&D investments, fuel efficiency improvements, and the emergence of electric and hybrid propulsion technologies are driving market growth.

India, poised to become the third-largest buyer of commercial passenger planes, has an increasing demand for MRO services. Currently, 90 per cent of MRO services are outsourced, highlighting a significant growth opportunity for domestic players.

The growth potential of the aerospace industry worldwide is fuelled by rising air travel demand, expanding aircraft fleets, and rapid technological advancements. Global fleet to double by 2042, with single-aisle aircraft leading the demand surge.

With increasing disposable incomes, government-backed initiatives, and a strengthening industrial base, India is well-positioned to capitalize on this evolving landscape.

Markets rebound nearly 1%; Sensex surges over 760 pts

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded sharply by nearly 1 per cent on Friday, propelled by buying in market heavyweights Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank and ITC.

Besides, hopes of a record dividend from the RBI and easing US treasury yields bolstered investor sentiment, traders said.

After a flat start, the 30-share BSE benchmark bounced back and surged 769.09 points or 0.95 per cent to settle at 81,721.08. During the day, it jumped 953.18 points or 1.17 per cent to 81,905.17.

As many as 2,361 stocks advanced while 1,589 declined and 156 remained unchanged on the BSE.

The NSE Nifty rallied 243.45 points or 0.99 per cent to 24,853.15.

On a weekly basis, the BSE benchmark dropped 609.51 points or 0.74 per cent and the Nifty declined 166.65 points or 0.66 per cent.

"The domestic market has recouped nearly half of the



week's losses, supported by gains in FMCG and IT stocks. FMCG benefitted from the early and above-normal monsoon forecast, while IT stocks saw a rebound following a healthy correction.

"Optimism around a potentially record-high dividend from the RBI is boosting hopes for fiscal consolidation, reflected in falling Indian bond yields," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

From the Sensex firms, Eternal, Power Grid, ITC, Bajaj Finserv, Nestle, Axis Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Adani Ports were among the biggest gainers.

On the other hand, Sun Pharma was the only lag-

gard, declining nearly 2 per cent.

The company's stock fell after it reported a nearly 19 per cent drop in consolidated net profit for the quarter ended March 31, 2025.

The BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.50 per cent and smallcap index went up by 0.45 per cent.

FMCG jumped 1.49 per cent, utilities (1.02 per cent), power (1.01 per cent), financial services (0.99 per cent), bankex (0.99 per cent), oil & gas (0.94 per cent) and energy (0.82 per cent).

In Asian markets, Japan's Nikkei 225 index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng settled in positive territory, while South Korea's Kospi and Shanghai's SSE Composite index ended lower.

India's forex kitty drops USD 4.88 bn to USD 685.72 bn

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

India's forex reserves dropped USD 4.888 billion to USD 685.729 billion for the week ended May 16, the Reserve Bank of India said on Friday.

The overall reserves jumped by USD 4.553 billion in the previous reporting week. The forex reserves touched an all-time high of USD 704.885 billion in September 2024.

For the week ended May 16, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by USD 279 million to USD 581.652 billion, the data released on Friday showed.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.



For the week ended May 16, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by USD 279 million to USD 581.652 billion, the data released on Friday showed.

After the sharp USD 4.52 billion jump in the previous reporting week, the gold reserves dropped by USD 5.121 billion to USD 81.217 billion during the week, the RBI said.

The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were down

by USD 43 million to USD 18.49 billion, the apex bank said.

India's reserve position with the IMF was also down by USD 3 million at USD 4.371 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed.

Goyal meets US Secretary Lutnick to boost India-US trade ties

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal held a meeting with Howard Lutnick, the United States Secretary of Commerce, to discuss the prospects of a mutually beneficial trade agreement between the two nations.

The meeting focused on deepening economic ties and exploring new opportunities for collaboration in trade and investment.

In a social media post following the meeting, Goyal shared, "Held a constructive meeting with Secretary @HowardLutnick for a mutually beneficial trade agreement. Committed to enhancing opportunities for our businesses and people."

The statement reflects the growing commitment from both sides to strengthen bilateral trade relations and promote economic growth through increased cooperation.



The statement reflects the growing commitment from both sides to strengthen bilateral trade relations and promote economic growth through increased cooperation.

India and the United States are poised to sign the first tranche of the much-anticipated Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) before July, according to sources who spoke to ANI.

Sources revealed that a round of meetings with the United States Trade Representative has already con-

cluded.

Officials from both nations have discussed various issues related to goods trade, with India pushing for concessions on labour-intensive exports such as leather and textiles. Service sector issues have also featured prominently in the discussions.

"We want to increase our

exports and preserve what we are already exporting," a source familiar with the negotiations told ANI. "The BTA with the US will be a win-win deal for both countries".

The sources indicated that India remains protective of sensitive sectors, particularly agriculture and dairy products. A key Indian demand is a full exemption from the 26 per cent tariff imposed on certain goods.

"Negotiations are proceeding on a very positive note, and we expect to conclude the agreement before the sunset clause set by the US, which expires on July 8," one of the sources added.

The India-US trade deal would mark a significant milestone in economic relations between the world's largest and fifth-largest economies, potentially opening new avenues for bilateral commerce and investment.

For the fourth consecutive year in 2024-25, the US

was India's largest trading partner, with bilateral trade valued at USD 131.84 billion. India had a trade surplus of USD 41.18 billion in goods in 2024-25.

During the recent meeting between President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in February, the two leaders resolved to expand trade and investment to make their citizens more prosperous, nations stronger, economies more innovative, and supply chains more resilient.

They resolved to deepen the US-India trade relationship to promote growth that ensures fairness, national security and job creation. To this end, the leaders set a bold new goal for bilateral trade - "Mission 500" - aiming to more than double total bilateral trade to USD 500 billion by 2030. Beyond the US talks, sources mentioned that trade negotiations with the European Union are also underway, and they expect an early harvest.

'Adani group to invest Rs 1 lakh cr in over 10 years'



Gautam Adani at the inaugural ceremony of the 'Rising North East Summit', at the Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Chairman of Adani group, Gautam Adani on Friday announced a massive investment of Rs 1 lakh crore across different regions of the North-Eastern part of the country over a period on next 10 years.

This invemnet will double the Rs50,000 crore investment announced by the Adani Group just three months ago at the Advantage Assam 2.0 summit in February, according to the press release by Adani Group.

Speaking at 'Rising Northeast Investors Summit' in New Delhi, Gautam Adani said, "Three months ago, in Assam, we pledged an investment of Rs50,000 crore. Today, once again, humbled

and inspired by your leadership, I announce that the Adani Group will invest an additional Rs50,000 crore across the Northeast over the next 10 years."

The Adani Group Chairman further mentioned that the prime focus of Adani Groups investment will be on green energy, along with "smart-meters, hydro, pumped storage, power transmission, roads & highways, digital infrastructure, logistics, as well as capacity-building through skilling and vocational training centres."

"But more than infrastructure, we will invest in people. Every initiative will prioritize local jobs, local entrepreneurship, and community engagement," said Gautam Adani.

Reliance to invest Rs 75,000 cr in North East over next 5 years: Mukesh Ambani

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Oil-to-telecom conglomerate Reliance Industries Ltd will invest Rs 75,000 crore in North Eastern states in setting up 350 biogas plants, expanding its telecom services, retail footprint, and clean energy projects, chairman Mukesh Ambani said on Friday.

Speaking at the Rising NorthEast Investors Summit here, Reliance Industries Ltd chairman and managing director said his group will invest in factories for high-quality FMCG products in the region and setting up a 150-bed cancer hospital in Manipur.

"Reliance has invested around Rs 30,000 crore in the region in the past 40 years. In the next five years, we will more than double our investments, with our target at Rs 75,000 crore," he said.

This will create over 2.5 million direct and indirect employment opportunities as the conglomerate aspires to touch the lives of most of the 45 million population in the North-East.

Ambani said he is making six commitments to the Chief Ministers of Arunachal



Mukesh Ambani addresses at the 'Rising North East Summit', at the Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi. ANI

Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.

The group's telecom unit Jio has already covered 90 per cent of the population with over 5 million 5G subscribers. "We will double this number this year," he said.

"Jio's priority will be to bring the revolutionary power of Artificial Intelligence to all schools, hospitals, enterprises and homes." When talent meets technology and competence meets connectivity, our North-East will surge ahead, he said.

Ambani said Reliance

Retail will vastly increase its procurement of staples, fruits, and vegetables to boost the income of farmers.

"We will also invest in factories for high-quality FMCG products in the region and promote the region's fabulous artisan economy," he said.

In clean energy, Reliance will look to "greatly" enhance generation of solar power in the region, he said without giving details.

In line with the vision of converting waste to wealth, Reliance will convert the region's vast 'wasteland into

wealth-land', by setting up 350 integrated compressed biogas plants which will turn organic waste into gas which could be used as CNG for transportation as well as fuel in industries and cooking in kitchens, he said.

Ambani said Reliance Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the group, will bring the best of cancer care to the North-East.

"To begin with, we have established a 150-bed comprehensive cancer hospital in Manipur. We are collaborating with Mizoram University on the care of breast cancer using genomic data. In Guwahati, we have built an Advanced Molecular Diagnostics and Research Lab. It will be among the largest Genome Sequencing Capacities in India," he said. "We will help transform the North-East into a healthcare hub and a research powerhouse".

Stating that the North-East is a treasure-house of world-class talent in multiple sports, he said Reliance Foundation will work with all eight states to set up Olympic Training Centres, which will prepare our youth to be tomorrow's medal-winners in Olympics.

North East sees Rs.6.75 lakh cr investment boost in a decade: Scindia



Union Minister Jyotiraditya M. Scindia at the of the 'Rising North East Summit', at the Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Communications and Development of North Eastern Region, Jyotiraditya M Scindia, on Friday highlighted the transformative progress of the North Eastern states over the last decade under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Speaking at the inaugural session of the Rising North East Investors Summit at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, the minister emphasized the government's commitment to the region's development.

Scindia announced that gross budgetary support for the north-eastern region has

seen a dramatic rise, from a mere 10 per cent to enabling an investment of nearly Rs 6.75 lakh crore in the last ten years. This significant allocation, he noted, has been a game changer in redefining the growth trajectory of the region, turning it into a land of opportunity.

He said, "It is our very own Prime Minister who, over the past ten years, has increased the gross budgetary support from 10 per cent to enable an investment of nearly Rs 6.75 lakh crore in the North Eastern region".

The summit, aimed at attracting both global and domestic investors, sought to spotlight the immense economic potential of the North East.

CULTURAL NATIONHOOD AND UNITY: THE CIVILIZATIONAL WORKS OF THE RSS

OPINION

PROF RAGHAVENDRA P. TIWARI



Founded in 1925, the Rashtriya Swayam-sevak Sangh (RSS) has played a pivotal role in fostering cultural unity in India. Guided by the philosophy of ‘Bharatiyata’ (Indian-ness), the RSS emphasizes the idea of a unified nation bound by a common civilization, cultural heritage, and historical continuity, despite India’s rich linguistic, social, regional, and religious diversity. Its vision of unity is rooted in shared traditions, moral values, and a deep sense of national pride. Its role is profoundly patriotic, serving as a catalyst for cultural restoration and continuity. As the RSS marks a century of its existence, it is apt to reflect on its role in reshaping Bharat as a cultural entity, despite the nation’s vast diversity in every sphere of life.

CULTURAL NATIONHOOD AND CIVILIZATIONAL IDENTITY: THE RSS

PERSPECTIVE

The RSS places strong emphasis on the idea of a shared cultural and civilizational identity that unites the people beyond distinctions of religion, language, or region. Central to its worldview is the concept of Sanskritik Rashtra—the notion that India is not merely a political entity but a cultural nation, bound together by centuries of shared traditions, values, and collective wisdom and memories. Drawing inspiration from ancient epics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, as well as spiritual and philosophical systems such as Vedanta, the RSS asserts that these foundational texts and ideas form the core of a unifying cultural consciousness. This common heritage is seen as a powerful force for national cohesion, offering a sense of belonging and identity to all citizens, regardless of their diverse backgrounds. By promoting pride in India’s ancient knowledge systems, the RSS is fostering a deep-seated cultural unity—one that nurtures respect for diversity while reaffirming the essential oneness of the Indian civilization.

BUILDING NATIONAL SOLIDARITY THROUGH SHARED FESTIVALS AND INCLUSIVE

PRACTICES

Acknowledging the deeply pluralistic fabric of Indian society, the RSS actively promotes the inclusive celebration of festivals and culturally significant occasions across regional, linguistic, and caste boundaries, reinforcing the belief that diversity is not a barrier but a vital strength of national unity. The uniform observance of festivals such as Raksha Bandhan, Guru Purnima, the Hindu New Year, and Vijayadashami etc. across the country is not merely ceremonial appreciation of a deeper emotional and cultural integration that transcends local identities. Rather this serves as common cultural threads, weaving together communities from different parts in a shared experience of heritage, values, and belonging. Consistently, RSS leaders—including current Sarsanghchalak Mohan Bhagwat Ji—have emphasized the importance of unity beyond caste, community, and creed, reiterating the need to view all Indians through the lens of shared ancestry and collective destiny. Accordingly, grassroots initiatives such as the ‘one temple, one well, one cremation ground’ campaign are aimed at dismantling caste-based hierarchies and fostering inclusive social practices that reflect true egalitarianism. Through such programs and broader cultural outreach, the RSS act as a unifying force that strengthens the bonds of national solidarity by celebrating India’s ancient heritage while advocating for social harmony and mutual respect. Forging Character and

Community: The Central Role of Shakhas in the RSS At the heart of the RSS organizational structure lies the institution of the shakha—a daily gathering that serves as the foundational unit for character building, ideological training, and community bonding. More than just a routine exercise session, the shakha functions as a vital platform for instilling values such as discipline, patriotism, social responsibility, and spiritual grounding among swayamsevak (volunteers). Conducted in neighbourhoods, villages, and urban centres across the country, these grassroots-level gatherings bring individuals from diverse social, linguistic, and regional backgrounds together in a spirit of fraternity and shared purpose. Through a structured curriculum of physical drills, group discussions, storytelling, songs, and games rooted in Indian culture and history, the shakhas nurture a sense of national consciousness and cultural pride. They also play a crucial role in community engagement, organizing relief efforts during crises, promoting educational and service initiatives, and addressing social issues like caste and untouchability. By fostering personal development alongside a collective ethos of service and unity, the shakha acts as both a training ground and a microcosm of the RSS’s vision of a culturally cohesive and socially resilient Bharat. In this way, shakhas are not merely organizational units but dynamic institutions of social transformation, reinforcing the Sangh’s broader mission of nation-building

through grassroots cultural revival and civic engagement.

PRESERVING CULTURE THROUGH LANGUAGE: RSS’S ROLE IN PROMOTING VERNACULARS AND SANSKRIT

The RSS places significant emphasis on the promotion of regional languages and Sanskrit, viewing language not merely as a means of communication but as a vital vessel for preserving and transmitting cultural values, historical memory, and civilizational identity. Recognizing the intimate link between language and culture, the RSS encourages the use of mother tongues in daily life and education, while also advocating for the revival and respectful use of Sanskrit as a symbol of India’s intellectual and spiritual heritage.

The RSS supports a wide network of educational institutions through affiliated organizations such as Vidya Bharati and Ekal Vidyalayas, which operate across the nation. These schools, apart from providing basic education, also integrate teachings on Indian history, ethics, customs, and indigenous knowledge systems—delivered in regional languages to foster cultural familiarity and accessibility. This approach instills linguistic pride and cultural rootedness among students, while also nurturing a respectful awareness of India’s broader linguistic diversity. By promoting vernacular languages alongside Sanskrit, the RSS aims to safeguard India’s cultural pluralism, counteract linguistic

alienation, and strengthen national unity through the revival of local identities and traditional wisdom.

FOSTERING SOCIAL HARMONY AND UNITY: THE RSS VISION OF INCLUSIVE NATIONAL IDENTITY

The RSS has long championed the cause of social harmony—Samajik Samarasata—by actively opposing caste-based discrimination and advocating for equality and inclusiveness across all layers of society. In numerous communities across India, RSS gatherings serve as crucial spaces where individuals from different castes, communities, and social backgrounds come together, breaking down traditional barriers through shared activities and mutual engagement. Initiatives such as the community meals play a transformative role in challenging entrenched caste divisions, fostering interpersonal bonds that transcend social stratifications, and nurturing a collective sense of fraternity within the broader Hindutva community that reflects the values of dignity, respect, and unity.

The organization affirms that India’s true strength stems from its pluralism, but it cautions that such diversity should serve as a source of enrichment rather than division. Thus, the RSS motivates people to cultivate a unified cultural consciousness that harmonizes multiplicity with oneness.

Further, the RSS upholds the ideal of India as a single, indivisible cultural nation—where people are united despite regional, religious,

caste, or ethnic diversities. It promotes the vision of Akhand Bharat and emphasizes national integration over parochial identities. Thus the RSS stands firmly against identity politics rooted in narrow sectarian interests, and social fault lines. It campaigns against divisive ideologies and seeks to forge a cohesive national identity.

FOSTERING UNITY IN DIVERSITY

Through a comprehensive array of outreach initiatives—including educational programs, welfare activities aimed at marginalized communities, and various service missions—the RSS endeavours to foster a sense of belonging to a single national and cultural family, known as the Rashtra Parivar. It celebrates the foundational traits of Indian culture, particularly its intrinsic inclusiveness and remarkable adaptability, which enable the harmonious coexistence and unification of people from myriad backgrounds under the guiding principles of Dharma (righteous living) and Seva (selfless service). The RSS seeks to cultivate a collective identity deeply rooted in time-honoured traditions such as Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah. These enduring philosophies serve as the moral and spiritual foundation for promoting harmony, inclusivity, and unity across the country’s diverse social fabric, reinforcing the ideal that despite multiplicity, India remains one indivisible whole.

RECAPITULATION

At its core, RSS plays a cru-

cial role in raising awareness about the dangers of social and political fragmentation, striving tirelessly to unite the diverse peoples of India by promoting a shared set of cultural values and an inclusive vision of nationhood. Through its extensive grassroots engagement, it actively involves communities across the country, emphasizing service to every section of society—irrespective of religion, caste, or ethnicity—thereby fostering a deep sense of belonging and solidarity among citizens. By anchoring its efforts in the timeless ideals of civilizational unity, disciplined living, and selfless service, the RSS endeavours to nurture a society where diversity is not perceived as a fault line, but embraced as a vital strength that enriches the collective identity of the nation. Over the decades, the RSS’s cultural initiatives and ideological outreach have profoundly influenced the collective consciousness of vast sections of Indian society, reinforcing bonds that contribute to national unity and cultural resilience.

Given the multifaceted challenges India faces in preserving its unity amid diversity, it remains a matter of national interest that the RSS continues to pursue its mission of building a united, culturally vibrant, and harmonious India. This work of RSS will lay the groundwork for a future where all Indians can coexist with mutual respect, shared purpose, and unwavering commitment to the nation’s well-being.

*Views are personal.
Vice-Chancellor, Central University of Punjab, Bathinda*

Let’s be proud of our country and Armed forces

OPINION

PRIYA S. TANDON



On a nationalistic front, the past month has been punctuated with emotions like patriotism, pride and revenge. The feelings of the common Bharatiya have been potently aggressive and intolerant towards terrorism.

The Hindu culture expounds the maximum of *Ahimsa Parmo Dharma*. Meaning: Nonviolence is the highest moral virtue. But if your adversary habitually practices violence as a way of life, then is Ahimsa your Parmo Dharma? No! In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna repeatedly counselled the Kauravas, to be fair to the Pandavas. After the completion of twelve years of exile and one year of

Agyaat-vaas, when the Pandavas returned to Hastinapur and claimed their share of the kingdom, Duryodhana refused to give it. In the course of negotiation, Krishna asked Duryodhana to give just five villages to the Pandavas. He assured Duryodhana that in the interest of peace, the Pandavas would not fight for their right. Duryodhana said that he would not give them land equal to even a pin’s head. In that eventuality, the Pandavas stood in confrontation with the Kauravas at Kurukshetra, and the Mahabharata war happened. It was a fratricidal carnage, but it was the only way forward. The Mahabharata war put an end to all those who supported adharma. Also, Krishna gave a hundred opportunities to Shishupala to err against or abuse Krishna. When Shishupala abused Him for the 101st time, Krishna severed Shishupala’s head from his body, because enough was enough! In the Ramayana, Devi Sita was abducted by Ravana. Ravana’s grandfather

Malyavan, wife Mandodari, brother Kumbhkarna, Rama’s envoy Angad, Lord Hanuman and many others, counselled Ravana but he did not agree to return Devi Sita back to Bhagwan Rama. War was the only answer. India has too many axes to grind with Pakistan. I was in college when terrorism was at its peak in Punjab. In the larger interest of the safety of the country, punitive action had to be taken against the terrorists. The Mumbai attack in year 2008, popularly known as 26/11, left the world stunned and horrified. The terrorists had struck on 5-star properties in Mumbai. Many rich and affluent people, including foreigners were killed. The news became a world news. But did the then government bring the perpetrators of crime to the gallows? Crores of rupees were spent in keeping the caught terrorist Kasab. He was eventually hanged in 2011. In the past few years, we have seen horrific incidents at Uri, Pulwama and recently at Pahalgam. When the pictures of the killings of 26 male Hindu tourists who were on holiday in Pahalgam, started streaming on the news and on social media, there was disbelief, anger and grief in the minds of the common man. Every logical and concerned mind asked, “Till when will this go on?” How barbaric can the terrorists be? They



People burn firecrackers as they celebrate following ‘Operation Sindoor’. ANI

gunned down Hindu men in front of their wives and children, only because they were Hindus. Will the common man, ever be able to live and breathe without fear of terrorism? And then came the decision that when peaceful talks do not yield results, you have to strike back. It took just 15 days for the Prime Minister to strategize and align the armed forces to strike. And strike like never before. The pent-up anger of decades was released and spewed, to wipe out a hundred plus terrorists across the border. Civilians in India slept, while our armed forces outperformed with surgical laser precision. And the world

woke up to the news that those who had snatched the Sindoor from our Hindu women, had been blasted to pieces in Operation Sindoor. After the sudden declaration of ceasefire, there were questions zig-zagging in the society. Some questioned Operation Sindoor itself. Some asked, why retaliate? Why put so many lives at risk? Others demanded to know why there was a ceasefire. Why this? Why that? I wonder how audacious people can be. Let us not overlook that the safety of the entire country was at stake. While going to war, there is always a risk of loss of lives, but sometimes war is the only way forward. Is it the time to doubt the

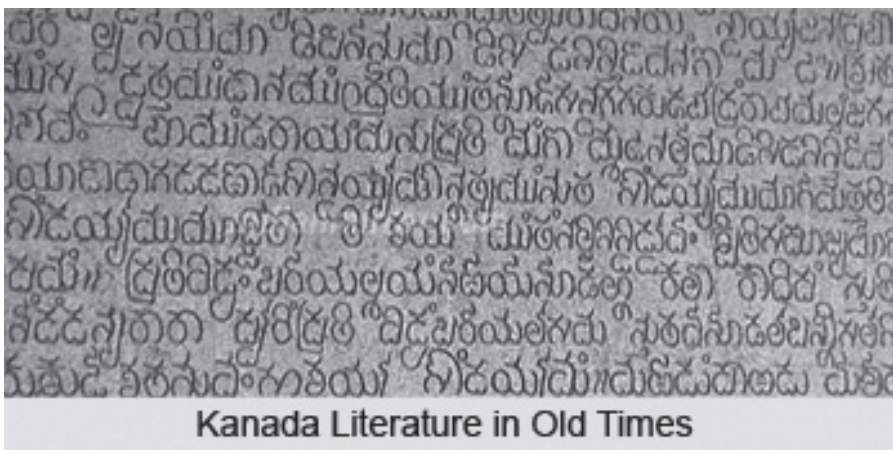
intentions and wisdom of a Prime Minister who has upheld the honour, dignity and safety of the country like no other? Is it appropriate for those who have nothing at stake, to question the moves and statements of the officers of the armed forces, who are the ones who have given their blood for protecting the country from terrorists? And all those voicing dissent and indignation at the way Operation Sindoor was conducted, are verily the enemy within us. Those questioning the intentions of the government should ask themselves if they are even worthy of being called Bharatiyas. They are akin to cancer that attacks the body,

from within. Interestingly, there is no cure for cancer in modern medicine. Cancer cells have to be killed by chemotherapy. And cancer can be reversed by ancient Indian practices. The present day Bharat believes in the wisdom of our ancient sciences and practices. It would not be improper to mention here that Operation Sindoor was named Sindoor because we believe in the sanctity of Sindoor. Watching the videos of missiles being shot down in mid-air, and the impenetrable air defence system, took me back to watching the Ramayana TV serial wherein was shown the weaponry used by Rama, Lakshmana, Indrajeet and Ravana. The firing and defusing of weapons in mid-air was portrayed therein. There is a mention of Hanumanji having a Raksha-kavach; a spiritual armour that no one could penetrate. Presently, India has developed its own advanced defence shield, known as Raksha Kavach. It was built by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and is a multi-layered protection system, designed to protect critical military assets, soldiers, armoured vehicles and defence complexes, against any kind of attack. In ancient times, the Astra-Shastra were given to the sages by the Gods in return for their spiritual pen-

ances, for the purpose of Dharma-Raksha. The present day weaponry including Air-defence systems, Brahmos etc. are made by super-intelligent minds, using technology and science. And India still uses them for self-defence; verily Dharma-Raksha! Both the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Air Marshal AK Bharti of the Indian army, while addressing the press, quoted from the Sundar Kaand in Ramayana. The press conference of the Indian armed forces on Operation Sindoor began with the powerful Shiv Tandava Stotram, enunciating India’s indomitable stance against terrorism. It is time each one of us acknowledges what the armed forces do, so that we can live comfortably. The most important question that each one of us needs to ask ourselves is, are we worth their sacrifices? We are perhaps the only nation that reveres our motherland as Mother India. India has emerged on the world front as a quiet and confident nation who knows what it is doing. India shall make its own rules. It shall not bow down to the whims and fancies of others. There is a sense of calm and surety that has left the world astounded. Let us be proud of our country, our government and our armed forces. Let us not be ungrateful. Jai Hind!

GEMS OF KANNADA LITERATURE CELEBRATED WORLDWIDE

As Kannada literature gains international acclaim, it serves as a testament to the power of storytelling in transcending cultural and linguistic boundaries. The works of these writers inspire a new generation of writers ensure that Kannada literature remains a vibrant and influential force in the global literary landscape.



Kannada literature, a rich tapestry woven with regional narratives and cultural nuances, has long been a cornerstone of India's literary heritage. From the pioneering works of U. R. Ananthamurthy to the groundbreaking achievements of Banu Mushtaq, the journey of Kannada literature has been marked by resilience, innovation, and a commitment to portraying the complexities of human experiences.

The trajectories of Ananthamurthy, Mamata and Mushtaq, though separated by time and thematic focus,

in 1932 in Thirthahalli, Karnataka, Ananthamurthy's literary journey was deeply intertwined with the Navya (modernist) movement, which sought to challenge traditional literary forms and explore contemporary themes. In 2013, he was nominated for the Man Booker International Prize.

His magnum opus, Samskara, delves into the intricacies of caste, tradition, and morality, questioning societal norms and the rigidity of rituals. The novel's adaptation into a film in 1970 further cemented its place in the annals of Indian litera-



Students in 'yakshagana' attire celebrating the art and culture of Karnataka state in Bengaluru. File Photo

Ananthamurthy magnum opus, Samskara, delves into the intricacies of caste, tradition, and morality, questioning societal norms and the rigidity of rituals.

converge in their shared commitment to challenging societal norms and amplifying marginalized voices. Ananthamurthy's exploration of caste and tradition laid the groundwork for future generations of writers, while Mushtaq's contemporary narratives continue this legacy by highlighting the struggles and resilience of women in conservative societies. Today we are digging deep into the celebrated writers of Kannada literature.

U. R. ANANTHAMURTHY
Udupi Rajagopalacharya Ananthamurthy, affectionately known as U. R. Ananthamurthy, stands as a monumental figure in Kannada literature. Born

ture and cinema. Ananthamurthy's contributions were not confined to his writings alone. He served as the Vice-Chancellor of Mahatma Gandhi University in Kerala and held esteemed positions such as the President of the Sahitya Akademi and the National Book Trust. His accolades include the Jnanpith Award in 1994 and the Padma Bhushan in 1998, recognizing his profound impact on Indian literature.

BANU MUSTAQ
Banu Mushtaq, born on April 3, 1948, in Hassan, Karnataka, is a distinguished Indian writer, lawyer, and social activist. Her literary works, primarily in Kannada, have garnered

national acclaim for their poignant portrayal of marginalized communities, particularly Muslim women in southern India. In 2025, she achieved international recognition by winning the International Booker Prize for her short story collection, Heart Lamp, translated into English by Deepa Bhashti.

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION
Mushtaq's formative years were marked by a commitment to education and personal growth. At the age of eight, she enrolled in a Kannada-language missionary school in Shivamogga, where she quickly mastered the language, surpassing expectations. Despite societal norms, she

pursued higher education and married for love at 26, challenging conventional expectations for women in her community. Initially, she embarked on medical studies but later shifted her focus to law, earning a degree and establishing a legal practice.

LITERARY JOURNEY
Mushtaq's literary career began in the 1970s, influenced by the Bandaya Sahitya movement, which sought to address caste, class, and religious oppression through literature. Her writing delves into the complexities of identity, gender, and societal norms, often drawing from her experiences as a journalist and lawyer. Over the years, she has authored six short story collections, a novel, a collection of essays, and a poetry anthology. Her works have been translated into multiple Indian languages, including Urdu, Hindi, Tamil, and Malayalam.

Beyond her literary pursuits, Mushtaq has been an active advocate for social justice. In 2000, she faced a three-month social boycott and a fatwa for championing the rights of Muslim women to pray in mosques. Her activism also extended to defending the right of Muslim

students to wear the hijab in schools, a stance that has sparked significant debate in Karnataka. Her fearless advocacy underscores her commitment to challenging societal injustices.

A LITERARY MILESTONE
Heart Lamp: Selected Stories is a compilation of 12 short stories that Mushtaq wrote over three decades, originally in Kannada. The stories offer intimate glimpses into the lives of Muslim women in southern India,

addressing themes of patriarchy, gender inequality, and resilience. The collection was translated into English by Deepa Bhashti and published in 2025. Notably, it became the first Kannada-language work and the first short story collection to win the International Booker Prize. The stories are characterized by their dry humor, emotional depth, and vivid portrayal of everyday life, reflecting Mushtaq's acute observations of human nature and societal dynamics.

RECOGNITION AND IMPACT
Mushtaq's achievement with Heart Lamp has been hailed as a significant milestone for Kannada literature, bringing regional Indian voices to the global literary forefront. Her work has not only enriched the literary landscape but has also inspired a renewed interest in Indian regional literature, both within India and internationally. The success of Heart Lamp underscores the universal relevance of stories that delve into the intricacies of

commitment to addressing inequality through literature reflects her broader dedication to social justice and human rights.

Banu Mushtaq's journey from a young girl challenging educational norms to an internationally acclaimed author and activist is a testament to her resilience and dedication to social justice. Through her literary works, she continues to amplify the voices of marginalized communities, offering profound insights into the complexities of identity and society. Her recognition with the International Booker Prize not only honors her individual achievements but also highlights the richness and diversity of Kannada literature on the global stage.



Mamta G. Sagar at the World Literary Prize award ceremony in Abuja, Nigeria. File Photo

INTERESTING FACTS

Ancient Roots

Kannada literature is one of the oldest in India, dating back over 1,200 years. The earliest known work is Kavirajamarga (c. 850 CE), a treatise on poetics and rhetoric.

Jnanpith Award Champions

Kannada writers have won the prestigious Jnanpith Award (India's highest literary honor) more times than writers of any other Indian language. Legends like Kuvempu, U.R. Ananthamurthy, Girisha, and Shivarama Karanth have been recipients.

First Kannada Writer on Booker Stage

U.R. Ananthamurthy was the first Kannada author to be shortlisted for the Man Booker International Prize in 2013, putting Kannada literature on the global map.

International Booker Prize Winner

In 2025, Banu Mushtaq became the first Kannada writer to win the International Booker Prize for her book Heart Lamp, highlighting Kannada literature's growing international recognition.

Rich Diversity of Themes

Kannada literature explores a wide range of themes — from ancient epics and philosophy to social reform, Dalit empowerment, gender issues, and modern existentialism.

Navya and Bandaya Movements

The Navya (modernist) literary movement of the 1950s and 60s brought intellectual depth, questioning tradition and caste, with figures like Ananthamurthy. The Bandaya (protest) movement of the 1970s focused on social justice and marginalized voices, inspiring writers like Banu Mushtaq.

Notable Poets and Writers

- Kuvempu (K. V. Puttappa): Known as the "Rashtrakavi" (National Poet), he promoted universal humanism and Kannada pride.
- D. R. Bendre: Revered poet, known for lyrical beauty and deep spirituality.
- Shivarama Karanth: A polymath — novelist, playwright, environmentalist, and folklorist.
- Girisha: Jnanpith awardee known for his contributions to modern Kannada poetry and fiction.

Strong Oral Tradition

Apart from written works, Kannada has a rich oral tradition including folk songs, ballads, and storytelling forms like Vachana Sahitya — spiritual and social poetry popularized by 12th-century saint-poets like Basavanna.



Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar receives a memento during the 87th All India Kannada Sahitya Sammelana in Mandya on Friday, December 20, 2024. File Photo



U. R. Ananthamurthy

identity, culture, and human experience.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

In interviews, Mushtaq has expressed that her legal work and activism have deeply influenced her storytelling. She views writing as a tool for enlightenment and resistance, aiming to shed light on societal injustices and inspire change. Her



Translator Deepa Bhashti and "Heart Lamp" author Banu Mushtaq, the winners of this year's International Booker Prize, in London on 22 May 2025. Agency

TRAILBLAZER GEETA SAMOTA: FIRST CISF WOMAN TO CONQUER EVEREST

TDG NETWORK

In a landmark achievement that exemplifies human endurance, indomitable courage, and unwavering determination, Geeta Samota, a woman sub-inspector of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), successfully scaled Mount Everest, becoming the first CISF woman officer to reach the world's highest peak at 8,849 meters (29,032 feet). On the morning of May 19, 2025, as she stood atop the "Roof of the World," it was not just a personal triumph but a powerful symbol of CISF's strength and India's boundless spirit.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS, BOLD ASPIRATIONS

Geeta's journey began in Chak village in Rajasthan's Sikar district, where she was born into a modest family with four sisters. Raised in a traditional rural environment, her early years were shaped by the simplicity and hardships of village life. Despite societal limitations, Geeta harbored dreams far beyond what her surroundings allowed. She often wondered why stories of achievement seemed reserved for boys. This thought planted the seeds of ambition that would later bloom into extraordinary success.

From an early age, Geeta showed keen interest in sports and was a promising hockey player during her college years. Unfortunately, a serious injury cut short her budding sports career. What seemed like a setback turned out to be a turning point, redirecting her energies toward a new path — one that would eventually lead her to the highest peak on Earth.

A New Direction: Entering CISF and Mountaineering

In 2011, Geeta joined the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF). In her early years of service, she noticed that mountaineering was a largely unexplored domain within the force, which at the time lacked a dedicated mountaineering unit. Rather than seeing this as a limitation, Geeta viewed it as an opportunity.

Her vision took a significant step forward in 2015 when she was selected for a six-week basic mountaineering course at the ITBP Training Institute in Auli, Uttarakhand. Remarkably, she was the only woman in her batch. Her performance during this rigorous training was exemplary and ignited a passion that would define her future. She followed up with advanced mountaineering training in 2017, becoming the first and only CISF officer to complete the course at the time.



SCALING NEW HEIGHTS

Geeta's grit and mountaineering prowess bore fruit in 2019 when she became the first woman from the Cen-

tral Armed Police Forces (CAPF) to successfully summit Mount Satopanth (7,075 meters) in Uttarakhand and Mount Lobuche (6,119 meters) in Nepal. Her dream of

scaling Everest almost came true in 2021, when she was selected as a core member of the CAPF's Everest expedition. However, the mission was canceled due to tech-

nical reasons — a moment that could have discouraged many.

But for Geeta, this disappointment became motivation. Instead of stepping back, she set her sights on an even bigger goal: the "Seven Summits" challenge, which involves climbing the highest peak on each of the seven continents — one of the most prestigious accomplishments in global mountaineering.

THE SEVEN SUMMITS JOURNEY

Despite the global COVID-19 pandemic and its accompanying hurdles, Geeta remained steadfast in her commitment. Between 2021 and early 2022, she climbed four of the Seven Summits: Mount Kosciuszko (2,228 meters), Australia; Mount Elbrus (5,642 meters), Russia; Mount Kilimanjaro (5,895 meters), Tanzania; and Mount Aconcagua (6,961 meters), Argentina.

She achieved these feats in just six months and 27 days, becoming the fastest Indian woman to make such progress on the Seven Summits expedition — a remarkable demonstration of her physical and mental resilience, discipline, and determination.

Adding to this incredible record, she completed an extraordinary feat in La-

dakh's remote Rupshu region, where she scaled five peaks in just three days — three of which were above 6,000 meters and two above 5,000 meters. With this, she became the first and fastest woman mountaineer to achieve such a feat in the region, further solidifying her legacy.

RECOGNITIONS AND HONOURS

Geeta Samota's achievements have been recognized with several prestigious awards:

- International Women's Day Award 2023 by the Delhi Commission for Women
- "Giving Wings to Dreams Award 2023" by the Ministry of Civil Aviation

These accolades celebrate not just her mountaineering success, but also her role in breaking gender stereotypes and redefining the limits of what women can achieve in uniformed services and extreme adventure sports.

A MESSAGE BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS

Geeta's outlook is as powerful as her achievements. She says, "Mountains treat everyone equally — they don't discriminate based on gender. Only those with an 'X-factor' within can reach the top." Her message is clear and bold: dream big, work hard, and never give up. For young girls across the

country, she is more than a mountaineer — she is a beacon of hope, courage, and limitless possibility.

Her Everest success is not just a personal or organizational milestone, but a national inspiration. She has not only shattered altitude records but has also challenged deeply rooted societal norms about gender roles in adventure, defense, and leadership.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND THE ROAD AHEAD

The CISF has played a crucial role in enabling Geeta's dreams, providing her opportunities for training at premier institutes like ABVI-MAS in Manali and financial and logistical support for international expeditions. Her success has now inspired the CISF to consider launching a full-fledged Everest expedition in 2026, marking the beginning of a new chapter for the force in high-altitude adventure and endurance sports.

The Director General of CISF, along with all officers and personnel, have extended heartfelt congratulations to Geeta Samota for her historic Everest conquest. Her journey has brought pride not just to CISF but to the entire Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) community and the nation.

Divyakriti Singh: Reigning queen of Asian equestrian sport

TDG NETWORK

Jaipur's Divyakriti Singh has once again ascended to the pinnacle of Asian dressage, reclaiming the No. 1 spot in the FEI Global Dressage Rankings for 2024-25. This achievement underscores her unwavering commitment and exceptional skill in equestrian sports.

A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE

At 25, Divyakriti's journey is a testament to dedication and passion. In 2023, she clinched the gold medal in the dressage team event at the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, China. Her performance was instrumental in India's victory, with the team securing a total score of 209.205, with Divyakriti contributing 68.176 points.

Following this triumph, she made history by becoming the first Indian woman to receive the prestigious Arjuna Award in equestrian sports in January 2024. This accolade not only recognizes her athletic prowess but also highlights the growing prominence of equestrian sports in India.

TRAINING AND ASPIRATIONS

Currently based in the Netherlands, Divyakriti trains rigorously for upcoming international competitions, including the 2025 Asian Championship in Thailand, the 2026 Asian Games in Japan, and the 2026 World Games in Germany. Her ultimate goal is to represent India at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

Despite the challenges posed by limited infrastructure in India, Divyakriti's determination remains steadfast. She emphasizes the need for enhanced support from both the government and



corporate sectors to develop world-class facilities and training programs for equestrian athletes.

A CALL FOR SUPPORT

Divyakriti's achievements serve as an inspiration to aspiring equestrians across the nation. Her journey underscores the importance of perseverance, discipline, and the support of a robust sporting ecosystem. As she continues to break barriers and set new benchmarks, the equestrian community and sports enthusiasts eagerly await her future endeavors on the global stage.

Divyakriti Singh's ascent to the top of Asian dressage rankings is not just a personal victory but a milestone for Indian equestrian sports. Her story is a beacon of hope and motivation for young athletes, especially women, aspiring to make their mark in the world of sports. With continued support and infrastructure development, India can look forward to more such champions in the future.

Illegal immigrants are threat to security of country



MURARI GUPTA

After the Pahalgam attack, illegal immigrants are once again in the news. Considering them a threat to the internal security of the country, a special campaign is being run against them. Union Home Minister Amit Shah had instructed all state governments to identify foreign nationals and send them back. After this, the work of driving out illegal immigrants was started in all states including Gujarat and Rajasthan. How dangerous these illegal Bangladeshi citizens are for the security of the country can be gauged from the statement of Gujarat's Home Minister Harsh Sanghvi. He said that many of the illegal Bangladeshi citizens were involved in drugs and human trafficking. Two of the four Bangladeshi citizens arrested worked as sleeper cells of Al Qaeda. News of illegal Bangladeshi citizens reaching many cities and towns of Rajasthan has started coming.

The extradition campaign of illegal Bangladeshi citizens is the result of increased security concerns after the Pahalgam terrorist attack. In 2010, a session titled "Illegal Bangladeshis in India: Impact on Internal Security" was organized by Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis under the chairmanship of Ajit Kumar Doval. Illegal migration to India and its impact were discussed in detail. In that session, it was revealed that between one and two crore illegal Bangladeshis are living in India. This is more of a threat to the internal security of the country than a burden on India's resources. In 2004, the then Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shripakash Jaiswal, had told the Parliament that about one crore twenty lakh illegal Bangladeshis are living in the country, out of which 57 lakh are in West Bengal alone. However, this

figure later became controversial. According to many reports, this number can go up to two crore. Along with illegal Bangladeshi citizens, a large number of Rohingyas are entering India after the internal conflict in Burma and are becoming a challenge for law and order. There are reports of clashes between Rohingyas and local citizens in many parts of the country. Illegal Rohingyas have also become a problem for the local administration. According to some reports, about 75 thousand Rohingyas are living illegally in India. But this number has increased rapidly in the last few years. These people are mainly settled in Delhi, Jammu, Hyderabad, Nuh and other cities. In the last few years, the role of Rohingyas in the law and order situation in Delhi has been suspicious. The previous government of Delhi had a special kind of affection towards the Rohingyas, which many parties including BJP have been criticizing.

Let us take a look at Bhutan, a small and beautiful country located in the northeast of India. It is among those eight countries of the world where it is very difficult to obtain citizenship. After this comes China, Qatar, Switzerland, Vatican City and Japan. To obtain citizenship of these countries, any person has to go through many criteria. Recently, the world also saw how the Trump government in America sent

illegal immigrants to their countries in humiliating conditions. We may criticize this behavior of Trump, but why should any nation bear the burden of illegal immigrants at the cost of its citizens. Unfortunately, in India, illegal migrants are snatching away Indian citizenship by going through "some chaos" in the system. This is a tampering with the internal security of India, on which the central and state governments should take strict action together without any differences. Illegal migrants not only steal resources, but they also pollute the local culture.

Talking about Rajasthan, in the last few years, a large number of illegal Bangladeshis have succeeded in preparing important documents through local agents. Last year, the police in Jaipur caught twelve illegal Bangladeshi citizens in Bhankrota area. They had everything that any Indian citizen should have. From PAN card to Ayushman Bharat health card, bank account, Aadhaar card, ration card and voter card, they have easy access to everything. Unfortunately, there are some elements in the system and society who are ready to compromise with national security and the identity of the nation in the greed of a few silver coins. The government and administration should first identify such people who are eating away the system like termites and take strict action against them.

However, the international border between India and Bangladesh is also a complicated element in itself from the geographical point of view. There is a total of 4096 km long international border between India and Bangladesh, out of which flooding work has been completed on 3196.7 km long border. About 54 small and big rivers flow between India

and Bangladesh on the India-Bangladesh border, on which flooding work is impossible. These are the places from where illegal migration from Bangladesh takes place in India.

The Indian government is serious about illegal infiltration on the international border and it is being constantly monitored. Diplomatic efforts are also being made for this. Many national and social organizations in India, including the Rashtriya Swam-sevak Sangh, have been seriously raising the issue of illegal immigrants from time to time. Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat had said in the year 2014 that illegal immigrants are causing population imbalance, which is a threat to national security. Many such parts have emerged in the country which are tacitly called mini Bangladesh. Apart from this, the Sangh has emphasized the need to implement the National Citizen Register across the country so that illegal immigrants can be identified and expelled from the country. The Supreme Court also recently ruled that only Indian citizens have the right to live in India and Rohingyas Muslims do not have this right. This has cleared the way for the deportation of the Rohingya community. In the Citizenship Act 1955, the government was asked to create a national register to identify every citizen of the country. The government should ensure the identification of Indian citizens through the National Register of Citizens (NRC). Experts believe that a holistic policy is needed to deal with the problem of illegal migration. This includes strengthening border security, identification and registration of illegal migrants and repatriation agreements with their countries of origin.

Her performance was instrumental in India's victory, with the team securing a total score of 209.205, with Divyakriti contributing 68.176 points.

HOW IRAN-US NUCLEAR NEGOTIATIONS COULD REDEFINE THE FUTURE OF NUCLEAR DIPLOMACY

Iran and the U.S. resumed indirect nuclear negotiations, aiming to limit uranium enrichment and ease sanctions, despite mutual distrust and regional tensions.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

As the United States and Iran prepare to resume nuclear negotiations for the fifth time this year, the world watches with bated breath. Set in Rome, the latest round of diplomacy marks a critical juncture—not only in the decades-long animosity between the two nations but also in the evolving architecture of global nuclear governance. With U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East, Steve Witkoff, and Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi leading their respective delegations, the outcome of these talks could redefine the direction of nuclear diplomacy, reshape Middle Eastern security, and challenge the future of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) itself.

FROM COOPERATION TO CONFRONTATION

Iran's nuclear story is paradoxical. In 1957, under the U.S.-led "Atoms for Peace" program, Iran signed a nuclear cooperation agreement with Washington. The deal allowed Iran to acquire civilian nuclear technology and laid the groundwork for what was initially a mutually beneficial partnership. This was further formalized when Iran became a signatory to the NPT in 1968 and ratified it in 1970, committing to using nuclear energy only for peaceful purposes.

TDG EXPLAINER

However, the Islamic Revolution in 1979 dramatically shifted Iran's political landscape. The new regime viewed nuclear capability not just as a technological achievement but as a matter of national sovereignty and security. Iran's cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) declined sharply, raising red flags globally. By the early 2000s, the Iranian nuclear program had expanded significantly. Enrichment facilities like the Natanz Enrichment Plant came online, and Iran began to assert its right to develop nuclear technology under the NPT framework. But suspicions arose over Iran's true intentions, with Western nations alleging that Tehran was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons capability—a claim Iran has consistently denied.

SANCTIONS, ISOLATION, & GLOBAL BACKLASH
Iran's nuclear advancements triggered a wave of international concern. The IAEA's limited access to Iranian

facilities and Tehran's lack of transparency intensified fears that the Islamic Republic was edging closer to weapons-grade enrichment. The response from the international community, particularly the West, was swift and punitive. The United Nations, European Union, and United States imposed multiple rounds of economic sanctions targeting Iran's energy, banking, and trade sectors. These measures crippled the Iranian economy, leading to inflation, unemployment, and a severe reduction in oil exports. Simultaneously, regional actors, especially Israel, viewed Iran's nuclear program as an existential threat. Tel Aviv warned of preemptive military strikes and actively lobbied against any leniency toward Iran.

JCPOA: A BREAK-THROUGH AGREEMENT
In 2015, diplomacy seemed to triumph over confrontation. After years of negotiation, Iran reached a landmark agreement—the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)—with the P5+1 (United States, United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, and Germany) and the European Union. The deal aimed to curb Iran's nuclear capabilities in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. Under the JCPOA, Iran agreed to limit uranium enrichment to 3.67%, reduce its stockpile of low-enriched uranium to 300 kilograms, and cap the number of operating centrifuges. Importantly, Iran allowed the IAEA to conduct regular and intrusive inspections, providing unprecedented access to its nuclear sites.



Trump's Middle East envoy, Steve Witkoff and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi

For a time, the JCPOA was hailed as a diplomatic victory, a model for resolving complex nuclear disputes. Iran complied with its obligations, and sanctions relief offered a glimmer of economic hope. However, the breakthrough was short-lived. Collapse and Escalation In 2018, then-President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the United States from the JCPOA, branding it as a "terrible deal." Washington reimposed stringent sanctions under a "maximum pressure" campaign, aiming to force Iran back to the negotiating table under more favorable terms. Iran responded by gradually breaching the deal's limits, accelerating its enrichment program, and reducing cooperation with the IAEA. By 2021, Iran had enriched uranium to 60% purity—just below weapons-grade—and expanded its nuclear infrastructure with support from allies like China and Russia. This escalation alarmed the international community and effectively placed the JCPOA on life support. The resulting stalemate persisted through multiple failed diplomatic overtures under President Joe Biden, as Iran continued to insist on full sanctions relief before returning to compliance.

NEW TALKS, FAMILIAR STAKES
In a surprising move during his second presidential term, Donald Trump has returned to the table, signaling a willingness to restart negotiations. This time, however, the tone is markedly different. Trump has coupled diplomatic outreach with threats of military action, and Israel is actively involved in strategic consultations. Iran remains defiant, demanding equal footing in negotiations and guarantees against future American withdrawals from any agreement. Oman has emerged as a crucial mediator, organizing discreet rounds of preliminary talks. Rome now serves as the formal venue for what could be a make-or-break round of diplomacy. Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has warned of a "Plan B," which involves deepening ties with Russia and China to counter Western pressure. These strategic partnerships could enable Iran to bypass sanctions, gain advanced nuclear technology, and challenge U.S. influence in the region.

REGIONAL ARMS RACE
A failed negotiation or an overt collapse of diplomacy could trigger a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. Countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Turkey might feel compelled to develop nuclear capabilities of their own to counterbalance Iran, fundamentally altering the region's security dynamics.

The United Nations, European Union, and United States imposed multiple rounds of economic sanctions targeting Iran's energy, banking, and trade sectors. These measures crippled the Iranian economy, leading to inflation, unemployment, and a severe reduction in oil exports.

COLLAPSE OF NON-PROLIFERATION NORMS
The JCPOA was not just about Iran; it was a test case for the global non-proliferation regime. Its failure weakens the credibility of the NPT and the authority of the IAEA. If Iran is seen as able to defy international norms with impunity, other countries might follow suit, undermining decades of non-proliferation efforts.

NEW GLOBAL ALLIANCES
As Iran turns toward China and Russia, a new geopolitical axis may be emerging. This shift could deepen the divide between Western powers and Eastern autocracies, leading to a more fragmented global order. Nuclear diplomacy might increasingly become a tool of great-power competition rather than a collaborative security framework. **RISK OF MILITARY CONFLICT**
Military escalation remains a very real threat. Israel has repeatedly stated that it will not allow Iran to acquire nuclear weapons, even if it means acting unilaterally. Any military strike could spiral into a broader regional conflict, drawing in U.S. forces, Hezbollah, and even Gulf states. Diplomacy or Deterrence? The negotiations in Rome represent far more than just another round of U.S.-Iran diplomacy. They are a test of the international community's ability to resolve one of the most complex and dangerous nuclear dilemmas of our time. The choices made now could set the tone for global nuclear politics for the next decade. If a new agreement is reached, it could restore trust in multilateralism, revitalize the NPT framework, and ensure greater stability in the Middle East. If talks fail, the world may witness a new era defined not by cooperation and containment, but by proliferation and confrontation. In the end, the question remains: will diplomacy prevail, or will the world edge closer to a nuclear flashpoint? The answer may well be written in the meeting rooms of Rome.

Brexit reset was always inevitable – The damage demands repair

TDG NETWORK

Prime Minister Keir Starmer's tentative steps toward repairing Britain's relationship with the European Union have sparked fierce criticism from the very architects of Brexit. Simon Jenkins, writing in The Guardian, exposes the political hypocrisy and national cost of a project that, from the beginning, was doomed to economic and diplomatic regression. Now, as the dust settles on years of missteps, the painful process of reconnection begins—not as a political betrayal, but as a necessity born of reality.

HYPOCRISY AND WASTED BILLIONS

Tory outrage over Starmer's Brexit reset is steeped in irony. The same government that pushed a hard Brexit spent £4.7 billion on post-EU border infrastructure, most of which is now obsolete. The Sevington checkpoint in Kent, hailed as a symbol of sovereignty, stands as a testament to bureaucratic excess and futility. Jenkins suggests memorial plaques be placed on these abandoned structures to mark the folly—and the former Prime Minister who inspired it.

STARMER'S OWN ROLE
Yet Jenkins is no blind defender of Labour either. He recalls how Starmer, as Jeremy Corbyn's shadow Brexit secretary in 2019, helped scuttle Theresa May's softer Brexit proposal. By siding with ideological purism over



pragmatic compromise, Labour enabled Johnson's ascent and the entrenchment of hard Brexit. This allowed a narrow, extreme vision of departure to define the next decade of British politics.

A MISGUIDED EXIT

Immigration—not economic autonomy—was the driving force behind the Leave vote in 2016. Polls at the time showed that few voters were motivated by opposition to the EU's economic structures. The idea of a hard Brexit was manufactured by Boris Johnson and his allies as a power play, not as a genuine policy proposal. The campaign misled the public, promising benefits that have never materialized. Today, the economic damage is irrefutable. Official and independent analyses agree that Brexit has cost the UK tens of billions of pounds, slowing growth and weakening public services. Trade deals with far-flung nations cannot replace the ease and volume of commerce lost with the EU.

POLITICAL FARCE AND REBUILDING
Reactions to Starmer's recent concessions—on EU food

standards, fishing access, and youth mobility—have been predictably theatrical. Figures like Nigel Farage decry them as surrenders, even as they benefit personally from EU privileges. Farage himself was reportedly spotted using an EU e-gate on his way to a holiday in France—a moment that typifies Brexit as political theatre rather than serious governance. Britain's weakened negotiating position means concessions are inevitable. The EU remains the larger market and a more powerful bloc. Any trade relationship must reflect that imbalance. Jenkins argues this isn't about surrender but about pragmatism.

LEARNING FROM THE PAST

Jenkins admits he once favoured a looser trade relationship over EU membership but now sees that view as short-sighted. The EU brought half a century of stability to Western Europe. Thatcher was right to push for the single market, just as Major and Blair were wise to avoid deeper integration and the euro. Britain has always functioned best with a semi-detached role—not the

complete rupture delivered by Brexit.

CHANGING LANDSCAPE

Two key shifts now define the post-Brexit reality. First, immigration concerns—once central to Leave rhetoric—now require international cooperation, as all of Europe grapples with rising flows. Second, Britain's immigration today is mostly legal, government-approved, and driven by labour shortages—many created by Brexit itself. The idea that Brexit would reduce immigration was always a myth. Public opinion reflects this disillusionment. A growing majority—55%, according to recent polls—now believe Brexit was a mistake. Only around 30% of people still support it. The consequences are visible: a decline in farming, manufacturing, academia, tourism, and even the arts. British orchestras have cancelled European tours. Small businesses have struggled with customs. Britain has isolated itself more than any other non-EU European nation.

MOVING FORWARD

The path back will be slow. The EU owes Britain no favours after years of antagonism. But with public sentiment shifting and economic pressures mounting, movement is inevitable. Jenkins calls for a return to civil and commercial cooperation with Europe—not necessarily full re-entry into the EU, but a serious restoration of ties.

TDG NETWORK

The Trump administration is once again attempting to dismantle the Flores Settlement Agreement (FSA)—a pivotal legal safeguard that has protected immigrant children in U.S. federal custody for nearly three decades. This latest move, revealed in court documents filed on Thursday, signals a renewed effort to strip away rules that limit how long and under what conditions migrant children can be detained by federal immigration authorities.

WHAT IS THE FLORES AGREEMENT?

The Flores Settlement Agreement dates back to 1997 and is named after Jenny Flores, a Salvadoran teenager who sued the federal government in the 1980s over the mistreatment of minors in detention. The agreement has since become a cornerstone of immigration policy regarding children, setting minimum standards for their care while in custody and limiting the time they can be detained—typically no more than 72 hours before being transferred to child-appropriate facilities operated by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

THE FSA MANDATES THAT:
Children be held in safe, sanitary conditions with



Young unaccompanied migrants, watch television inside a playpen at the US Customs and Border Protection facility, the main detention center for unaccompanied children in the Rio Grande Valley in Donna Texas. File Photo

access to basic necessities; Minors be released or transferred to licensed, non-secure facilities within a set timeframe; Federal facilities undergo regular monitoring by independent court-appointed experts.

WHY IS THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION TARGETING THE FSA?

Government attorneys argue that the Flores Agreement has become an "intrusive regime" that no longer serves the purpose it once did. They claim that it has "ossified" immigration policy, making it difficult for federal agencies to respond effectively to evolving migration trends. In the motion to terminate the agreement, they also contend that the FSA has inadvertently encouraged families to migrate unlawfully, believing that children provide a sort of legal shield against pro-

longed detention. "The FSA itself has changed the immigration landscape by removing some of the disincentives for families to enter the U.S. unlawfully," the administration wrote in its filing, as reported by the Associated Press.

ADVOCATES PUSH BACK

Immigration and child welfare advocates have expressed alarm over the attempt to dismantle what they see as a vital human rights protection. Sergio Perez, executive director of the Center for Human Rights and Constitutional Law, condemned the move, calling it a "lawless step" that puts vulnerable children at risk. "Children who seek refuge in our country should be met with open arms—not imprisonment, deprivation, and abuse," Perez said

in a statement. "Ending the Flores protections sacrifices accountability and decency for the sake of a political agenda that demonizes migrants."

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The Trump administration's motion to terminate the FSA will be reviewed by Chief U.S. District Judge Dolly Gee, who has overseen compliance with the agreement for years. A hearing on the matter is expected in mid-July, according to a joint filing by both the government and child advocates. As the legal battle plays out, the future of how the U.S. treats immigrant children at its borders hangs in the balance. For critics of the move, the attempt to end Flores marks not just a shift in immigration policy—but a fundamental test of America's commitment to human rights.

HARVARD SUES TRUMP GOVT OVER BAN ON ENROLLING FOREIGN STUDENTS

The Harvard University has sued the Trump administration after losing certification to enroll foreign students, affecting 7,000+ visa holders and Programmes speaking.


TDG NETWORK
NEW YORK

Harvard has sued the Trump administration over its “unlawful and unwarranted” decision to revoke the university’s certification to enrol foreign students, asserting that “without its international students, Harvard is not Harvard”.

Harvard University filed an over 70-page lawsuit in the US District Court for the District of Massachusetts Friday against the Trump administration, including Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice and State Department as well as against the agencies’ leaders, including Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem, Secretary of State Marco Rubio and

HARVARD CHALLENGES

- The US government revoked Harvard’s certification abruptly, affecting over 7,000 international students.
- Harvard claims this action threatens a quarter of its student body and key academic programs.
- International students must transfer or risk losing lawful status in the US immediately.
- Harvard can no longer sponsor F-1 and J-1 visa holders for summer and fall terms of 2025-26.
- Thousands of academic and research programs supported by international students face



disruption.

- Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem ordered termination of Harvard’s SEVP certification.
- Decertification bans Harvard from having F or J visa students for the 2025-26 academic year.
- Existing F and J visa students must transfer to maintain legal status.

US Attorney General Pamela Bondi.

“For more than 70 years, Harvard University has been certified by the federal government to enrol international students under the F-1 visa program, and it has long been designated as an exchange program sponsor to host J-1 non-immigrants,” the university said in the

‘Bangladesh’s interim govt chief Yunus mulls resignation’

Student-led National Citizen Party chief Nhid Islam was quoted that Yunus is apprehensive over the evolving political situation in the country and whether he will be able to carry on with his work.

AGENCIES
DHAKA

Bangladesh’s interim government chief Muhammad Yunus is mulling resignation as he is finding it difficult to work in view of political parties failing to reach a common ground to bring a change in the country, according to a media report.

Student-led National Citizen Party chief Nhid Islam was quoted that Yunus is apprehensive over the evolving political situation in the country and whether he will be able to carry on with his work.

“He (Yunus) said he is thinking about it (resignation). He feels that the situation is such that he cannot work,” Islam said on Thursday night after he met with the 84-year-old leader.

Islam said he went to meet Chief Adviser Yunus after hearing throughout the day about the speculation of his resignation.

“Sir (Yunus) said, ‘If I can’t work... I was brought here after a mass uprising to bring change

and reform to the country. But in the current situation, with mounting pressure from movements and the way I’m being cornered, this isn’t how I can work,” Islam told the media.

Another media report referring to unnamed sources close to Yunus said he actually threatened to resign if political parties do not give him their backing and expressed his desire to quit at a cabinet or advisory council meeting earlier on



Bangladesh’s interim government chief Muhammad Yunus

Thursday.

It said the other advisers, effectively ministers, however, persuaded him not to do so.

Islam told the THE MEDIA that he urged Yunus “to stay strong for the sake of the country’s security, and future and to meet the expectations of the mass uprising” (and) I hope everyone will cooperate with him”.

Islam, one of the key coordinators of the Students Against Discrimination (SAD), who previously served as one three representatives of the platform in the interim government’s advisory council or cabinet, quit his office to lead the NCP that emerged in February this year visibly with Yunus’s blessings.

The SAD led the July uprising last year forcing the ouster of prime minister Sheikh Hasina’s Awami League regime on August 5, 2024.

Three days later Yunus, a Nobel Peace Prize winner for experiment of microfinance, flew from Paris to take charge.

US, Iran resume nuclear talks in Rome

TDG NETWORK
ROME

U.S. and Iranian negotiators have resumed talks in Rome, aiming to resolve a longstanding dispute over Iran’s nuclear program. The discussions, led by Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi and U.S. Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff, mark the fifth round of negotiations mediated by Oman.

The primary point of contention is Iran’s uranium enrichment activities. The U.S. insists that Iran cease all enrichment to prevent the development of nuclear weapons, while Iran maintains that it has the right to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes. Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has dismissed U.S. demands to halt enrichment as “excessive and outrageous,” suggesting that such conditions could derail the talks.



Washington maintains that Iran’s uranium enrichment programme could lead to developing nuclear bombs, while Tehran has consistently denied the claim, insisting that its nuclear programme is meant for civilian purposes.

Israeli strikes kill six guarding Gaza aid trucks

AGENCIES
CAIRO/JERUSALEM

At least six Palestinians were killed in Israeli airstrikes while guarding aid trucks in southern Gaza, Hamas officials reported on Friday. The incident highlights the severe challenges in delivering desperately needed food and medical supplies to Gaza’s population, following an 11-week-long Israeli blockade. The Israeli military confirmed that 107 trucks carrying flour, food, and medical aid entered Gaza through the Kerem Shalom crossing on Thursday. However, aid distribution remains chaotic and inconsistent, especially around Khan Younis, where looting has intensified.

According to a coalition of Palestinian aid organizations, only 119 aid trucks have entered the besieged enclave since Israel eased its blockade earlier in the week after mounting international pressure. But armed groups have reportedly intercepted many of the convoys, stealing food intended for families facing extreme hunger.

“These men, some of them armed, stole food meant for children and starving families,” the aid coalition said in a statement, condemning both the looting and the Israeli strikes on security teams protecting the aid deliveries.

A Hamas official confirmed that six guards were killed during these airstrikes. The Israeli military has not yet commented on the incident. The aid network also criti-



Palestinians after the Israeli strike on a house in Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip May 23, 2025. Agency

Israeli probe finds tactical errors

TEL AVIV: An Israeli military investigation into Hamas’ October 7 attack on Kibbutz Kissufim and the nearby Kissufim army base found glaring failures in the Israel Defense Forces’ preparedness. The report, released on Thursday, found that soldiers, trained primarily for combat in Gaza’s open areas, were ill-prepared for fighting within a civilian setting.

Forty-five people -- mostly soldiers, but several civilians and Thai workers were killed during an assault by about 150 terrorists from two of Hamas’s elite Nukhba Force battalions. The report highlighted how the absence of specialized training and clear operational protocols for urban warfare led to serious tactical errors, including “two-sided shooting” incidents, where IDF troops fired on each other and at fellow civilians. In one case, Tom Godo, a 52-year-old civilian, was killed after soldiers heard Arabic nearby and opened fire without confirming the source -- only later realizing it came from a neighboring Israeli home.

cized the volume and scope of the assistance reaching Gaza, calling it insufficient and narrowly focused.

Pakistan to offer mining concessions to US in bid to ease tariff pressure

TDG NETWORK
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan plans to offer U.S. firms concessions in its mining sector as part of ongoing tariff negotiations with Washington, Commerce Minister Jam Kamal said. The move is part of Islamabad’s broader strategy to avert a 29% tariff on its exports to the U.S., imposed last month due to a \$3 billion trade surplus, but suspended for 90 days to allow for negotiations.

Kamal said Pakistan will invite U.S. investment in mining projects—particularly in the resource-rich Balochistan province—through joint ventures with local firms. These concessions would include favorable lease agreements.

“There is untapped potential for U.S. companies in Pakistan, from mining machinery to hydrocarbon ventures,” Kamal noted.

In parallel, Pakistan also plans to increase imports from the U.S., especially in cotton and edible oils, to help narrow the trade gap. The offer of mining concessions is expected to be tabled during upcoming bilateral talks.



While Kamal didn’t provide details on the bidding process or specific projects, the proposed initia-

tive aligns with Pakistan’s broader ambitions to develop its mining sector. Notably, the Reko Diq copper and gold project in Balochistan is seeking up to \$2 billion in financing, including up to \$1 billion from the U.S. Export-Import Bank. The mine could generate an estimated \$70 billion in free cash flow over its life. President Donald Trump has expressed interest in forging “big deals” with both India and Pakistan. Minister Kamal believes the U.S. is now recognizing Pakistan as a serious trade partner, unlike previous administrations which focused primarily on India. Pakistan also plans to gradually reduce tariffs in its upcoming federal budget to encourage trade and investment.

INDIA CONTINUES TO SUSPEND INDUS WATER TREATY; PAK ARMY SHOWS COLLABORATION WITH THE TERROR NETWORK; INDIA RECEIVES SUPPORT FROM UAE AND JAPAN

This week, India has unequivocally communicated to the global community that “Operation Sindoor” has become its standard approach to combating terrorism, and it will persist in its diplomatic surgical strikes against Pakistan. Following India’s suspension of the vital Indus Water Treaty with Pakistan, it has been met with various threats from Pakistani officials. Recently, Lashkar Chief Hafiz Saeed also issued a warning to the Indian government, threatening severe repercussions if the ban on the Treaty, which is essential for Pakistan’s survival, is not lifted. The Pakistani government has echoed similar sentiments; however, numerous countries, including the UAE and Japan, have voiced their steadfast support for India in its multi-dimensional fight against terrorism.

This week, India reaffirmed its stance that any engagement between India and Pakistan must be bilateral. During a media briefing, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal stated that discussions and terrorism cannot coexist. He mentioned that India is willing to talk about the transfer of prominent terrorists whose names were submitted to Pakistan several years ago. He emphasized that any bilateral dialogue regarding Jammu and Kashmir will solely focus on the withdrawal of illegally occupied Indian territory by Pakistan. Concerning the Indus Waters Treaty, it was made clear that it will remain suspended until Pakistan credibly and irrevocably renounces its support for cross-border terrorism. This declaration has indeed caused concern in Pakistan. Shaken Pakistani authorities, along with the terrorists, are currently

dispatching threat messages to India.

In a striking display of the close collaboration between the Pakistan Army and the country’s terror network, a military spokesperson appeared to issue a veiled threat to India, using language that closely mirrors that of the notorious terrorist Hafiz Saeed. This statement resonates with the words of Hafiz Saeed, the leader of Lashkar-e-Taiba, who stated, “If you stop the water, God willing, we will stop your breath, and then blood shall follow in these rivers.” This message has been highlighted in various online videos, where observers pointed out the alarming

WORLD RECAP

ANSHU JOSHI



similarities between the two statements. Additionally, a recording of Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, captured during an event at a Pakistani university, revealed him asserting, “If you block our water, we will choke you.” His comments were reportedly a direct response to India’s recent decision to suspend the water-sharing treaty in the wake of the Pahalgam terrorist attack.

The Indus Waters Treaty delineates the conditions for the sharing and management of the Indus River along with its five tributaries, Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Jhelum, and Chenab, between India and Pakistan. It also mandates for

a consistent exchange of information between the two neighbours. Following the tragic Pahalgam terror attack, India declared a suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty until Pakistan halts its support for cross-border terrorism. Also, the integrated Check Post at the Attari border was promptly closed. Subsequently, on May 7, India initiated Operation Sindoor, targeting significant terror sites associated with terrorism in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir. The announcement



of the Treaty’s suspension has particularly unsettled Pakistan, as it is crucial for its agricultural sector and overall survival.

On the other hand, India is garnering support from an increasing number of countries in its battle against terrorism. While India has proposed that nations such as China and Türkiye should discourage Pakistan from engaging in terrorist activities, it is receiving backing from numerous like-minded countries. This week, the United Arab Emirates and Japan have expressed their strong support for India’s global outreach initiative against terrorism, demonstrating solidarity with India following the tragic April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam that resulted in the deaths of 26 individuals. In Tokyo, the Japanese Foreign Minister informed the Indian delegation that “terrorism cannot be justified in any form.” The UAE reiterated its steadfast support for India, with senior Emirati lawmaker Ali Rashid Al Nuaimi labelling terrorism as a “global threat” and an “evil for all humanity.” Al Nuaimi made these statements after meeting with an Indian all-party parliamentary delegation in Abu Dhabi. “Terrorism poses a threat not only to a single nation or region, but it is a global menace,” stated Al Nuaimi, who chairs the UAE Federal National Council’s Defence, Interior and Foreign Affairs Com-

mittee. “We are already collaborating with India on initiatives to combat terrorism. The safety of Indian nationals is non-negotiable. India is a strategic partner, not only with the government but also with its populace.”

This is not solely India’s battle. The global community must provide a united, efficient, thorough, and appropriate response to terrorism. Political frameworks, governance, and policies are established to enhance the quality of life for individuals. Setting politics aside, nations need to consider what they stand to gain by supporting terrorism. While Pakistan should reflect on the implications of its decisions for its future, countries such as the US must not forget the events of 9/11 and should fully support India.

The author is Professor, School of International Studies, JNU

PRIME VIDEO REALITY SERIES 'THE TRAITORS' TO PREMIERE ON JUNE 12

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Prime Video has announced that its original unscripted reality show The Traitors, hosted by filmmaker Karan Johar, will premiere on the streaming platform on 12 June.

Based on the BAFTA and Emmy award-winning global format created by IDTV, the Indian adaptation is produced by BBC Studios India Productions in collaboration with All3Media International. The high-stakes series features 20 celebrities from diverse backgrounds who face the ultimate test of trust and betrayal as they compete for a substantial cash prize and the prestigious title of ultimate winner. Following the premiere, new episodes will stream every Thursday.

“Prime Video has consistently been home to some



of the biggest and most beloved scripted shows in the country. Now, we're making a bold leap as we scale our Unscripted content slate with our biggest reality series yet—The Traitors,” said Nikhil Madhok, Head of Originals, Prime

Video India. “We're thrilled to have Karan Johar as the host who better to stoke the fire in this volatile mix of 20 celebrities, each vying for a massive cash prize and the title of ultimate winner! The Traitors promises immersive entertainment and

next-level mind games that are sure to captivate our wide gamut of audiences.”

Sabrina Duguet, EVP APAC at All3Media International, added, “India is one of the most dynamic and exciting markets in the world, with an audience base that's highly receptive to reality shows. The Indian adaptation of The Traitors offers this audience high-calibre celebrities and intense drama, all wrapped up in thriller-esque gameplay.”

Neha Khurana, Executive Producer for The Traitors, BBC Studios India Productions, commented, “With an all-celebrity cast and jaw-dropping twists, The Traitors is an unmissable treat for fans of high-stakes reality entertainment.”

The show marks Prime Video's ambitious expansion into the unscripted genre, promising drama, strategy, and suspense in every episode.

REVIEW: ★★★★★

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE



PRAVEEN NAGDA

One can never forget when Ethan (Tom Cruise) was descending into a vault, and how he avoided touching the floor, which could have resulted in devastating events in the very first edition of Mission: Impossible, which has now hit the 8th installment with the release of Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning, released last week. The Mission Impossible franchise, known for substantially improving action sequences with every newer installment, is back with spine-chilling action in its latest edition.

Ethan entertains the audience in this edition deep under the seas and equally high up in the skies with fantastic stunts. Watching him entering into a dormant mode submarine vessel

that is sitting on the bottom of the Arctic Sea, him navigating inside the vessel full of missiles and arsenal, searching the source code for a device that controls simultaneous nuclear-load missile launches across the world, is an absolute visual treat with a breathtaking, awe-inspiring, and spectacular performance. The “cruciform key” that Ethan salvaged in the last film reappears here to unlock the “Podkova” device, on board a Russian submarine lying on a seabed.

Then there are super action sequences involving various planes including the 1941 Make the Yellow biplane, Boeing B75N1, a 1943 Make the Red biplane, Boeing E75N1 Stearman, Gulfstream V, and many of the Bell-Boeing CV-22 Ospreys stationed on the warships. The Final Reckoning keeps you glued to your seat with action after action, becoming better and better, sequence after sequence. Ethan's climb up on the biplane in the air chasing Gabriel (Esai Morales), an agent working earlier for an Artificial Intelligence



known as Entity, controlling the whole world by taking over the digital networks.

The Entity wants to take control of the nuclear arsenals across the world, launch a lethal attack, and wipe out the entire humanity. Having bugged the digital networks, the AI Entity has an absolute control over them, is now hunting for the source code controlling the nuclear arsenals. Ethan is entrusted by the President of united States, to deal with this situation against the recommendation of the bureaucrats and the chiefs of all forces.

The fight scenes, nail-biting action, impressive visual effects, brilliant photography, and a fast-moving storyline makes Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning, an excellent watch giving you multiple moments of adrenaline rush through the film. With AI as an anti-hero, the film also has a mes-

sage of the risks humanity could have from an uncontrolled evolution of Artificial Intelligence, and its potential to mess up with human lives.

Directed by Christopher McQuarrie, this masterpiece with its exemplary action, is superior in comparison to all its previous editions, making The Final Reckoning as the most exhilarating one so far. Ethan and his team including Grace (Hayley Atwell), Luther (Ving Rhames) and Benji (Simon Pegg) play along well in entire film.

The real fun would be to watch this film on a large screen, preferably IMAX, giving you a truly immersive experience soaking you completely in the mesmerizing visuals and the compelling narrative equally well.

Praveen Nagda is Festival Director of KidzCINEMA and CultureCinema Film Festivals



Shraddha Kapoor poses for her social media. (Instagram)

BRAIN PICKING



I am an engineer by profession, but I knew I wanted to act. My parents always encouraged me, and when my father shifted to Mumbai for work for a brief while, I came along.
— KRITI SANON
(Indian Actress)

Michael Jackson biopic delayed

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON DC

The Michael Jackson biopic titled 'Michael' release date is expected to be delayed to 2026, reported Variety. It is being directed by Antoine Fuqua.

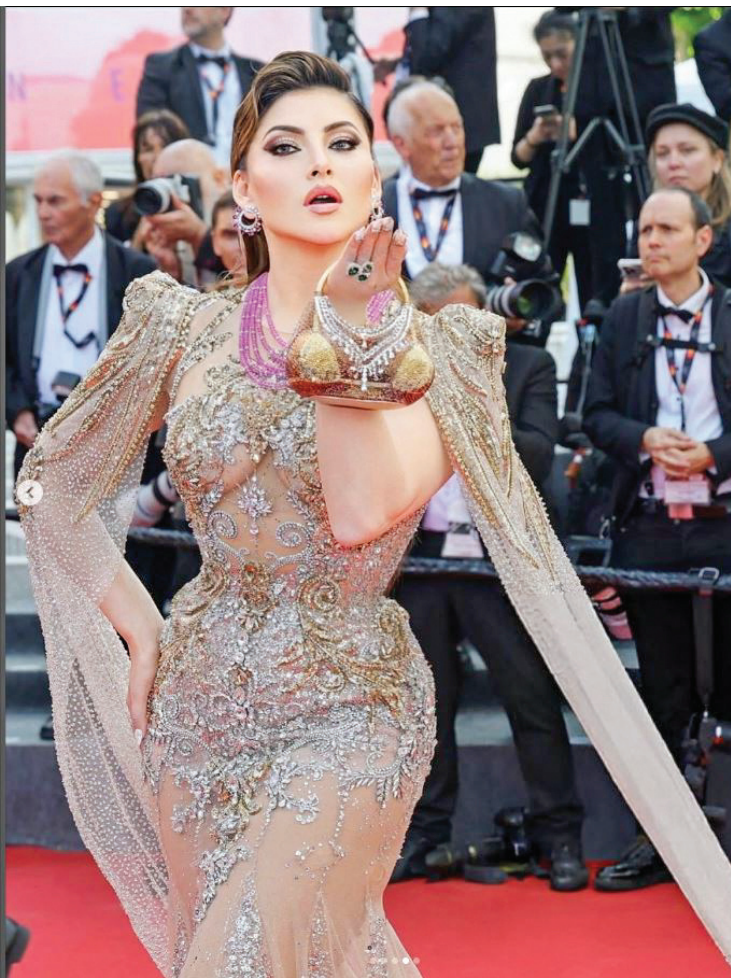
During Lionsgate's Q4 2025 earnings call, CEO Jon Feltheimer shared an update on the film starring

Jackson's nephew Jaafar Jackson, who makes his screen debut in the project.

"In regard to our Michael Jackson biopic, we're excited about the 3 1/2 hours of amazing footage from producer Graham King and director Antoine Fuqua, and we will be announcing a definitive release strategy & timing in the next few weeks.



Elegance Meets Innovation



AISHWARYA RAI BACHCHAN
Gown, titled 'Heiress of Clam', was a custom-made piece from Gaurav Gupta Couture.

URVASHI RAUTELA
A bold, parrot-inspired gown paired with a quirky parrot-shaped clutch



JANHVI KAPOOR
Dressed In Black Dress



NITANSHI GOEL
Dressed in a pastel pink beaded mini-dress by the Indian designer label Papa Don't Preach by Shubhika.

WHY WOMEN NEED WOMEN, MORE THAN MEN



NAMRATA KOHLI

WOMAN WISE

Behind every successful woman is a MOM. She may not make the headlines. She may not be quoted in interviews. But behind every woman who dares to dream and do, there is often a mother quietly powering the story.

The Indian mother is an institution. She's the original multitasker, the unpaid therapist, the relentless cheerleader. Sometimes, she raises her daughter to be everything she couldn't be. Sometimes, she quietly pushes her into spaces that scare her. Sometimes, she just listens—and that alone moves mountains. And for working women especially, the role of a mother doesn't stop with childhood. She becomes the fallback system—stepping in for school pick-ups, sick days, missed meals, or simply as moral ballast. In modern urban India, where nuclear families

and competitive lives have frayed traditional support systems, the mother remains a constant—emotionally and logistically.

In fact, when women are asked “How do you do it all?”, many smile and look towards their moms—not just out of affection, but acknowledgment. Because sometimes “behind every successful woman” isn't a mentor or a manager—but a mother, keeping the wheels turning behind the scenes.

Whether it's the CEO on stage or the young lawyer cracking her first case, chances are there's a woman supporting her somewhere—juggling her own life so her daughter can live hers more fully. Because success may wear stilettos, but it often walks on the shoulders of a sari-clad superwoman called Mom.

Women need women rather than men and this is more so true in India - from maid to mom, sisters to girlfriends - the more women in your life, the richer you are. They are your treasure trove, which no money can buy.

Not all moms are biological—some are mother-figures: grandmothers, aunts, sisters, or even domestic helps who mother their madams in quiet ways. But they all wear the same badge of silent strength.

Actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas in multiple interviews



has credited her mother and female friends for her strength. “Women supporting women—that's the real game-changer. It's not a competition; it's a community.”

For all the progress in gender roles and evolving equations, one truth remains constant that women need women. In India especially, where the load of everyday life is carried quietly and ceaselessly by women, it's often another woman who helps lighten that burden.

From the maid who silently keeps your home running to the mother who still calls to check if you've eaten; from a sister who stands by you in crisis to girlfriends who decode everything from heartbreak to hormonal shifts—women form an unspoken, powerful network. It's invisible in policy papers but undeniable in practice.



Ask any Indian woman juggling work, home, parenting, and ageing parents, and you'll find she survives not because of a man but because of a female support system. The household help becomes indispensable. The mother-in-law doubles as childcare. The neighbour-



hood auntie becomes your emergency contact. The best friend becomes your therapist. And in recent years, a younger generation of women entrepreneurs, mentors, wellness experts, and community leaders are creating spaces—online and offline—where women



Ask any Indian woman juggling work, home, parenting, and ageing parents, and you'll find she survives not because of a man but because of a female support system. The household help becomes indispensable. The mother-in-law doubles as childcare. The neighbour-

rally behind one another like never before.

This isn't to pit genders against each other but to point to a simple truth: men may offer love, protection, even partnership, but it is women who offer deep empathy. They just get it. The unending mental load. The silent expectations. The periods, pregnancies, body image issues, career compromises, glass ceilings. All of it.

This solidarity is not sentimental—it's strategic. In a

country where women still struggle for equal space, pay, and respect, having more women in your corner is not just comforting, it's critical.

Sociologists say this informal support structure is one of the most underrated strengths in Indian society. Psychologists confirm that women with a strong female circle report lower stress levels and better emotional health. And storytellers—be it in films, web series or books—are finally beginning

to highlight these bonds with the complexity and warmth they deserve.

The truth is, women empower women in a way no one else can. And the more women you have in your life—maids, moms, mentors, mates—the richer your life is. Not in rupees, but in resilience.

Because behind every strong woman is often not a man—but a tribe of other well-meaning and supportive women.

Caffeine and pregnancy: What you should know about safe consumption

ANUSHI JAIN

Caffeine is a natural stimulant commonly found in coffee, tea, chocolate, energy drinks, and even certain medications. While many people rely on caffeine to boost alertness and energy, pregnant women need to be particularly cautious about their intake. This is because caffeine can cross the placenta and potentially impact the developing fetus, whose body is not capable of metabolizing caffeine efficiently. As a result, excess caffeine exposure during pregnancy may pose several risks to fetal development. Understanding the safe consumption limits, potential dangers, and hidden sources of caffeine is essential for expectant mothers who want to ensure a healthy pregnancy for themselves and their babies.

Health authorities around the world, including the World Health Organization and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, recommend limiting caffeine intake during pregnancy to under 200 mg per day. This is equivalent to roughly one standard 12-ounce cup of brewed coffee, one to two small cups (100–150 ml) of coffee, two cups of black tea, four cups of green tea, or one to two cans of cola. Despite these guidelines, studies show that many pregnant women unintentionally exceed this limit, often due to a lack of awareness about caffeine content in various foods and drinks.

There are several reasons why restricting caffeine is particularly important during pregnancy. First, pregnant women metabolize caffeine more slowly than non-pregnant women,

which means caffeine stays in their system longer. More importantly, caffeine passes through the placenta, but the fetus lacks the necessary enzymes to break it down effectively. This accumulation can disrupt normal fetal development. Caffeine has been shown to influence placental blood flow, potentially altering the delivery of oxygen and nutrients to the fetus. It may also elevate maternal and fetal stress hormone levels, further complicating devel-



opment.

Another consideration is the genetic variability in caffeine metabolism among women. The enzyme CYP1A2 is responsible for breaking down caffeine in the body, and its activity is influenced by both genetic and hormonal factors. Some women have slower-acting versions of this enzyme, making them more sensitive to caffeine's effects. As a result, even moderate caffeine intake might pose risks for certain women due to these genetic differences, underscoring the need for more personalized healthcare approaches in prenatal care.

High caffeine consumption, particularly above 300

mg per day, has been associated with a range of pregnancy complications. These may include low birth weight, fetal growth restriction, and a potential increased risk of miscarriage. While the link between caffeine and preterm labor is not consistently supported by research, some studies do indicate that excessive caffeine may contribute to this risk as well. Though the evidence varies, the potential dangers warrant a cautious approach.

Caffeine is not only found in coffee or tea but also in a range of other products. Dark chocolate contains significantly more caffeine than milk chocolate. Energy drinks are especially concerning, as they often have extremely high levels of caffeine and should be avoided entirely during pregnancy. Additionally, some over-the-counter medications, such as certain pain relievers and cold remedies, contain caffeine. This makes it essential for pregnant women to read product labels carefully and consult with healthcare providers before taking any medication.

Managing caffeine intake during pregnancy can be done with a few simple

strategies. Opting for decaffeinated beverages or herbal teas can be a good substitute, although it's important to ensure that specific herbs are safe during pregnancy. Spacing out caffeine intake throughout the day can help avoid spikes in caffeine levels. South Indian filter coffee, known for its strong brew, should be consumed in moderation or avoided due to its high caffeine content. Staying hydrated with water, milk, or fruit-based beverages can also help re-

duce reliance on caffeine. In the future, advancements in genetic testing and precision medicine may allow for more individualized recommendations based on a woman's unique response to caffeine.

FINAL THOUGHTS

While caffeine isn't entirely off-limits during pregnancy, moderation and awareness are key. Keeping daily intake below 200 mg, being mindful of hidden sources, and understanding one's own sensitivity to caffeine can go a long way in supporting a safe and healthy pregnancy.

The author is Nutritionist & Founder- Nutri Maven

THE IMPACT OF WOMEN-LED COMMUNITIES IN DRIVING SOCIAL CHANGE



DR. SONALI PRIY KAPOOR

Women-led communities have emerged as powerful catalysts for social transformation, leveraging empathetic leadership, contextual intelligence, and inclusive approaches to tackle deeply rooted societal challenges. With their distinct lens, these communities actively contribute to sustainable development across a broad spectrum—from poverty alleviation and gender parity to healthcare equity, educational reform, and grassroots empowerment. At the core of their effectiveness lies a collaborative leadership ethos that departs from traditional hierarchical structures.

Rather than relying on command-and-control models, women leaders tend to foster participatory governance, encouraging dialogue, consensus-building, and shared ownership. This approach promotes diverse representation and fosters community cohesion, a crucial factor in driving systemic change.

REDEFINING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH A GENDERED LENS

Women have long served as the social cornerstone of a resilient community. They are ideally positioned to precisely address localized requirements because of their life experiences, emotional intelligence, and holistic problem-solving skills. Their influence has proven to be not only useful but also necessary for long-lasting effects as they progressively

rise to decision-making positions.

Empirical evidence consistently supports the correlation between women's inclusion in policy and planning and the achievement of equitable, long-term outcomes. Initiatives spearheaded by women tend to prioritise social justice, human dignity, and the upliftment of marginalised groups—values that ripple across generations and reshape collective futures.

GRASSROOTS MOVEMENTS: THE PULSE OF REAL CHANGE

Many of the most impactful social interventions originate at the grassroots level, where women often serve as the first responders to community crises. From initiating self-help groups and nutritional awareness campaigns to designing micro-education platforms and advocating for environmental stewardship, women are reclaiming agency through localised action.

These are core, not additional, endeavors. Without institutional support, women use a macro-perspective to tackle the micro, transforming communal issues into platforms for change.

ECONOMIC AGENCY AND ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP

Women's economic participation is a cornerstone of community advancement.

As entrepreneurs, women are not only job creators but also community architects. Their enterprises tend to be rooted in purpose, cultural sensitivity, and responsiveness to local needs, fostering innovation tailored to context.

Moreover, women-led businesses often reinvest in their communities, creating multiplier effects in education, healthcare, and social mobility. Their leadership, grounded in empathy and pragmatism, generates models of inclusive growth.

BARRIERS TO SCALE: STRUCTURAL INEQUITIES

Despite their profound impact, women leaders continue to face structural headwinds. Entrenched patriarchal norms, limited access to capital, gendered expectations, and exclusion from formal power networks often curtail the potential scale of their efforts. These barriers are not just individual; they are systemic.

Expanding access to training, mentorship, funding, and venues that amplify women's perspectives across industries is essential for making substantial progress in breaking down these invisible boundaries.

MOVEMENTS WITH MOMENTUM: WOMEN AS CLIMATE GUARDIANS

Women-led movements

are also at the forefront of environmental activism. Particularly in developing economies, where women often serve as custodians of natural resources, their leadership in climate resilience is deeply rooted and pragmatic. From water conservation initiatives to eco-entrepreneurship, women are mobilising collective action to safeguard ecosystems while advancing community welfare.

Their combined position as nurturers and negotiators makes them crucial in building a link between environmental sustainability and social fairness.

A FUTURE POWERED BY WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

The future of community development will increasingly be shaped by women who lead with authenticity, equity, and purpose. As the global narrative shifts toward inclusivity and gender-balanced leadership, investing in women's capabilities becomes a strategic imperative.

Supporting women in leadership means more than policy—it means tangible investments in education, entrepreneurship, and advocacy. It means creating enabling environments that honour their agency and amplify their impact.

Because when women rise, communities don't just progress—they transform.

As we look ahead, we must continue to support and empower women in their efforts to develop communities. This involves funding in education, entrepreneurship, and advocacy programs that promote women's leadership. By creating circumstances in which women can thrive, we not only benefit individuals but also communities as a whole.

The author is Founder & MD, The Hatch Project



CAN WE BECOME ANGELS?



B.K. GEETA

Angels are said to be benevolent celestial beings who act as intermediaries between God and humans, and as guardian or guiding spirits.

Many people claim to have seen angels, usually describing them as having a body of radiant white light, clad in a robe, and with wings on their back.

Are angels for real? Visions and dreams aside, there are individuals who are no less than angels to those around them. "Oh, he's an angel", and "She's an angel" are remarks made about such persons.

What makes a person an angel? Can a person be an angel, or like an angel, while living in this world? To answer this question, we must know what sets apart angels

from ordinary people. They are selfless, compassionate, non-judgemental, loving yet detached, and free of the flaws that blemish human character. It is possible for us to be like an angel: what it requires is a change of consciousness.

Through centuries of conditioning by society, religion, and other forces, we have acquired ways of thinking and behaviour which seem 'natural' or 'normal'. These include being critical, judgemental, possessive, and self-centred. We may also become upset, disappointed, depressed, or ecstatic with joy. Angels, on the other hand, are not influenced by anything. They remain detached in every situation, not because they do not care, but because they have no needs or desires, and their intellect is not clouded by any weakness. This enables them to discern accurately and respond appropriately, and their response comes from their inner store of virtues: peace, love, truth, and power.

Being an angel means to think, feel, and act like one. It will not come naturally to us in the beginning, but



When angels see someone suffering, they do not quote the law of karma. They provide succour.

with constant attention on the self, and the examination and refinement of our thoughts and feelings to keep them aligned with what is true and good, we

can develop an angelic consciousness.

One with such a consciousness will see the uniqueness of each soul, accepting them as they are,

and at the same time appreciating their virtues. Most people, on the other hand, tend to have a critical vision that seeks faults in others. This is partly due to the

subtle desire, generated by ego, to feel superior.

From critical vision to criticism and ridicule is a small step. When we focus on what we think is wrong

in others, our feelings turn negative and there is little space for compassion or understanding. Angels do not do this. When they notice a defect in someone, they understand that every soul has its own story and is suffering because of its weaknesses. With empathy, they offer that person love, support, and inspiration to change.

Angels do not engage in the popular human pastime of speculating about people and events – an exercise that involves attributing motives and blame on the basis of ignorance and prejudice.

When angels see someone suffer, they do not quote the law of karma or tell themselves – and others – that the person is getting his just deserts. Instead, they provide succour and try to ease the pain of the sufferer.

Few people would have sympathy for someone who has done them great harm, and fewer still would help such a person if they are in need. Angels do not dwell on anyone's past, and knowing that everyone has the potential to improve, they offer them assistance.

While doing all this, angels

do not get stuck with any person or situation, nor do they expect acknowledgement or applause: they do what is needed and move on, happy to have served. They also do not let others become attached to them, for they know that they are merely instruments of God, doing His work in the world.

It is from that Supreme source of energy that angels draw their power. God is truth, they say, and because angelic beings remain true to their innate virtues, their consciousness is elevated enough to enable them to connect with God and receive His blessings. Since they are full and complete, they freely share these blessings with their fellow humans, in the form of love, compassion, joy, and peace.

In doing this, angels guide the attention of every soul to the One who made them what they are, inspiring them to connect with that source so that they too can break free of their limitations and be liberated from all suffering.

B.K. Geeta is a Rajyoga teacher at the Brahma Kumaris headquarters in Abu Road, Rajasthan.

The power of acceptance



RACHEL PRIESTMAN

Acceptance is key to any kind of change. Those on a spiritual journey understand the need for change and the powers that are necessary for us to acquire in order to make the change. There are eight main spiritual powers that, once mastered, can make life free from distress or sorrow. Acceptance is not one of those eight powers, but is the key to them all: the powers to withdraw, let go, accommodate, discriminate, judge, face, cooperate, and tolerate. The power of acceptance opens the way to clarity, calmness? and wisdom. When we are unable to accept situations, the behaviour of others and, most importantly, our own selves, the stress and anger that arise, pull

us into the blame game. These feelings of negativity and resistance harm us mentally and also physically – mental distress affects the body.

When we stop that internal whirlwind of waste thoughts about situations and people, when we stop trying to make things the way we think they should be, when we simply accept what is happening and how it is happening, then wonders can happen. Every one of us has an idea of what is 'normal' inside of us.

Normal for us. None of us have the same 'normal'. Even if we live in the same family, the same house, for years, each one of us will have our own mindset about how things should be.

Because of our different life experiences, we are all programmed slightly differently and so it is actually quite miraculous that we all get on with each other as well as we do.

It is wisdom when we understand this - that everyone is living a story very different to my own, and we have no way of knowing their story, unless they honour us by relating it.

The first step towards acceptance is to accept the self. To do

that, we must understand our original nature - our original 'normal', because that 'normal' is true for all of us. We are eternal, spiritual beings, having a physical experience, and the spiritual being is full of love, peace, joy, wisdom, and compassion. However, we have had

very different experiences in this physical world, and those who believe in reincarnation understand how complex the story of each one must be, having lived many different lives. But those are physical stories. I, the soul, the eternal being of light, the powerful, benevolent

energy, am not physical. What is difficult for us is to accept the mistaken actions we have taken in our long story of physical experiences.

We have made mistakes, often to protect ourselves, in an attempt to safeguard our peace and happiness. We have de-



By learning how to accept myself, I can accept others

veloped an ego that refuses to allow us to bow down and accept the resulting situations and relationships.

However, it is not in demanding or resisting but in accepting that we regain the peace that gives us clarity and wisdom to know what to do next, to make things smooth and harmonious, and full of joy.

So, first I have to accept myself - to truly see and know the beauty of the self. It is through a loving connection to God, the Divine, that this can happen, because God sees all of me, understands every part of my story and loves me unconditionally. God accepts me. God knows about the goodness within, and helps me to see that. Then I can bring that into my thinking, speaking, and doing. But this is not a one-switch wonder.

It requires constant practice, an ongoing rehearsal and gentle corrections. By learning how to accept myself I can accept others. This is such a great gift that I have to offer. When I am able to stay calm in difficult situations through my own acceptance, it changes the atmosphere and empowers others. This is an act of giving, and giving is part

of our original nature.

Everything depends on my thinking. So, taking time out every so often during the day to check with what awareness I am thinking and behaving, is essential self-care. I give myself the chance to re-route my thoughts towards what is positive and uplifting - I connect with my inner power and the Source of all power, and am then able to carry on with more understanding and integrity. When I see the importance of meditation, I will make sure I give time to that.

Meditation is not running away; it is a very practical mental manoeuvre, preparing myself to do or be my best - just like any musician or an athlete will do. Whatever we practise we become good at. When we practise being angry and critical, we become experts in anger! When we practise meditation and experience our own inner peace and inner powers, we are on the journey to becoming masters - of the self.

Rachel Priestman is based at Global Cooperation House, in the Brahma Kumaris International Co-ordinating Office, London.

How to keep the heart full



NEVILLE HODGKINSON

Have you noticed that out of the many books, articles and videos offering guidance on how to improve our lives, a large number focus on strengthening self-respect? It is clearly a great need of our times.

Much practical wisdom is shared on topics such as becoming emotionally self-sufficient, setting boundaries, and not looking for approval from others. But how does this advice fit in with centuries-old teachings urging us to care for one another? That to give, is to receive? The answer is that such giving does work, but it must come naturally, from the

heart. And for that, we have to know how to keep the heart full.

Lack of self-respect is not the root of our problem. Rather, it is a hollow in our hearts that comes from not knowing our spiritual selves. There is an essence to us that connects us to the flow of life. When we think and act in ways that align with this essence, the sky is the limit as to the happiness and fulfilment we can find in being. This then spills over into our relationships, bringing genuine benefit to those with whom we share our lives, without making them feel they owe us anything.

Our essence has this incredibly constructive, beautiful, creative potential. It is natural, it is truth, and it needs to be re-experienced and regularly savoured in order to charge the battery of our well-being. Choose the company of thoughts, as well as other people, which help it grow. Love yourself! Practise remaining positive in the face of challenges. Accept people and circumstances for who and what they are, but do not remain chained to a life that



Look into your own heart - who looks inside, awakes.

does not feel you. When you experience that love and appreciation are your true nature, you will be able to stop focusing on people's defects, and see their strengths instead.

Carl Jung, the great Swiss

psychologist, famously told us: "Look into your own heart - who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes." Once we have awoken to the beauty of the inner being, we do not have to fight to maintain our respect, by chasing

the approval of others. We will automatically find the clarity and courage to say no to things that do not reflect it.

Meditation is all about looking inside, dropping negative habits of thought and beliefs that hold

us back in life, and becoming alert to the inner strength and beauty that are our natural inheritance from the One above.

Neville Hodgkinson is a UK-based author and journalist, and a long-time student of Rajyoga.

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Happiness is generative. It is experienced as an abundance of good feelings. To be happy, I must accumulate pure karma. Giving is the karma that increases my happiness. Today let me generate happiness through pure intentions and actions.

ISHAN KISHAN'S BLITZ POWERS SRH TO 231 VS RCB

AGENCIES
LUCKNOW

After an impactful fifty, from Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) wicketkeeper/batter Ishan Kishan and a vital cameo from Aniket Verma, powers SRH to 231/6 in their 20 overs, against Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) in the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL), on Friday in Lucknow.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru stand-in captain Jitesh Sharma won the toss and opted to bowl against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head opened the innings for SRH. Both batters counter-attacked RCB bowlers from the first over, and the duo brought up their 50-run stand in the fourth over.

After conceding 15 runs in the same over, RCB bowler Lungi Ngidi removed Sharma for 34(17), his innings included three fours and sixes each. Wicketkeeper/batter Ishan Kishan joined Head in the middle.

Veteran seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar removed Head in



Sunrisers Hyderabad's Ishan Kishan looks on as he waits for the result of the Decision Review System (DRS) appeal during the IPL Twenty20 cricket match between Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Sunrisers Hyderabad at the Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow.

the following over for 17(10), smashed three boundaries, and Heinrich Klaasen joined Kishan in the middle. SRH finished their power-play on 71-2.

After being smashed for three fours by Suyash Shar-

ma in the 9th over, Klaasen was removed for 24(13). His innings included two sixes and fours each. Aniket Verma joined Kishan in the middle.

Verma played a vital cameo of 26 (9), before Krunal Pandya removed him in the 12th

over; his innings included three sixes and a four. Nitish Reddy joined Kishan in the middle. SRH crossed the 150-run mark in the 13th over.

Kishan scored fifty in 28 balls after smashing a century in SRH's initial match in

BRIEF SCORE
SRH 231/6 (Ishan Kishan 94*, Abhishek Sharma 34; Romario Shepherd (2/14). vs RCB.

the ongoing IPL. For the first time, Kishan crossed the 50-run mark.

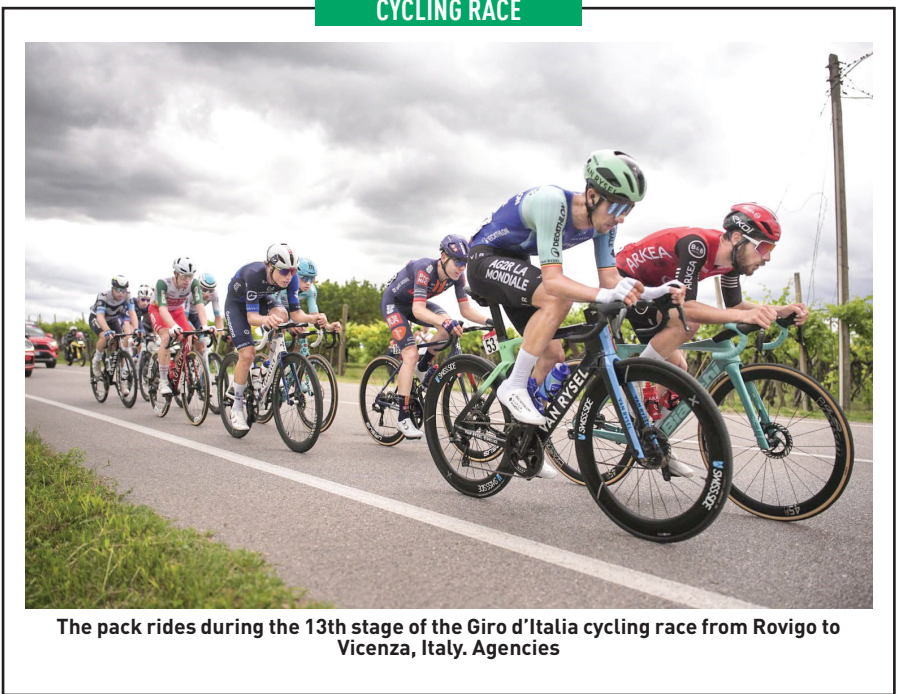
Reddy's dry runs in the IPL 2025 continued as he was dismissed for four, courtesy Romario Shepherd. Abhinav Manohar joined SRH's wicketkeeper/batter on the crease.

After almost a run-a-ball innings, Manohar was dismissed by Shepherd in the 17th over. After 17 overs, 188/6. SRH crossed the 200 runs mark in the 18th over.

SRH finished their innings on 231/6, and Ishan Kishan was the top scorer for Hyderabad, scoring 94* in just 48 balls.

RCB will have to chase 232 in their second innings when they come out to bat.

In bowling, Romario Shepherd (2/14) was the pick of the bowlers for RCB, and Bhuvneshwar, Ngidi, Suyash, and Krunal picked wickets for each.



The pack rides during the 13th stage of the Giro d'Italia cycling race from Rovigo to Vicenza, Italy. Agencies

Angelo Mathews to bid Test farewell after first Sri Lanka-Bangladesh clash

AGENCIES
COLOMBO

Veteran Sri Lankan all-rounder Angelo Mathews on Friday announced that the first Test against Bangladesh next month will be his last five-day game as he makes way for younger talent in the traditional format with a "grateful heart and unforgettable memories." The 37-year-old will, however, continue to play white-ball cricket for his country. His final Test appearance will be in Galle from June 17 to 21. "With a grateful heart and unforgettable memories. It is time for me to say goodbye to the most cherished format of the game, International Test Cricket... The first Test match against Bangladesh in June will be my last red-ball appearance for my country," he posted on 'X'.

"Whilst I bid adieu to the Test format, as discussed with selectors I will remain available for selection for the white ball format, if and when my country needs me. "I believe this Test team is a talented side with many future and present greats playing the game. Now seems like the best time to make way for a younger player to take the mantle to shine for our nation," he



added. Since making debut in 2009, Mathews has turned up in 118 Tests, scoring 8167 runs -- the third-highest tally in Sri Lanka's history, behind Kumar Sangakkara (12,400) and Mahela Jayawardene (11,814).

He has a fairly good average of 44.62 and has so far smashed 16 hundreds and 45 centuries with a 200 not out being the best of his lengthy career. He also has 34 wickets to his credit.

"A true servant of Sri Lanka Test Cricket. Thank you...for 17 years of unwavering dedication, leadership, and unforgettable moments in the red-ball format. Your commitment and passion have inspired a generation," Sri Lanka Cricket stated in its tribute. "We wish you all the very

best as you step away from Test cricket and look forward to seeing your continued contributions in white-ball cricket," it added.

Mathews, who was Sri Lanka's all-format captain from 2013 to 2017, said he has considered playing the format the highest honour.

"Nothing can match that feeling of patriotism and servitude when one dons the National Jersey. I have given my everything to cricket and Cricket has given me everything in return and made me the person that I am today," he said.

Mathews said he is grateful for the support that he has got over the years, from his family, his coaches and Sri Lanka Cricket.

"A chapter ends, but the love for the game will always remain," he signed off.

Punjab aim for top-2, Delhi fight for pride in Jaipur showdown

SUNIL YASH KALRA
JAIPUR

The 66th match of IPL 2025 promises high stakes and emotional intensity as the Punjab Kings lock horns with the Delhi Capitals at Jaipur's iconic Sawai Man Singh Stadium tonight.

While Punjab have already secured a place in the playoffs, a win here could cement their position in the top two. Delhi, on the other hand, are virtually out of playoff contention but will be playing for pride in their final outing of the season.

Punjab come into this clash riding high on confidence after a dominant victory over the Rajasthan Royals at the same venue. Their top order has been on fire -- opener Priyansh Arya has smashed 356 runs in 12 innings at a jaw-drop-

ping strike rate of 190.37. His partner, Prabhsimran Singh, has been equally explosive, racking up 454 runs at a surreal strike rate of 173.95, including 283 runs in the death overs alone. Shreyas Iyer has provided stability in the middle, scoring 435 runs and finishing strong with a strike rate of 267 in the final overs.

Punjab's finishing firepower has also been top-class -- Marcus Stoinis has hammered runs at a staggering strike rate of 306 in the death overs, while Azmatullah Omarzai, Shahank Singh, and Nehal Wadhwa have kept the momentum going during the middle phase. The only concern for the Kings is that big names like Glenn Maxwell and Suryansh Shedge haven't quite fired yet.

Speaking on the Cricket

Predicta show powered by 1xBat, former India cricketer Noel David said, "Delhi have nothing to lose, but Punjab have everything to gain. A win puts them in the top two, and with the kind of form Priyansh and Prabhsimran are in, it could be a long day for Delhi's bowlers if they get going again."

For the Delhi Capitals, this season has been a mixed bag.

Their recent loss to the Mumbai Indians was a tough blow, as the team was bundled out for just 121. Suryakumar Yadav, Tilak Varma, and Naman Dhir stitched together crucial partnerships for Mumbai, who hammered 48 runs in the last two overs to post a daunting total. In reply, Delhi's batting crumbled, leaving fans and management disappointed.

ICC announces match officials for WTC final between Australia, South Africa

AGENCIES
DUBAI

Chris Gaffaney of New Zealand and England's Richard Illingworth have been announced as on-field umpires for the World Test Championship (WTC) final which is set to take place at Lord's from June 11 to 15 between Australia and South Africa, as per the ICC official website.

The highly anticipated clash will see South Africa take on Australia in the culmination of a fiercely contested two-year Test cycle for the mace.

Illingworth, who was also part of the officiating team in the 2021 and 2023 finals, continues his consistent presence in marquee Test matches. He is also the current ICC Umpire of the Year,

having won the David Shepherd Trophy for the fourth time in 2024.

Gaffaney had partnered with Illingworth in officiating last year's ICC Men's T20 World Cup Final, and also officiated in the WTC 2023 Final between India and Australia.

Illingworth will be making history in the Ultimate Test, having stood as an on-field umpire for all three World Test Championship Finals.

Richard Kettleborough, also from England, who has officiated in the finals of several marquee ICC events, including the Men's Cricket World Cup and the Champions Trophy, has been appointed as the TV umpire, after having played the same role in the WTC 2021 Final between India and New Zealand.

Raiza Dhillon wins silver in women's skeet at ISSF Junior World Cup 2025

AGENCIES
SUHL [GERMANY]

India's skeet shooter Raiza Dhillon bagged a silver medal in the ISSF Junior World Cup 2025 in Suhl, Germany, as per Olympics.com.

The 21-year-old Indian shooter, who won a silver medal at the Asian Championships last year, landed 51 of her possible 60 shots in the final to finish behind Great Britain's Phoebe Bodley-Scott, who scored 53 on Thursday.

This was Bodley-Scott's



second junior ISSF World Cup gold medal after winning the same event at the same venue three years

ago. Annabella Hettmer of Germany clinched bronze with 38.

Earlier in the day, Raiza

Dhillon had made the cut for the six-woman medal round by finishing second in the qualifying round with a score of 116.

India's Vanshika Tiwari (109), Yashasvi Rathore (106) and Mohika Sisodiya (100) finished 15th, 19th and 28th, respectively, in the qualifiers.

The men's skeet event, meanwhile, saw India's Harmehar Singh Lally miss a spot in the final by a single position. His score of 117 saw the Indian shooter finish seventh in the qualifiers.

Nadal's absence from the 2025 French Open changes the tournament

AGENCIES
PARIS

As the French Open enters a new, post-Rafa, era this year, there are a couple of prevailing sentiments among tennis players.

One is: It's a shame the world won't get to see the King of Clay, as Rafael Nadal came to be called, ply his unique brand of topspin-heavy relentlessness on the crushed red brick of Roland-Garros, where he won a record 14 of his 22 Grand Slam titles.

The other, expressed by men who would love to get a chance at carving their own bit of history at the place, goes like this: Whew, it sure

will be nice not to have that guy looming in the bracket now that the 38-year-old Spaniard is retired.

"Luckily -- or unluckily -- I never got to play him in Roland-Garros," said American Tommy Paul, a 2023 Australian Open semifinalist currently ranked 12th.

"It's nice to not have to worry about him, I guess," Paul added with a laugh. "That's the main thing that comes to my mind."

Players repeatedly used the word "different" to describe what it'll be like without Nadal around.

"It'll be strange for the fans, above all," said top-10 player Lorenzo Musetti, an Italian



who reached the semifinals at Wimbledon and earned an Olympic bronze medal in 2024. "But the history he made in Paris will never be forgotten."

To be sure, Nadal's dominance in Paris was unprec-

edented.

"Impossible," defending champion Carlos Alcaraz said, "to repeat."

Nadal collected more championships than any other player at one major tennis tournament, spanning from

his first, which arrived two days after his 19th birthday in his 2005 debut, to his last at age 36 in 2022 on a painful foot that required nerve-dulling injections. He went 112-4 overall in the event.

One measure of just how good Nadal was there is reflected in his head-to-head records against the other two members of the Big Three of men's tennis, Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer. Nadal went 8-2 against Djokovic in the French Open -- accounting for about 15% of all of Djokovic's lifetime Grand Slam losses anywhere -- and 6-0 against Federer.

"What a legend. What an ambassador for the sport,"

Australian player Thanasi Kokkinakis said about Nadal. "One of the greatest athletes ever -- not just in tennis." He certainly left his indelible mark in Paris. A larger-than-life statue was erected near an entrance to the tournament grounds in 2021, while he was still active; a ceremony honoring him will be held Sunday in the main stadium, Court Philippe-Chatrier, after the first three matches of Day 1.

One would imagine that Nadal will be treated to the sort of applause and chants of "Ra-fa!" he heard often, including when he played for the final time at the site -- at the Paris Olympics last

year -- and left describing the "unforgettable feeling and emotions" he enjoyed.

And no one who ever faced him, or watched him, at the French Open will forget his lefty whip of a forehand or the way he stood so far back to return serve or the way he chased every ball. Or the way the arena announcer would list off all of his ever-growing list of championship years before a match. Or the way Nadal would bite his trophies after winning one, something Naomi Osaka emulated after claiming her first clay-court title just last month. "As a tennis community, everybody's going to miss Rafa, for sure. If I were

thinking about it selfishly, I would say, 'Of course I want to watch Rafa play. Of course I want him to be here,'" former No. 1 and two-time Australian Open champion Victoria Azarenka said. "But I see it a little bit differently. I look at it as that was his decision. Same with when Serena (Williams) left. Of course I miss Serena; she was my biggest motivator. But they've moved on in their life to what's best for them. And I just have so much respect for what they've done for the sport. How much they contributed. How much they elevated it. My only thing is to say, 'Thank you,' to players like that."