

# Dumani Mail

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सोमलिङ्गं नरो दृष्ट्वा सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते।  
लभते फलं मनोवाञ्छितं मृतः स्वर्गसमाश्रयेत्॥



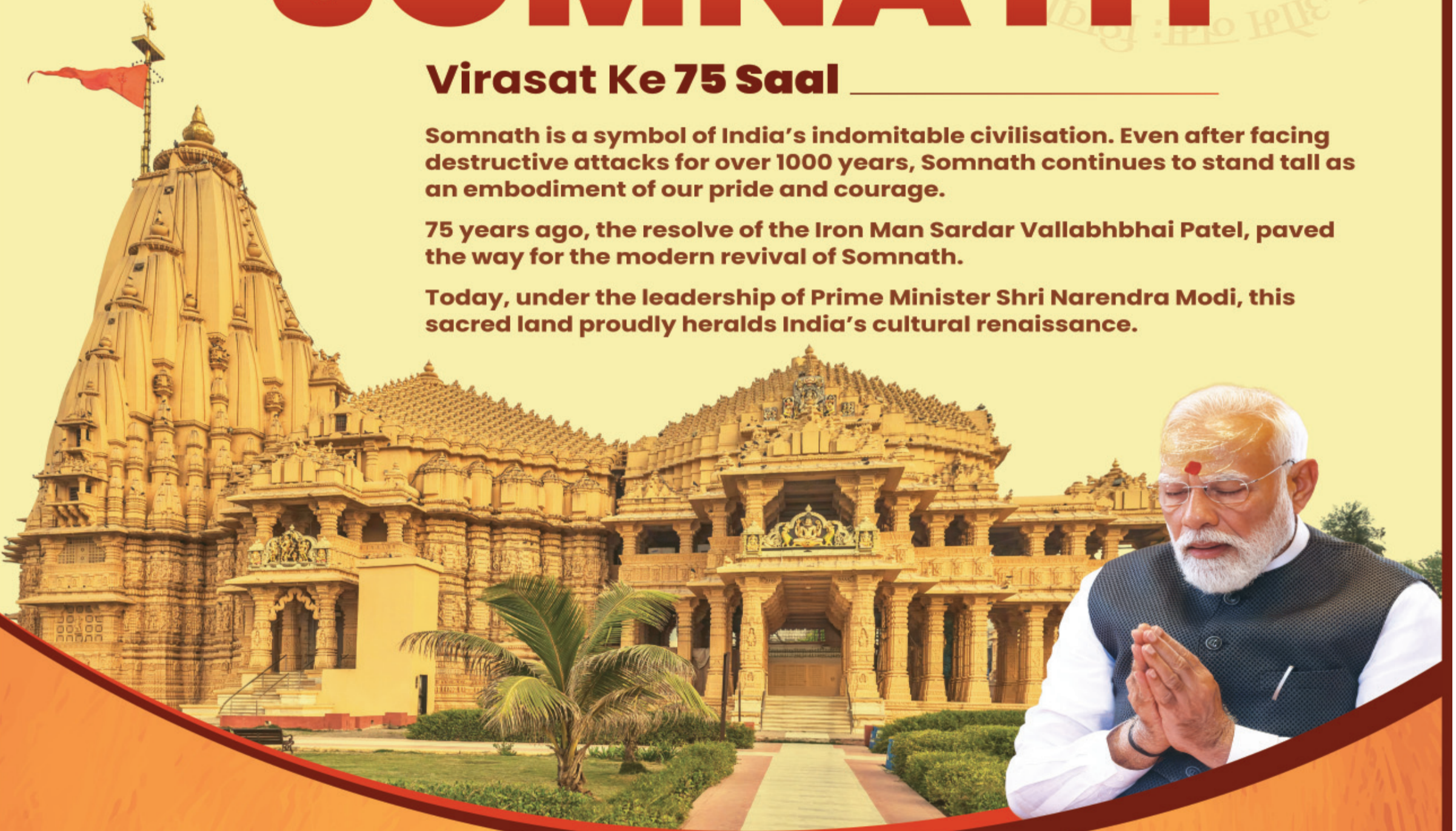
## SOMNATH

### Virasat Ke 75 Saal

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#### Key Activities

Kalash Yatra | Bhajan Sandhya | Chanting of the Omkar Mantra  
Mantra Writing in the Somnath Booklet  
Narration of Stories Associated with Somnath

**Shri Somnath Temple Complex, Prabhas Patan | 8<sup>th</sup> –11<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

“Somnath is that song of hope which teaches us that the power of creation is far greater than the power of destruction”

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi (Chairman, Shri Somnath Trust)



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To contribute to the divinity and grandeur of Somnath, and become a part of its glorious history.

## Women's Participation in India's Maritime Sector Surges 340% Since 2020: Sarbananda Sonowal

New Delhi/Paradip - Women's participation in India's maritime sector has increased by 340% since 2020, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), Sarbananda Sonowal said, underscoring the government's push to build a more inclusive, future-ready maritime workforce.

Delivering the keynote address at the 10th Indian Ocean Dialogue in New Delhi, Sonowal highlighted "Nari Shakti" as a central pillar of India's maritime growth story. Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal was joined by His Excellency, Dhananjay Ramful, Foreign Minister of Mauritius, and His Excellency, Waleed Mohammed Al-Qadimi, Minister of State of Yemen.

"Through initiatives like 'Sagar Mein Samman', we are advancing dignity, inclusion and leadership opportunities for women in the maritime sector, which has seen a remarkable rise of about 340% since 2020," Sarbananda Sonowal said. "Under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji, this transformation in the maritime sector is helping shape a more inclusive, resilient and future-



ready workforce for the Indian Ocean Region."

The Union Minister positioned the surge in women's participation within India's broader maritime vision, combining economic growth with social empowerment. He noted that the "human element" remains central to India's maritime strategy, alongside efforts to enhance security, connectivity and sustainability.

"The Indian Ocean is not just a geographic space, but a global lifeline," Sonowal said. "Its importance to global energy flows,

trade and supply chains calls for stronger cooperation, resilience and inclusivity."

Sonowal emphasized that India's maritime initiatives are aligned with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, including frameworks such as SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and MAHASAGAR, aimed at strengthening regional cooperation and ensuring equitable growth.

The 10th Indian Ocean Dialogue, hosted by India as Chair of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) for 2025-27,

is themed "Indian Ocean Region in a Transforming World." The forum brings together ministers, policymakers, academics and industry leaders to deliberate on key regional issues. IORA comprises 23 member states and 12 dialogue partners, focusing on economic cooperation and sustainable development in the Indian Ocean Region, with women's economic empowerment identified as a key cross-cutting priority area.

Under India's Chair of IORA, the forum focuses on "Innovation, Openness, Resilience and Adaptability," with women's economic empowerment identified as a key cross-cutting priority area.

Sonowal also highlighted India's role as a "net security provider" in the region, pointing

to initiatives in humanitarian assistance, maritime surveillance and disaster response. Sonowal stressed that no single country can address maritime challenges alone and called for collective action rooted in transparency and respect for international law.

"India remains committed to working with all partners to advance a safe, secure and stable Indian Ocean Region," Sonowal said.

The Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD), IORA's flagship Track 1.5 platform launched in 2014 in Kochi, convenes ministers, policymakers, academics and industry leaders to deliberate on key regional issues. IORA comprises 23 member states and 12 dialogue partners, focusing on economic cooperation and sustainable development in the Indian Ocean Region, with women's economic empowerment identified as a key cross-cutting priority alongside the blue economy. The 10th edition of the Dialogue, being held on May 7-8, 2026 in New Delhi, features dedicated sessions on maritime security, blue economy, disaster risk management, climate change and women's empowerment.

## Two arrested for kidnaping and ransoming



Keonjhar : Keonjhar police arrested two persons from Salapada over bridge (NH20) Ghasipura police station while kidnaping a businessman and taking him in a car to Cuttack.

According to the police they intercepted the car (OD 22Y 4999) at Salapada bridge after getting a tip on Friday at 9.30 pm. On being verification police learnt that one Lunagariya Jaman Bhai (47) is doing tiles bussiness with Bajarang Lal (accused) of Keonjhar Town. Jaman Bhai belongs to Gujarat and Bajarang Lal basically from Rajasthan.

Yesterday Jaman Bhai had been to keonjhar to get Rs 9 Lakh which was due. But the accused

Bajarang Lal confined him in his house, brutally assaulted, threatened for dire consequences. The accd Bajarang has taken Rs 14,50,000/- from him. The accd kidnaped the victim from keonjhar and was proceeding to cuttack.

Bajarang Lal was threatening unless he pays Rs 33 lakhs to him, he will kill him at any time, police said.

"After receiving written complaint the the accused Bajarang and his driver Muniram were arrested. Further investigation in this connection ongoing going" said SDPO Anandapur, Kamal Kumar Panda. (EOM)

## fourteen hours since young Rudra has been sitting on a tower 100 feet high

DHENKANAL(9/5)It has been fourteen hours since young Rudra has been sitting on a tower 100 feet high. He has alleged that he was fired from his job without any reason. He has also demanded immediate steps for the treatment of his cancer-stricken mother at home and for him to be reinstated in his job. Despite many attempts, two fire brigade teams from Bhubaneswar, Angul and Dhenkanal have died as he did not come down. Similarly, a team from ODRAF has also been deployed for the rescue. He has warned that if he is rescued before giving a written promise to fulfill his demands, he will either jump down or commit suicide by pouring petrol on himself. Meanwhile, the Deputy Collector, Additional SP, Tehsildar, and Town Police Station are also present at the scene. Even after much negotiation, Rudra is not ready to listen to anyone.



## Mahanadi Water Dispute: End of the Deadlock or a Statistical Maze ?

Sambalpur-09/05(DMS) The long-standing water dispute between Odisha and Chhattisgarh over the waters of the Mahanadi River appears to have entered a decisive phase, but questions are now being raised over what critics describe as a "statistical and mathematical trap" behind the newly accepted data.

The debate intensified after the Mahanadi Water Disputes Tribunal officially recorded a joint technical report prepared by both states regarding water flow and water availability in the Mahanadi basin. The report marks the first major consensus between the two governments after years of disagreement over hydrological data and river flow assessments.

According to the report, based on data collected between 1980-81 and 2018-19, the average annual water flow reaching the Hirakud Dam has been estimated at 32.83 million acre-feet (MAF). Out of this, nearly 85 percent — around 27.76 MAF — originates from the Chhattisgarh region, while Odisha's contribution up to Hirakud is estimated at only 4.82 MAF.



The report further states that during drought or low-rainfall years, water inflow into Hirakud may decline to 21.82 MAF under 90 percent dependability conditions. Both states have also reportedly agreed that the total average water availability across the entire Mahanadi basin, from Naraj to the sea, stands at 62.36 MAF.

The tribunal, during its May 2 hearing, granted both states time until May 30 to resolve the remaining contentious issues. While the initial disagreement over measurement of water availability appears to have been addressed, crucial matters such as water sharing between the states and

ensuring continuous river flow during non-monsoon seasons are yet to be settled.

Questions are also being raised over the actual utilisation of the large volume of water claimed to be flowing through Odisha. Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi had earlier informed the Assembly on August 29, 2024, that reduced inflow into Hirakud during summer months has adversely affected the ability of the multipurpose project to achieve its intended objectives in recent years.

The Chief Minister had also informed the Assembly that comparative assessments of river flow between 1991-92 to 2004-

05 and 2005-06 to 2015-16 had been submitted before the tribunal, highlighting the declining non-monsoon water flow in the river.

At the same time, the Odisha government has pointed out that Chhattisgarh has constructed 41 major and medium irrigation projects and nearly 1,874 irrigation structures, along with several barrages and anicuts in the upper reaches of the river basin. Questions continue to remain over the exact number of water-control structures built since 2010 across the Mahanadi and its tributaries including the Seonath, Hasdeo, Ib, and Jonk rivers.

Observers believe that

securing a permanent water security guarantee for Hirakud during non-monsoon periods has now become Odisha's biggest challenge. The state government is under pressure to ensure uninterrupted river flow throughout the year.

Meanwhile, the Mahanadi Banchao Andolan has sharply criticised the statistical framework used in the report. The organisation's convener Sudarshan Das alleged that "mathematical manipulation" has weakened Odisha's rightful claim over the river waters.

He claimed that the data submitted before the tribunal is misleading and creates an impression that Odisha has virtually surrendered its position before Chhattisgarh. Das further stated that the organisation would soon hold a press conference to expose what it calls discrepancies in the report.

With the tribunal's next deadline set for May 30, attention across Odisha is now focused on the future course of the Mahanadi water dispute and whether the latest developments will lead to a final settlement or deepen the controversy further.

## Two arrested in Chips smuggling

Keonjhar : Keonjhar police have taken arrested two accused from different places in connection with the smuggling of a huge quantity of metal chips in Bandha village under Dhokotha GP of Ghasipura police station. The arrested accused are Surendra Patra and Sushanta Patra from Bandha village, under the Ghasipura block.

According to sources, Gayatri Company left about 40,000 cubic meters of chips at the NH 20 construction site about eight years ago. The Revenue Department seized the chips on 13 October 2018 and left them there. However, during the investigation the Mining Department found only 3,965 cubic meters of chips at that location.

Deputy Superintendent of Police Cyber and Economic Offence Police Station, Keonjhar, Bijay Kumar Bihari said that after receiving a complaint from Ghaisipura tahasil, a case (12/2026) was registered, and the two accused were arrested and produced in



court on Thursday. Further investigation is ongoing.

According to sources from a few years ago, the administration seized huge quantities of chips dumped in a ground in Bandha village. In April, 2026 the chips were stolen without the knowledge of the administration.

After this, the Sub Collector Anandapur Nilamadhav Suna ordered the tahasil and mining departments to inquire. On the 2nd, the official from the Tahsil and Mining Department, along with the police personnel visited the place and conducted a preliminary investigation.

During the investigation found huge quantities of chips were found to have been stolen and shifted from the location.

After receiving a complaint, the Revenue and Mining Department visited the site. While verifying the ground, they found that huge quantities of chips had been stolen and dumped there. Later after receiving the complaint, the Keonjhar Cyber and Economic offence police station regarding the theft. After this, the Keonjhar police formed a special squad and on the 7th, after investigation arrested the accused from the Thakurmunda

area of Mayurbhanj district and another from Puri while they were trying to escape.

Sources alleged that they sold the chips without obtaining any permission from the mining department. Later they joined the BJP party to escape arrest in the presence of senior BJP leaders and people's representatives. But the local BJP workers opposed their merger.

The police also seized more than 10 vehicles including a Hyva, many costly four wheel vehicles, and Machines. Because huge quantities of chips were smuggled from the site, the government is losing revenue worth many crores. Hence local people urged the government to conduct a high-level inquiry into this matter, including the buyers of the stolen chips and any political or other influential persons providing protection. Meanwhile, as the police crackdown continues, it remains unclear who is involved and how many people the police can reach.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER  
BRUTANG & HADUA IRRIGATION PROJECT, DASAPALLA  
E-mail: [ccebhip@gmail.com](mailto:ccebhip@gmail.com)

No. 463

Date: 08.05.2026

**Notice Inviting Tender**  
"e" Procurement Notice No. CCE-BHIP-02/2026-27 Dt.08.05.2026

Invites online request for proposal (RFP) tenders in a double-cover system through e-procurement for engagement of a Proof Engineering Consultant (PEC).

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | Name of the Works:   | 01(One) number engagement of a Proof Engineering Consultant (PEC)  |
| 2 | Approximate Estimated cost:                                  | Rs. 81 Lakhs each  |
| 3 | Period of Completion:  | 24 (Twenty four) months  |
| 4 | Date and time of availability of bid document in the portal: | From 10.00 hours of Dt. 11.05.2026 to 17.00 hours of Dt.25.05.2026   |
| 5 | Last date/time for receipt of bids in the portal:            | 17.00 hours of Dt. 25.05.2026  |
| 6 | Date of Opening of Technical Bid:                            | 11:30 Hours of 26.05.2026  |
| 7 | Name and address of the Officer inviting Bid                 | Chief Construction Engineer, Brutang & Hadua Irrigation Project, Dasapalla, Nayagarh-752084. e-mail id :- <a href="mailto:ccebhip@gmail.com">ccebhip@gmail.com</a> |

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal of Odisha Government <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. All information, notices, addendum, corrigendum, cancellation notice etc. if required, will be published in this portal.

32001/177/2627

Chief Construction Engineer  
Brutang & Hadua Irrigation Project, Dasapalla

# Odisha Health Minister Inaugurates Vedanta Lanjigarh's First-of-its-Kind 24x7 Telemedicine Facility

**Bhubaneswar** : New telemedicine facility to benefit over 70,000 people across nearly 70 villages in Kalahandi and adjoining areas. Vedanta's initiatives are strengthening healthcare, education, livelihoods and grassroots art, sports and culture – with a focus on women & child development.

Over 10 lakh lives impacted through Vedanta's community development programmes across Odisha. Lanjigarh: Dr. Mukesh Mahaling, Hon'ble Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Government of Odisha, today inaugurated Vedanta Aluminium's first-of-its-kind 24x7 Telemedicine Facility in Lanjigarh,

Kalahandi district, launched in partnership with Tata 1mg through a virtual event. The initiative marks a major step towards strengthening healthcare access in Kalahandi by bringing timely specialist medical consultation closer to communities across remote villages, employees, families, business partners, etc.

A dedicated Telemedicine Room has also been established at Vedanta Lanjigarh Hospital for assisted consultations. In addition, through the Tata 1mg App, beneficiaries can access free audio and video consultations with nearly 30 specialist and super-specialist doctors, reducing the need for long-distance

travel for medical guidance. The service is expected to benefit more than 70,000 people across nearly 70 remote villages in Kalahandi and adjoining regions.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Mukesh Mahaling, Hon'ble Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Government of Odisha, said, "Vedanta's 24x7 telemedicine facility is a meaningful step towards improving healthcare access for communities in Kalahandi, especially in remote tribal and rural areas where timely medical consultation can make a significant difference. Vedanta's broader work in healthcare, education, women empowerment and livelihoods reflects how

responsible industry can support the state's development priorities. Continued collaboration between government, industry and communities will be important for ensuring inclusive and balanced development across Odisha."

According to Mr. Pranab Kumar Bhattacharyya, CEO Vedanta Alumina Business, "Odisha remains central to Vedanta's growth journey, and the well-being of local communities is at the heart of our work in the state. With the launch of this telemedicine service, we are enhancing last-mile access to quality healthcare for those who need it the most. Across Odisha, especially in

Kalahandi and Rayagada, many such meaningful interventions are rapidly bringing these areas to the socio-economic mainstream of the state. We remain committed to working closely with our local communities and the government to contribute meaningfully to Odisha's inclusive and sustainable development."

Vedanta's diverse community projects such as Project Aarogya bringing healthcare closer to remote villages through preventive care, health camps and medical outreach, while Project Sakhi is helping women build skills, confidence and income opportunities through entrepreneurship and self-

help groups. Project Sangam is strengthening farmer livelihoods through watershed development, irrigation support and climate-resilient agriculture. Vedanta's education initiatives, including DAV Vedanta International School, the first English-medium school in the region, and Nand Ghars which are modernized anganwadis, are expanding access to quality learning, early childhood care, nutrition, healthcare support and women empowerment. Together with youth skilling and community infrastructure projects, these initiatives are helping build healthier, more educated, self-reliant and empowered

communities across the region.

Around Kalahandi and the Raigarh region, these interventions are helping build healthier, more skilled and self-reliant communities. Across Odisha, Vedanta Aluminium's community programmes have positively impacted more than 10 lakh people, supported by over ₹500 crore invested in social development initiatives over the years.

The occasion also highlighted Vedanta Aluminium's world-class alumina refinery in Lanjigarh, India's largest alumina refinery and among the largest globally outside China, with a capacity of 50 lakh tonnes per annum. A

key pillar of India's aluminium value chain, the refinery has strengthened Odisha's position as a major aluminium hub while driving regional progress through employment, local enterprise support, allied livelihoods and socio-economic development around Lanjigarh.

Vedanta Aluminium's Odisha operations have also contributed significantly to the state's industrial and economic development. The company has said it has invested over ₹1 lakh crore in Odisha and supports more than 20,000 MSMEs and business partners, creating large-scale direct and indirect livelihood opportunities across its value chain.

## PRESIDENT OF INDIA HOSTS PRESIDENT OF VIETNAM

The President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu received H.E. Mr. To Lam, President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam at Rashtrapati Bhavan today (May 6, 2026). She also hosted a banquet in his honour.

Welcoming President Lam on his first State Visit to India, the President said that India and Viet Nam share a deep friendship rooted in historical, civilizational, and cultural ties.

The President noted that in recent years, India-Viet Nam bilateral relations have expanded across high-level

exchanges, defence and security cooperation, development partnership, and sectors such as trade, health, science & technology, and tourism. She was happy to note that during this visit, agreements and announcements had been made in important areas such as rare earth minerals, digital and financial technology, culture, and education.

The President was happy to note that India and Viet Nam have decided to further strengthen relations through the "Joint Statement on Enhanced Comprehensive

Strategic Partnership."

The President noted that over the past decade, our bilateral trade has grown significantly, and India is keen to further expand trade in a balanced and mutually beneficial manner.

The President said that within the framework of our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with ASEAN, our relations with Viet Nam are an important part of our 'Act East' policy and Indo-Pacific Vision. She appreciated Viet Nam's participation in the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative.

The President said that defence and security are important pillars of the India-Viet Nam bilateral relations. She underlined India's commitment to working together with Viet Nam to address shared challenges and promote regional peace and stability.

The two leaders agreed that close cooperation between India and Viet Nam can bring immense benefits to our people. The President expressed confidence that under the leadership of President To Lam, the India-Viet Nam relations will grow even stronger.

## Advento Communications Honored for Excellence in PR Services

Bhubaneswar: Odisha's leading PR agency, Advento Communications, was recently honored with an award for Excellence in PR Services by the Bhubaneswar Sambadik Sangh. The recognition took place during a program organized to celebrate World Press Freedom Day at the Suryansh Hotel in Bhubaneswar. The event was attended by several distinguished guests, including BJP State President and Rajya Sabha MP Manmohan Samal, who served as the chief guest, and MLA Babu Singh.

Speaking about the achievement, Mr. Durga Charan Samal said that As one of the best PR agency in Odisha, Advento Communications has been a leading name in Odisha's communication sector since 2010. He remarked that media and PR naturally go hand in hand and expressed that it was a privilege to be recognized by such a respected Press Association. Known for its innovative and efficient service, the Advento Communications has been instrumental in supporting

a wide range of both local and national clients.

Besides Advento Communications, awards in several categories are also given to top media persons and allied sector. For more than one and half a decade Advento Communications have been acting a pivotal role in designing and crafting PR and communication strategy for different Private, Govt and organisations of all genre. Though the agency has its office at Bhubaneswar, but it operates across Odisha.

The event also featured

insights on contemporary journalism from notable figures such as former Rotary Circle Member Ajay Kumar Agarwal, BJP General Secretary Biranchi Narayan Tripathi, Editor of Daily 'Sarkar' Prakash Rath, and former MLA Priyadarshi Mishra. The proceedings were conducted by Rajen Chaudhary, Treasurer of the Utkal Journalists Association, while Pratap Chandra, President of the Bhubaneswar Journalists Association, presided over the meeting.

## Red cross not just an organisation, it is a promise in times of crisis, no one is alone, Dr.S.K.Kalamulla.

Khordha:-9/5- World Red Cross Day was celebrated at the Maitri Bhawan premises of Pranannath Autonomous College, Khordha. The program was presided over by the Principal of PN, Autonomous college, Dr. Purnima Nayak and the former Vice-Chancellor of North Odisha University, Maj. Khirod Prasad Mohanty, was the chief guest and shared his experience about the Red Cross. As the guest of honor, Prof. Subodh Jagdev delivered a fact-based



introductory speech on the Red Cross. Dr. S.K. Kalamulla, a researcher at Cuttack Red Cross, was the keynote speaker and delivered a speech on the role

of the Red Cross in the world and the selfless service attitude of the Red Cross volunteers and workers. He said red cross is not an organisation, it is a promise

that in times of crisis, no one is alone. Whether responding to earthquake, floods, health emergencies or supporting those displaced by war, the Red Cross operate in the

most dangerous, remote or hostile environments, ensuring aid reaches everyone, regardless of nationality, race or religion. Today, is a day to recognise these heroes and also remember those who have lost their lives while supporting our humanitarian mission. Prof. Prafulla Kumar Sahu, Khordha District Coordinator of Red Cross, delivered the guest introduction and welcome speech. The guests paid tribute to the founder of the Red Cross, Jan Henry Dunant, by placing floral wreaths on his portrait.

Sambalpur : Shri Sambheet Saurav Nayak (IRTS), assumed charge as Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) of Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) on Thursday. Shri Nayak is 2012 batch Indian Railway Traffic Service (IRTS) officer and has held key operational, commercial, and safety roles in East Coast Railways serving as Senior Divisional Commercial Manager (Sr DCM), Khurda Road; Senior Divisional Commercial Manager (Sr DCM), Sambalpur; and Senior Divisional Safety Officer (Sr DSO), Sambalpur. He



has been instrumental in executing Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects including both greenfield and brownfield infrastructure projects in Sambalpur Division. Team MCL looks forward to his diverse field experience,

leadership and administrative expertise to further strengthen vigilance administration, transparency and ethical governance in the company towards ensuring the nation's energy security.

## Legal Frameworks Must Evolve with Changing Demography: Law Minister

**Bhubaneswar** : In a significant initiative aligned with the vision of Viksit Odisha 2036 and 2047, the Department of Law, Government of Odisha, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), today organised a high-level multi-sectoral consultation on "Demographic Change and Legal Systems: Preparing for Emerging Human Futures" at Mayfair Convention, Bhubaneswar. The consultation focused on how emerging demographic realities—including ageing, changing family structures, declining fertility, adolescent transitions, migration and reproductive technologies—are reshaping governance systems, public institutions and legal frameworks in the state. The consultation is among the first such initiatives in the country to examine how demographic transition is influencing legal systems, governance institutions and public policy frameworks. It

sought to initiate a forward-looking dialogue on preparing legal and institutional systems for emerging social realities arising from demographic change.

Inaugurating the consultation, Hon'ble Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan emphasised that governance systems must increasingly anticipate social change rather than merely respond to it. "As Odisha moves towards Viksit Odisha 2036 and 2047, our legal and institutional systems must remain responsive to changing demographic and social realities. Law cannot remain static when society itself is evolving," the Minister stated. He appreciated the collaboration between the Department of Law and UNFPA, describing it as a visionary initiative that brings together demographic evidence and legal analysis to support future-ready governance. The Law

Minister also emphasized that the Odisha Government is set to establish five new cyber courts to ensure speedy justice in cybercrime cases and seven Fast Track Courts for women will be established to ensure the swift disposal of cases related to crimes against women.

Advocate General, Government of Odisha, Pitambar Acharya, highlighted the growing complexity of legal interpretation in a rapidly changing society. "Courts today are increasingly engaging with issues arising out of changing family structures, care responsibilities and emerging social realities. Discussions during the inaugural session highlighted that demographic transition is not merely altering population structures, but is also influencing how institutions respond to issues relating to ageing, adolescents, caregiving, migration and



reproductive choices. Odisha is currently undergoing a rapid demographic transition characterised by declining fertility, increasing life expectancy and a steadily rising elderly population. With fertility levels declining to around 1.7 and family structures changing significantly, the state is witnessing important shifts in age composition and social relationships. These trends have been highlighted in

various demographic analyses and projections of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the only United Nations agency mandated to work on population and demographic issues globally. Chief Secretary, Odisha, Anu Garg emphasised that demographic transition would play a defining role in shaping the future trajectory of economic, health and social capital under Odisha Vision 2036 and 2047. "Demographic change is not

merely about population numbers. It influences families, labour participation, care systems, social protection frameworks and access to justice. Preparing for demographic transition and preparing for Viksit Odisha must go hand in hand," she stated.

The consultation also underscored the importance of anticipatory governance and evidence based institutional responses as Odisha prepares for long-term social transformation arising from demographic shifts. Chairperson, Odisha Law Commission, Justice Biswanath Rath underlined the importance of continuously examining whether legal systems remain aligned with evolving societal realities and emerging vulnerabilities. Principal Secretary to Government, Law Department, Pabitra Mohan Samal noted that the initiative marked an

important institutional dialogue between law, governance and demographic evidence, and highlighted the need for greater integration between demographic insights and public policy frameworks.

Speaking on the occasion, Nadeem Noor, Head of Office, UNFPA Odisha, highlighted the uniqueness of the partnership between the Department of Law and UNFPA in bringing demographic perspectives into legal discourse. "This initiative recognises that demographic transition is fundamentally reshaping how societies function. The analysis of several judicial decisions demonstrates that these shifts are already visible within legal systems and institutional responses," he stated. A key highlight of the consultation was the release of the reflective compendium titled "Law in a Changing Society: Demographic Transition and Legal Frameworks in

Odisha", which analyses several judicial decisions to examine the intersection between demographic change, governance and legal systems in Odisha.

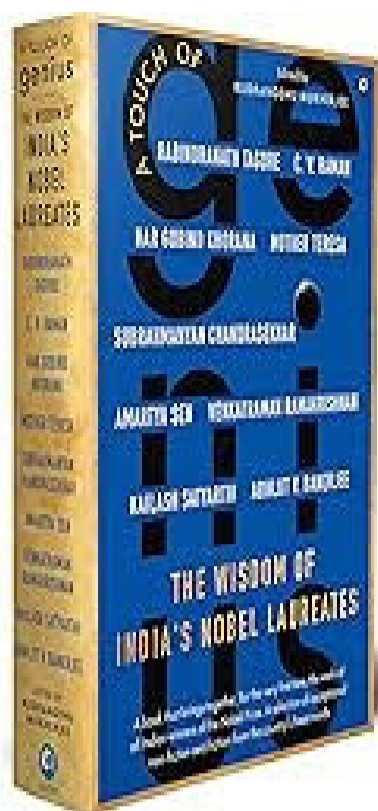
At this programme, Principal Secretary of the Law Department, Dr. Pabitra Mohan Samal delivered the welcome address. At the end, UNFPA representative Surya Prakash proposed the vote of thanks.

The consultation also featured thematic panel discussions involving senior administrators, legal experts, academics and development practitioners on issues relating to ageing, changing family systems, adolescent realities, assisted reproductive technologies, care responsibilities and emerging institutional responses. The event concluded with a shared recognition that demographic transition is not a distant future concern, but a present governance reality that requires continuous dialogue between law, policy and demographic evidence.

## An Amazing Cerebral Feat

BhaskarParichha

A Touch of Genius, edited by Rudrangshu Mukherjee, is an ambitious and intellectually rich anthology that brings together the voices of India-linked Nobel laureates across disciplines, generations, and sensibilities. The very premise of the book-curating writings from figures as diverse as Rabindranath Tagore, C. V. Raman, Amartya Sen, and Abhijit V. Banerjee-signals both its scope and its challenge. What emerges is not merely a collection of distinguished writings but a mosaic of intellectual inquiry that reflects the breadth of human thought. The anthology includes over seventy pieces-essays, lectures, poems, reflections, and prayers-organized into ten thematic sections such as Literature, Science, Religion and Philosophy, Inequality and Injustice, and Politics. This structure allows the reader to move fluidly between disciplines while also appreciating the underlying unity of human curiosity. The inclusion of literary works by Tagore alongside scientific reflections by Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar or biological insights from Har Gobind Khorana highlights how different modes of knowledge ultimately converge in their attempt to understand the world. One gripping aspect of the book is its ability to humanize greatness. These Nobel laureates are often viewed through the lens of their monumental achievements, yet here they appear as thinkers engaged in dialogue with society, morality, and themselves. The writings of Mother Teresa, for instance, foreground compassion and service, while Kailash Satyarthi brings urgency to questions of justice and human dignity.



Together, these voices create a powerful moral and intellectual continuum. Mukherjee's editorial vision is both inclusive and deliberate. By bringing together Indian citizens, naturalized Indians, and those historically connected to India, he subtly expands the idea of "Indian intellectual heritage" beyond rigid boundaries. This is particularly significant in a globalized intellectual landscape, where ideas transcend geography even as they

remain rooted in lived experiences.

*The voluminous book - it has more than 800 pages - offers considerable variety. Some pieces are dense and academic, especially in the sections on science and economics, while others-particularly in literature and memoir-are lyrical and deeply reflective. This unevenness in tone may challenge some readers, but it also reflects the diversity of the contributors themselves. The anthology does not aim for uniformity; instead, it celebrates difference.*

A Touch of Genius is a remarkable intellectual achievement. It is not a book to be read hurriedly but one to be revisited, contemplated, and engaged with over time. For readers interested in the intersections of literature, science, ethics, and public life, this anthology offers both depth and inspiration. It stands as a testament to the enduring power of ideas and to the diverse ways in which Indian minds have shaped the global intellectual tradition.

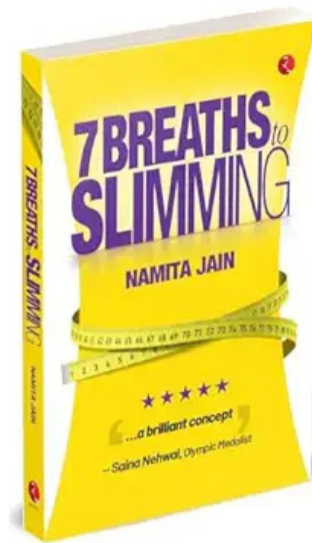
**A Touch of Genius**  
Ed. Rudrangshu Mukherjee  
Aleph Books  
New Delhi

## Holistic Perspective on Slimming

Dharma Raj

In a crowded wellness landscape dominated by fad diets and quick fixes, 7 Breaths to Slimming by Namita Jain offers a refreshingly simple and grounded alternative. Drawing on over three decades of experience in health, nutrition, and fitness, Jain presents a method that shifts the focus from external control-calories, restrictions, rigid plans-to an internal, often overlooked tool: the breath.

At the heart of the book lies a compelling premise-that conscious breathing can serve as the foundation for sustainable weight loss and overall well-being. Rather than advocating extreme dietary changes or intense workout regimens, Jain introduces a calm, science-backed approach rooted in mindful breathing. This makes the book particularly appealing to readers fatigued by conflicting diet advice and the pressures of achieving rapid results. The structure of the book is clear and accessible, guiding readers through the physiological and psychological connections between breath, stress, and metabolism. Jain explains how activating the body's relaxation response through controlled breathing can reduce stress hormones, improve digestion, and regulate eating patterns. In doing so, she



bridges modern wellness science with intuitive practices that feel both practical and sustainable. One major aspect of the book is its emphasis on mindful eating and portion control. Instead of prescribing strict rules, Jain encourages awareness-eating slowly, recognizing hunger cues, and developing a more conscious relationship with food. This approach naturally addresses overeating and emotional eating, two major barriers to healthy weight management. Her method does not rely on willpower alone; rather, it gently reshapes habits by cultivating calmness and self-awareness. The book also stands out for its

accessibility. Jain's writing is straightforward, avoiding technical jargon while still maintaining credibility. Real-life applications and relatable insights make the concepts easy to integrate into daily life. The idea that something as simple and cost-free as breathing can have a transformative impact is both empowering and reassuring. Another strength lies in the book's holistic perspective. The book is not just about losing weight; it is about achieving balance-physically, mentally, and emotionally. By addressing stress and its role in unhealthy eating patterns, Jain broadens the conversation beyond appearance to overall well-being. This makes the book relevant not only for those seeking weight loss but also for anyone interested in mindful living. Largely, 7 Breaths to Slimming is a thoughtful and practical guide that redefines the approach to weight loss. It replaces urgency with patience and discipline with awareness, offering readers a sustainable path to health. In emphasizing breath as a powerful yet simple tool, Jain reminds us that sometimes the most effective solutions are also the most fundamental. 7 Breaths to Slimming  
Namita Jain  
Rupa Publications  
New Delhi

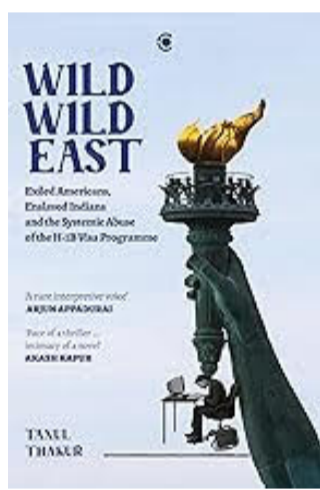
## A Searing Exposé of H-1B Visa

BhaskarParichha

In Wild Wild East, Tanul Thakur delivers a searing, deeply researched exposé of the H-1B visa programme, peeling back its polished surface to reveal a system riddled with exploitation, opacity, and systemic abuse. What begins as the story of three individuals-Kumar Pandravad, Virgil Bierschwala, and Manu Mitra-quickly expands into a sweeping indictment of a transnational ecosystem that spans corporations, governments, and institutions across India and the United States.

Thakur's central argument is stark: the H-1B visa system, widely perceived as a gateway for global talent, has in many cases devolved into a mechanism for labour exploitation and corporate gain. Drawing on eight years of investigation, he presents a dense web of evidence-court records, financial data, personal testimonies, and policy analysis-to demonstrate how wage violations, fraudulent practices, and systemic loopholes have been normalized. The figure he cites-over \$121 million in documented wage violations-serves as both a statistic and a symbol of a much larger, underreported crisis.

One of the book's most compelling strengths is its narrative approach. Despite



dealing with complex legal and economic frameworks, Thakur writes with the urgency and clarity of a storyteller. The personal journeys of the three central figures anchor the narrative, humanizing what could otherwise feel like an abstract policy critique. Their struggles-marked by precarity, disillusionment, and resilience-offer a powerful counterpoint to the dominant narrative of upward mobility associated with the H-1B visa.

The book also excels in exposing the complicity of multiple stakeholders. Thakur does not limit his critique to shadowy intermediaries or "bad actors." Instead, he broadens the lens to include major technology firms, outsourcing companies,

educational consultancies, and even sections of the media and policy establishment. This systemic perspective is one of the book's defining features, challenging readers to reconsider widely accepted assumptions about globalization, meritocracy, and the so-called "American Dream."

Equally noteworthy is the book's refusal to fall into simplistic binaries. Rather than framing Indian and American workers as competitors, Thakur highlights how both groups are often victims of the same exploitative structures. This nuanced approach adds intellectual depth to the narrative, positioning the book as more than just an exposé-it becomes a critique of the global labour economy itself.

An intelligent book, Wild Wild East is a courageous and necessary work. It combines investigative rigour with moral clarity, offering readers both information and insight. In an era where migration, labour, and technology intersect in increasingly complex ways, Tanul Thakur's book stands out as a vital contribution-provocative, unsettling, and ultimately indispensable.

Wild Wild East  
Tanul Thakur  
Westland/Context  
New Delhi

## Trauma &amp; Cultural Specificity

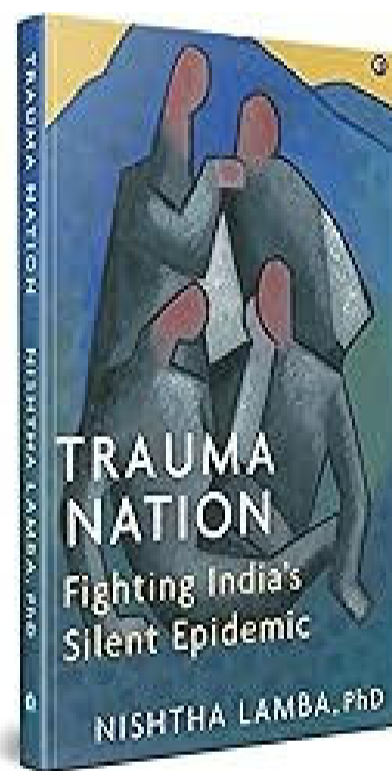
Arun Mishra

In Trauma Nation, Nishtha Lamba confronts one of the most under-acknowledged crises of contemporary India-the pervasive and often invisible impact of psychological trauma. With a blend of academic rigor and emotional sensitivity, the book positions trauma not as an individual anomaly but as a widespread social condition, embedded in families, institutions, and collective memory.

Lamba's central premise is both urgent and unsettling: trauma in India operates like a "silent epidemic," shaping behaviors, relationships, and even physical health, often without conscious recognition. Moving beyond clinical definitions, she explores how everyday experiences-childhood neglect, toxic relationships, societal pressures, accidents, and even historical upheavals-leave deep psychological imprints. These imprints, she argues, are not contained within individuals but are transmitted across generations, creating cycles of pain that remain largely unaddressed.

The book's most compelling features is its narrative approach. Lamba interweaves scientific research with deeply personal accounts from survivors, allowing readers to see trauma not as an abstract concept but as lived reality. These stories are raw and relatable, giving voice to emotions-fear, and shame, confusion-that many experience but struggle to articulate. By grounding theory in human experience, she makes complex psychological ideas accessible without diluting their depth.

The book also stands out for its cultural specificity. While trauma has been extensively studied in Western contexts, Trauma Nation situates the discussion firmly within Indian



society. Lamba examines how social norms, family structures, and cultural expectations often suppress conversations around mental health, thereby intensifying the effects of trauma. Her insights into intergenerational trauma are particularly powerful, illustrating how unresolved pain can be inherited like a "cursed heirloom," shaping identities and choices in subtle yet profound ways.

The writing is compassionate yet unflinching. Lamba does not shy away from the harsh realities of trauma, but neither does

Lamba's central premise is both urgent and unsettling: trauma in India operates like a "silent epidemic," shaping behaviors, relationships, and even physical health, often without conscious recognition. Moving beyond clinical definitions, she explores how everyday experiences-childhood neglect, toxic relationships, societal pressures, accidents, and even historical upheavals-leave deep psychological imprints. These imprints, she argues, are not contained within individuals but are transmitted across generations, creating cycles of pain that remain largely unaddressed.

she leave the reader in despair. Instead, she offers pathways toward healing-emphasizing awareness, self-compassion, and the importance of safe psychological spaces. Her integration of Eastern and Western perspectives adds a valuable dimension, suggesting that healing must be both scientifically informed and culturally rooted.

It is an essential and timely work. It succeeds not only as a psychological study but also as a social commentary, urging a shift in how mental health is perceived and addressed in India. Lamba's work is both a mirror and a call to action-inviting readers to confront difficult truths while also imagining the possibility of healing.

In a society where silence often surrounds suffering, Trauma Nation breaks that silence with clarity, empathy, and purpose.

Trauma Nation  
Nishtha Lamba  
Aleph Books  
New Delhi

## Far beyond a Biography

BhaskarParichha

'MADE IN INDIA: The Story of DeshBandhu Gupta, Lupin and Indian Pharma' is a compelling and deeply grounded account of how individual conviction can intersect with national transformation. At its heart is the extraordinary journey of DeshBandhu Gupta, but the book expands far beyond biography to become a narrative about India's emergence as a global pharmaceutical force. What makes this work stand out is its emphasis on process rather than myth. Gupta's rise-from a modest academic life in Rajasthan to building Lupin Limited into a global enterprise-is portrayed as a series of deliberate, often difficult

choices. The backdrop of the License Raj is not merely historical context; it becomes an active force shaping the trajectory of Indian entrepreneurship. In this environment of constraint, Gupta's belief that affordable medicine should be accessible to all acquires both moral and strategic significance. The authors, Manish Sabharwal and Sundeep Khanna, bring a rare combination of policy insight and narrative clarity. Their writing captures the texture of institution-building in India-where progress is incremental, setbacks are frequent, and resilience becomes the defining trait. Rather than presenting success as inevitable, they show how it is constructed

patiently, often under immense pressure.

A particularly enriching dimension of the book is its recognition of Manju Gupta and her role in shaping Lupin's broader social mission. Through her work in rural development and community engagement, the story gains a human depth that extends beyond corporate milestones. It reinforces the idea that enduring institutions are rooted not just in financial success but in social commitment.

The narrative also situates Gupta within a wider constellation of pharmaceutical pioneers, including Yusuf Hamied, Kallam Anji Reddy, Dilip Shangvi, and Parvinder Singh. This collective framing is

*A particularly enriching dimension of the book is its recognition of Manju Gupta and her role in shaping Lupin's broader social mission. Through her work in rural development and community engagement, the story gains a human depth that extends beyond corporate milestones. It reinforces the idea that enduring institutions are rooted not just in financial success but in social commitment.*

one of the book's strongest contributions. It shows that India's rise as the "pharmacy to the world" was not accidental,

but the result of a shared entrepreneurial vision that challenged global monopolies and redefined access to medicine.

Equally engaging is the way the book interweaves three narratives-the evolution of India's pharmaceutical industry, the rise of Lupin, and Gupta's personal transformation. These threads complement one another, creating a rich, multi-layered account that is both informative and inspiring. The industry's shift from dependence on imports to global leadership is presented with clarity, making complex developments accessible without diluting their significance. The book also resonates strongly in a contemporary

context, where questions of healthcare access, affordability, and supply chain resilience dominate global conversations. By tracing the roots of India's pharmaceutical capabilities, it offers readers a deeper appreciation of how strategic vision, scientific capacity, and entrepreneurial courage can converge to shape global outcomes. The narrative implicitly underscores the importance of policy frameworks, talent development, and long-term thinking in building industries that serve both national and international needs. This gorgeously brought out book succeeds because it remains grounded in reality while still offering inspiration. It avoids

easy conclusions and instead highlights the sustained effort required to build something meaningful. Gupta's journey becomes a lens through which readers can understand not just entrepreneurship, but the making of modern India itself. For entrepreneurs, students of business history, and anyone interested in the intersection of enterprise and nation-building, this book offers both insight and perspective. It is a reminder that transformative change is rarely sudden-it is built, step by step, by those willing to persist against the odds. MADE IN INDIA  
Manish Sabharwal/Sundeep Khanna  
Juggernaut  
New Delhi

# Suvendu Adhikari Begins Term With Small, Diverse Cabinet In Bengal

New Delhi: West Bengal's new Chief Minister, Suvendu Adhikari, on Saturday took oath of office and secrecy in a grand ceremony at Kolkata's Brigade Parade Ground, heading a tiny yet well-represented cabinet in terms of gender, region, and experience. It will be the first Bharatiya Janata Party government in the state. It will also be the first time in 55 years that the government will be headed by someone from outside Kolkata. Suvendu hails from Purba Medinipur district in West Bengal, and he has mostly worked in and around this region. It was his on-ground strategy and involvement in the Nandigram agitation against the then Left Front government's land acquisition for industrialisation that helped catapult Mamata Banerjee to head the state government in 2011. The last Chief Minister from outside Kolkata was Ajoy Kumar Mukherjee, also from Purba Medinipur, whose term ended in June 1971. He led the United Front government. Since then, Jyoti Basu, Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, and Mamata Banerjee have all been residents of the state capital. For Dilip Ghosh, it was a recognition of the work he has done even under incriminating conditions and hostility. As an organiser with the Rashtriya



Swayamsevak Sangh, he helped build the Bharatiya Janata Party's network across West Bengal, resulting in significant electoral gains for the party. He paved the way to his maiden Assembly victory in 2016 and led his party to a record 18-seat win in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections in West Bengal. He again won, this time from the Medinipur Parliamentary constituency. The 61-year-old leader is known for his regular morning walks, and he launched a political campaign, "Chai Pe Charcha", where he spoke to people while sipping tea. For some time, it appeared he was drifting away from the current state party leadership.

However, the current Bharatiya Janata Party President, Samik Bhattacharya, has successfully brought all leaders together. If it was recognition of his successful leadership in challenging political conditions for Ghosh, inducting Agnimitra Paul into the first Bharatiya Janata Party cabinet was the party's salute to women's power, which has been instrumental in the win. The 51-year-old is a fashion designer who went on to defend the Asansol Dakshin seat this time with a wider margin. She had served as the President of the West Bengal unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party Mahila Morcha and as the party's

General Secretary. By including Nisith Pramanik and Ashok Kirtania, the Bharatiya Janata Party has recognized West Bengal's two largest Scheduled Caste communities. While the two groupings have been delivering fractured mandates of late, this time their choice has largely been consolidated. Pramanik, representing the Rajbanshis, who comprise over 18 per cent, is West Bengal's largest Scheduled Caste group. The total population is estimated at around half a crore, spread across Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, Malda, and Murshidabad districts, making them an

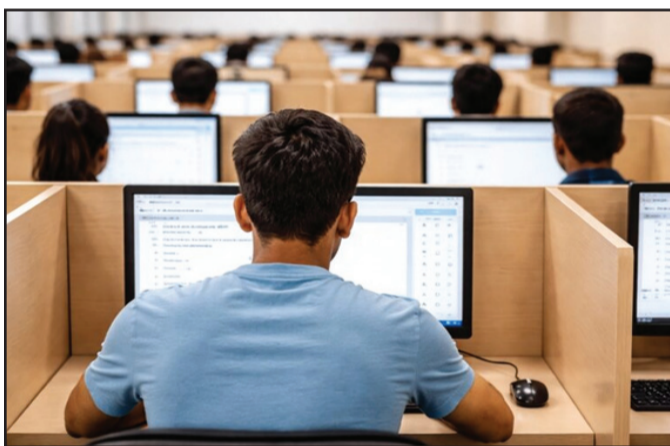
important vote bank. The 40-year-old was Union Minister of State for Home Affairs and Youth Affairs between 2021 and 2024. He lost the subsequent Parliamentary election. In 2021, he represented the Dinhat Assembly constituency. This time, he won from the Mathabhanga constituency in the Cooch Behar district. Kirtania belongs to the socio-religious group, Matua, whose roots can be traced back to the Namasudra movement led by Harichand Thakur in the 19th century. Originally formed to challenge caste-based discrimination and promote social equality, the Matuas became a significant voice for marginalised Hindus, particularly those who migrated from the East Pakistan, later Bangladesh, during Partition. In West Bengal, they are concentrated in districts like North 24 Parganas and Nadia, where their numbers make them a decisive electoral bloc. He retained the Bongaon Uttar seat in North 24 Parganas district in the crucial Matua belt bordering Bangladesh. Meanwhile, the Bharatiya Janata Party also did well in the tribal areas, particularly in the western parts of the state, hoisting the saffron flag across large tracts of largely forested land bordering Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha.

# Former WB CM Mamata Banerjee holds Rabindra Jayanti at her residence

Kolkata, 9/5: Former West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday paid tribute to Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore on the occasion of Rabindra Jayanti by garlanding his portrait at her residence, while also alleging restrictions on public celebrations of the cultural event. Banerjee said permission had been sought to organise Rabindra Jayanti programmes at multiple locations, but it was denied, forcing her to hold the observance at her residence. "Permission was sought for Rabindra Jayanti celebrations at 3 places. It was denied. So, I decided to continue it here at my residence. They asked all decorators not to provide any help...I appeal to all like-minded parties to stop the BJP," she said. Pochishe Boishakh, observed on the 25th day of the Bengali month of Boishakh, marks the birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore and is regarded as one of the most significant cultural occasions in West Bengal and among Bengali communities worldwide. Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, along with newly sworn-in West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari, paid tributes to Rabindranath Tagore on his 165th birth anniversary at Kolkata's iconic Brigade Parade Ground. Prime Minister Modi described it as a "pleasant coincidence" that the oath-taking ceremony of the first-ever BJP government in West Bengal took place on Pochishe Boishakh. In a post on X, PM Modi said, "In a pleasant coincidence, the oath-taking ceremony of the first-ever BJP Government in West Bengal took place on Pochishe Boishakh, the Jayanti of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore. At the ceremony, tributes were paid to Gurudev Tagore. His timeless words have long stirred the conscience of the nation and his vision continues to illuminate India's development journey." Meanwhile, Suvendu Adhikari was sworn in as the 9th Chief Minister of West Bengal, marking the end of the Trinamool Congress's 15-year rule in the state. Along with Adhikari, senior BJP leaders Dilip Ghosh, Agnimitra Paul, Ashok Kirtania, Kshudiram Tudu and Nisith Pramanik also took oath as ministers in the West Bengal cabinet during the swearing-in ceremony held in Kolkata. The ceremony was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Union Ministers JP Nadda and Dharmendra Pradhan, among several other senior party leaders. Chief Ministers from various BJP-ruled states also attended the event, including Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami. Following the swearing-in ceremony, Prime Minister Modi also met the families of slain BJP workers Debasish Mondal, Soumitra Ghoshal and Ananda Paul.

# Centre Fully Operationalises Four Labour Codes After Over 5 Years

New Delhi, 9/5: The Centre has completed the implementation of the four labour codes by notifying the corresponding rules in the official gazette, more than five years after the reforms were first introduced to overhaul India's labour law framework. The four labour codes — the Code on Wages, 2019, the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, the Code on Social Security, 2020, and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 — had come into force on November 21, 2025. With the publication of the rules, the new labour regime has now become fully operational across the country. Notably, the labour codes were brought in to replace and consolidate 29 existing labour laws into a simplified structure. However, according to officials, some operational aspects of the codes could not be implemented earlier due to the absence of notified rules. Earlier in May, Labour Minister Dr Mansukh



Mandaviya launched a nationwide annual health check-up initiative for all workers aged 40 and above under new Labour Codes. The free health check-ups for all workers above 40 years of age will now be conducted across the country every year. Mandaviya said the implementation of the four Labour Codes reflects Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guarantee of ensuring dignity, welfare and social security for workers across the

country. Highlighting key labour reforms, the minister stated that provisions for equal wages for men and women workers have been ensured, maternity leave has been increased from 12 weeks to 26 weeks and work-from-home provisions for women have also been incorporated. In addition, the framework provides for setting up a National Reskilling Fund to support workers who lose employment and require fresh training for new opportunities.

# 'Dishonestly Occupying Parts Of Country': Kejriwal Likens PM Modi To Aurangzeb

New Delhi, 9/5: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) National Convenor Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday likened Prime Minister Narendra Modi to tyrant Mughal emperor Aurangzeb and accused him of dishonestly occupying large parts of the country and now reached Punjab. Addressing a press conference in the backdrop of Enforcement Directorate (ED) action against Punjab Minister Sanjeev Arora, Kejriwal said, "Punjab is the land of the Gurus. Several hundred years ago, Aurangzeb seized control of many parts of the country through crime and oppression. Modi ji too has deceitfully seized control of many parts of the country. After that, Aurangzeb arrived in Punjab. Modi ji has now arrived in Punjab as well." Invoking the issue of Punjab identity and the sacrifices of Sikh Gurus, Kejriwal said, "Aurangzeb perpetrated great atrocities on the Gurus. Modi ji is also perpetrating atrocities on Punjabis. But the Gurus



confronted Aurangzeb through sacrifice and saved the people. Today, drawing inspiration from the Gurus' sacrifice, Punjab will confront Modi ji's atrocities and save the entire country from his oppression." Kejriwal referred to the now-withdrawn farm laws and said, "A few years ago, Modi ji had challenged Punjab's farmers, and he had to bow before them. Today, Modi ji has challenged the entire Punjab." Insinuating political motives behind ED raids in Punjab, Kejriwal said, "As soon

as the Bengal elections ended, Modi ji started conducting daily ED raids in Punjab. In the past few years, Modi ji has dealt Punjab a heavy blow. Punjabis have been harassed in every possible way." He said attacks were launched on Punjab's water, attempts were made to take over Panjab University, funds for rural development were withheld, and now, relentless ED raids have been unleashed. Referring to ED action against a former AAP Rajya Sabha MP, Ashok Mittal, he said,

"A raid was carried out at Ashok Mittal's place, and the very next day, he was brought into the BJP. This means the purpose of the ED raid wasn't to uncover stolen money. It was solely to break Ashok Mittal and get him to join the BJP. "Just a few days ago, a raid was also conducted at Sanjeev Arora's place. When he didn't join the BJP, another raid was carried out at his premises," he said. The ED on Saturday arrested Arora, one of the powerful Cabinet ministers in the Bhagwant Mann-led Punjab government, from his official residence in Sector 2 in Chandigarh. The action came after the ED carried out extensive search operations on Sanjeev Arora's residences and offices under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) of 2002. However, there is no official statement from the ED on his arrest. Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leader Bikram Singh Majithia claimed that Arora has been arrested for alleged GST fraud.

# Hydroponic Marijuana Worth Rs 34.9 Crore Seized At Delhi Airport From Bangkok Passengers

New Delhi: Delhi Customs officials at the Indira Gandhi International Airport have seized 34,935 grams of suspected hydroponic marijuana from two passengers who arrived from Bangkok on flight TG-323, officials said on Thursday. The contraband was detected after the passengers were flagged through the Advance Passenger Information System (APIS) profiling and intercepted by Customs officers after they crossed the Green Channel at the airport. According to officials, the passengers came under suspicion during routine profiling procedures carried out by Customs authorities. Their baggage was subsequently subjected to X-ray screening, during which suspicious images were noticed by officials. A detailed examination of the luggage led to the recovery of 31 vacuum-sealed packets



containing a substance suspected to be hydroponic weed, commonly referred to as ganja or marijuana. In an official statement, Delhi Customs said, "On the basis of APIS profiling, two passengers travelling from Bangkok to Delhi by Flight No. TG-323 dated 08.05.2026 were intercepted by Customs officers after crossing the Customs

Green Channel at Indira Gandhi International Airport." Officials further stated that the recovered substance weighed a total of 34,935 grams, including the packing material. "The total gross weight of the recovered substance was found to be 34,935 grams (including packing material). Prima facie, it appeared to be ganja/

marijuana. The market value is approximately 34,935 crores in the market," the statement added. According to Customs officials, the act amounts to a violation of Section 8 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, and is punishable under Sections 20, 23 and 29 of the Act. Both passengers have been arrested under the relevant provisions of the NDPS Act, 1985, officials confirmed. The seized narcotics are estimated to be worth nearly Rs 34,935 crore in the Indian illicit drug market, making it one of the significant drug recoveries at the airport in recent times. Officials said that further investigation is currently underway to ascertain the source, intended recipients and possible links to any larger drug trafficking network.

# Social Security, Pension Schemes Show Our Commitment To Bring Dignity, Financial Security To People: PM Modi

New Delhi, 9/5: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said that key Jan Suraksha Schemes, which completed 11 years of providing social security cover, reflect the government's commitment to bring dignity, assurance and financial security into the lives of the people of India. Launched on May 9, 2015, by PM Modi, the schemes — Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), and Atal Pension Yojana (APY) — were envisioned to provide affordable financial protection to all, particularly underserved and vulnerable sections of society. "On this day, 11 years ago, key social security and pension schemes were launched by the NDA Government. They reflect our commitment to bring dignity, assurance and financial security into the lives of the people of India," the Prime Minister said in a post on X. Sharing a



MyGovIndia thread, PM Modi said that "This thread highlights that the PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and PM Suraksha Bima Yojana have had a positive impact at the grassroots". PM Modi further stated that the Atal Pension Yojana has been highly beneficial for many people, enabling them to lead a more secure life in their old age. "The scheme reflects our commitment to making social security

accessible and inclusive. It is gladdening to see our Nari Shakti in particular benefit from this scheme," he mentioned. The three Jan Suraksha Schemes have reached 94.5 crore in cumulative enrolments. The enrolments under PMJJBY have exceeded 27.43 crore; under PMSBY, more than 58.09 crore people have enrolled; and more than 9.04 crore individuals have enrolled in the APY scheme (till April 30).

# India Thanks Portugal For Support In Extraditing Fugitive Abhay Rana

Lisbon, 9/5: India on Saturday thanked the Portugal government and its law enforcement authorities for their cooperation and support in the successful extradition of wanted fugitive Abhay Rana to India. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), in coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), successfully secured the extradition of Abhay alias Abhay Rana from Portugal to India. The Embassy of India in Lisbon also issued a statement, thanking the Portuguese authorities after the conclusion of the extradition process. "Abhay Rana is charged with several serious offences and will now be subject to trial in the Indian courts. This extradition was carried out under the bilateral extradition agreement between the India and Portugal, following the issuance of an Interpol Red Notice," read a statement issued by the Indian Embassy. "The return of Abhay Rana marks an important step in the ongoing efforts of the Government of India to extradite fugitives currently residing in



various foreign countries. The success of this operation was made possible through active and sustained coordination between the Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, Haryana Police and the Embassy of India in Lisbon and various law enforcement agencies of Portugal," it added. According to the CBI, Abhay alias Abhay Rana, who was

the subject of an Interpol Red Notice, was wanted by the Haryana Police in multiple criminal cases registered in the state. The charges against him include extortion, criminal intimidation, operating an organised crime syndicate, attempt to murder, and issuing life threats. Investigators revealed that, in one of the cases registered

in Karnal district of Haryana, the accused, along with his associates, allegedly threatened local businessmen through social media platforms, including WhatsApp calls, demanding ransom payments. Those who failed to comply with the demands were reportedly assaulted by members of the syndicate. Following the completion of the investigation, a

charge sheet was filed against the accused before the competent court. On the request of Haryana Police, the National Central Bureau (NCB)-New Delhi got an Interpol Red Notice issued against the accused. India submitted a formal extradition request after he was geo-located and arrested by the Portuguese authorities. Following due legal proceedings, the Portuguese authorities approved the extradition of the accused to India. A Haryana Police escort team subsequently travelled to Portugal, where the accused was formally handed over to Indian authorities. The team, along with the accused, arrived at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi on Saturday. CBI, as the National Central Bureau for Interpol in India, coordinates with all law enforcement agencies in India through Bharatpol for assistance via Interpol channels. More than 160 wanted criminals have been successfully brought back to India in the last few years through coordination via Interpol channels.

# Japan Reports More Than 400 Measles Cases Since January

Tokyo: Japan has recorded more than 400 measles cases since January, a national health research body said. According to the Japan Institute for Health Security, medical institutions across the country reported 68 measles cases in the week through April 26, bringing the cumulative total for this year to 436. In comparison, 96 cases were recorded during the same period last year, and the full-year total for 2025 stood at 265. Tokyo alone has recorded 211 cases this year, accounting for nearly half of the national total. Including the neighboring prefectures of Kanagawa, Chiba and Saitama, the greater Tokyo metropolitan area has reported more than 300 cases in total. In a notice issued in late April, the institute said most domestic measles patients this year were teenagers and people in their 20s, around half of whom had either not completed the recommended two-dose vaccination schedule or had unclear vaccination histories. The highest annual number of measles cases in Japan

in the past decade was 744 in 2019. The institute warned that measles is highly contagious, with more than 90 per cent of non-immune individuals likely to become infected after exposure to the virus. Severe cases can lead to complications such as pneumonia and encephalitis. Japan was declared measles-free by the World Health Organization in 2015. However, since 2023, the number of measles cases reported worldwide has continued to rise, increasing the risk of imported infections. The institute said receiving two doses of the vaccine remains the most effective way to prevent measles infection and severe illness. It also advised travelers heading to countries or regions where measles may be spreading to confirm their vaccination status beforehand. Xinhua news agency reported. People experiencing symptoms such as fever, rash, coughing, or conjunctival redness were urged to contact medical institutions before seeking treatment and to inform healthcare providers of any recent overseas travel or contact with infected individuals.

# S. Korea, US Join Hands To Advance Shipbuilding Cooperation

Washington, 9/5: South Korea and the United States have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to advance bilateral shipbuilding cooperation, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department said, as Seoul has committed to help revitalise the U.S. shipbuilding sector as part of a bilateral trade agreement. Park Jung-sung, deputy minister for trade at Seoul's Ministry of Trade, Industry and Resources (MOTIR), and U.S. Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade William Kimmitt inked the MOU in Washington, overseen by Industry Minister Kim Jung-kwan and Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, according to the International Trade Administration. The MOU signing came as South Korea has pledged to invest US\$150 billion in the U.S. shipbuilding sector as part of last year's trade deal that committed the Asian country to

investing a total of \$350 billion in the U.S. with an annual cap of \$20 billion, reports Yonhap news agency. "The MOU signing builds on ongoing U.S.-Korea cooperation in strategic industries and reflects continued efforts to strengthen allied industrial capacity, promote investment, and expand collaboration in advanced manufacturing sectors," the administration said in a release. Under the MOU, the two sides will establish the Korea-U.S. Shipbuilding Partnership Initiative (KUSPI) — a new platform to strengthen bilateral cooperation in commercial shipbuilding, workforce development, industrial modernisation, and maritime manufacturing investment, it said. The partnership will leverage the Korea-U.S. Shipbuilding Partnership Center, which is expected to be established in Washington later this year, and will support expanded collaboration

between government, industry, and research institutions from both countries. Specific activities under the partnership will include facilitating foreign direct investment into the U.S. maritime industrial base, workforce training initiatives, shipyard productivity improvement projects and technical exchanges, among others. In line with the MOU, the Commerce Department will facilitate the centre's interactions with U.S. shipbuilding companies, suppliers, universities and research institutes, and act as the U.S. government-wide point of contact for the centre, according to the administration. MOTIR will coordinate cooperation across the Korean government and other shipbuilding stakeholders and provide the personnel and funding necessary for the center. Meanwhile, Kim and Lutnick held talks on Friday to discuss South Korea's projects to invest in the U.S. as part of the trade deal, an informed source said.

# Indian Seafarer Killed After Ship Catches Fire, Sinks Near Strait Of Hormuz

Dubai/New Delhi: An Indian seafarer lost his life while four others sustained burn injuries after a wooden dhow carrying 18 Indian crew members capsized near the Strait of Hormuz following a fire onboard, official sources confirmed on Saturday. The incident took place on Friday in the strategically sensitive Strait of Hormuz region, where tensions linked to the ongoing Iran-US conflict continue to escalate, and reports of drone activity in the area have heightened security concerns. According to sources, the wooden dhow was transporting general cargo when the fire broke out. Authorities are still trying to determine the exact cause of the blaze that led to the vessel capsizing. Providing details of the incident, a government source said, "A wooden Dhow, carrying general cargo, with 18 Indian crew capsized yesterday close to the Strait of Hormuz after it caught fire. The exact cause of the fire is



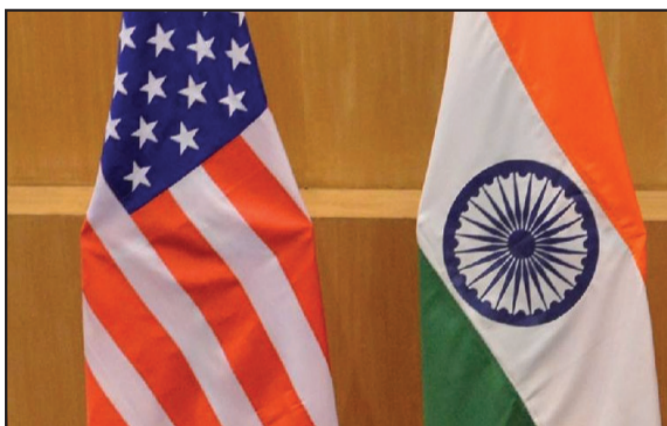
being ascertained. The crew members were rescued by a vessel which was passing by. In this incident, one Indian on the dhow died while four received burn injuries. The injured are receiving medical treatment in Dubai and are safe." The source further stated that officials from the Indian Consulate had met the rescued Indian nationals on Friday night and were coordinating with the dhow owner while extending all

possible support and assistance to the crew members and their families. Earlier on Friday, the Consulate General of India in Dubai had also confirmed the incident through a post on X, expressing grief over the death of the Indian crew member. "The Consulate is saddened to learn of the unfortunate incident at Sea that caused the tragic death of an Indian crew member of a ship. The Consulate is in touch with the owner of the ship and is

ascertaining further details. The Consulate will render all possible assistance in this matter on priority. Our deepest condolences," the Consulate stated. The latest maritime incident comes amid worsening instability in West Asia and growing risks to commercial shipping routes in and around the Strait of Hormuz, a key global energy transit corridor. The conflict in the region intensified after joint US-Israel strikes targeted Tehran on February 28, resulting in the death of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei. In response, Iran launched retaliatory attacks on Israel and on US military bases located across Gulf nations. The hostilities have also contributed to disruptions and blockades around the Strait of Hormuz, increasing risks for commercial vessels operating in the area. Similar incidents involving attacks or threats to Indian crew members have also been reported in the past.

# US-India Push AI Defence Cooperation

Washington, 9/5: The United States and India must step up cooperation in artificial intelligence and defence as warfare shifts to data and algorithms, experts said. Speaking at a US-India forum, Vivek Lall, Chief Executive of General Atomics Global Cooperation, and Lt Gen (Retd) Raj Shukla said the nature of war is changing fast. The session was moderated by Sameer Lalwani of the Special Competitive Studies Project. Shukla said AI is already shaping the battlefield. "AI is not futuristic... algorithmic warfare is arrived, and it will change the workflows of combat forever," he said. He said militaries must adapt quickly. "Military is conservative organizations don't update their process once a year... in Ukraine... software innovations are being delivered every two weeks, hardware every four weeks," he said. He called for a



major shift in defence systems. "Departments of Defense... now need to operate as software companies," he said. Shukla said India needs stronger debate and thinking on these issues. "Ideation in these domains in India has to strengthen," he said. Lall said no country can lead alone in new technologies. "No one country has remarked on the

best ideas," he said. He said the US and India together can deliver results. He pointed to the need for cooperation across industry and academia. "Universities vocational institutes... play a great role, because at the end of the day, it's global talent," he said. Lall listed key areas for joint work. These include data sharing, training, and control of the

electromagnetic spectrum. Shukla also flagged the cost factor in modern war. "For every \$1 that the Iranians spent... it took the Americans... \$28 to intercept," he said. He said India must break silos across sectors. "Civil, military, private sector, government Academy... operated in science," he said. Both speakers said the partnership is at a key moment. Lall said, "We're at an inflection point," and added that the next decade could see "a lot of co development work... a lot of co production work." The United States and India have expanded defence ties over the past two decades. This includes joint exercises and technology partnerships. AI and emerging technologies are now central to the relationship. Both countries are working to build capabilities in data, autonomous systems and next-generation warfare.

# Indian Ambassador Vinay Kwatra Backs 'AI For All' Vision

Washington, 9/5: India is pushing for the "democratisation of AI" while expanding technology cooperation with the United States, Ambassador Vinay Kwatra said at the US-India AI and Emerging Technology Forum. Speaking at an event here, Kwatra said the recent AI summit in India brought together global leaders, scientists and industry to shape a shared vision. "One of the driving thrust... was eventually the democratisation of AI," he said. He explained the idea as wider

access to AI outcomes. "If the end product of this technology is intelligence... the diffusion of that intelligence has to be democratised for the benefit of people," he said. Kwatra said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's approach is clear. "AI for all in many ways," he said, adding that the idea was captured in the New Delhi Declaration. He said the summit showed convergence across global innovation systems. "You saw convergence of the multiple innovation

ecosystem," he said. Kwatra said more than 20 heads of state and government attended, along with global research communities. He also pointed to growing India-US cooperation. "We could also sign a joint cooperative framework between India and the US in this space," he said. Kwatra said the partnership spans technology, innovation and manufacturing. These links are shaping supply chains and economic activity.

# Attacks On Civilians In Democratic Republic Of Congo Raise Alarm: UN



United Nations, 9/5: A new wave of deadly attacks against civilians in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has raised alarm, a UN spokesman said. In the last three days, at least 34 civilians have reportedly been killed in a series of attacks in Ituri and North Kivu provinces, said Farhan Haq, deputy spokesman for the UN secretary-general on Friday (local time), quoting the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. In Ituri's Irumu and Mambasa, attacks reportedly killed at least 15 civilians between Tuesday and Thursday. The violence forced people to flee to neighbouring

villages in North Kivu province, said Haq. In North Kivu's Oicha, an attack by an armed group near the border with Ituri province reportedly killed at least 19 civilians on Tuesday and Wednesday. Local partners reported that several civilians were attacked while working in their fields, and other people remain missing, he said. In Ituri's gold-rich Mambasa, at least 130 civilians have reportedly been killed and more than 500 others abducted since mid-March. The violence has displaced over 68,000 people within Mambasa and into neighbouring Tshopo province, while more than

310,000 people have also been displaced across Beni and Lubero territories in North Kivu province, said the deputy spokesman. "Our humanitarian partners are currently assessing displacement and urgent needs," said Haq. "As you can imagine, these attacks are heightening humanitarian and protection concerns in the northern parts of eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. We reiterate our call on all parties to the conflict to immediately cease attacks against civilians and on all parties to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law," he added.

## PNB organized Mega Agriculture Expo at Kulundi, Circle Office, Sambalpur

Sambalpur,9/5(DMS): Punjab National Bank organized a Mega Agriculture Expo at Kulundi, Circle Office, Sambalpur. The event was graciously attended by GM Corporate Credit Head Office, Chita Ranjan Prusti and Shri Johnson, AGM, Zonal Office, Bhubaneswar. Sanction letters were handed over to 15 valued customers. The expo proved to be a success, with a total of 185 loan leads generated, amounting to Rs. 68 crore, reflecting strong customer engagement and business potential. Later in the evening GM Sri Prusti addressed Circle Office staff and local Branch staff at Circle Office and other branches of the circle were connected through WebEx.



## PHDCCI Hails Government's Rs 5,000 Crore Emergency Credit Support For Airlines

New Delhi: PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) on Saturday welcomed the government's decision to approve a Rs 5,000 crore emergency credit support scheme for airlines under 'ECLGS 5.0' to address the financial and operational stress arising from the ongoing West Asia crisis. Rajeev Juneja, President, PHDCCI, said, "The Government's swift intervention through the Rs 5,000 crore emergency credit scheme demonstrates strong policy responsiveness towards one of the most critical pillars of India's services economy". "Aviation is the backbone of tourism, trade and business mobility and

supporting airline stability at this juncture will have a cascading positive impact across the broader economy, including hospitality, travel services and employment generation," said Juneja. The announcement aligns with key recommendations made in the recently released PHDCCI 'Tourism and Hospitality Resilience Report', titled 'Impact of the West Asia Conflict on India's Tourism, Aviation & Hospitality Sectors', which highlighted the urgent need for targeted financial and policy support measures to stabilise India's aviation and tourism ecosystem amid geopolitical disruptions.

## BC Jindal Group Strengthens Educational Equity Through Scholarship Initiative

BHUBANESWAR, 9/5(DMS): BC Jindal Foundation, the CSR wing of India's leading business conglomerate, the BC Jindal Group, has announced that it has extended support directly to more than 500 children across 4 districts in 4 states by committing Rs 192 lakh. Through its foundation's initiative, the BC Jindal Scholarship, the group continues to support talented children to pursue higher education in Angul, Nashik, Ernakulam and Varanasi across the states of Odisha, Maharashtra, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh, respectively. The BC Jindal Group, led by Shyam Sunder Jindal, Promoter, BC Jindal Group has been working toward enabling education in India's remote areas through various social initiatives of the BC Jindal Foundation.

The education program has become a cornerstone of the group's commitment to social upliftment, specifically targeting children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. "Low family incomes and deep-rooted societal biases against girls' education often prevent talented youth from reaching their full potential. Through targeted financial aid, we are empowering academically bright, underprivileged students to access higher education and build brighter futures. We aim to create opportunities for children to pursue education beyond primary school," said a BC Jindal Group spokesperson. In Odisha's



Angul district, the foundation's BC Jindal Vidya Scholarship initiative focuses on a transparent, merit-based system across four government high schools, directly impacting 20 villages in the Kaniha block. The rural-centric scholarship model empowers financially disadvantaged yet academically meritorious girl students to excel in higher education. In Nashik, Maharashtra, the BC Jindal Foundation-supported Udayan Shalini Fellowship (USF) initiative offers financial assistance to deserving girl students over five years from government and government aided schools, ensuring economic barriers do not disrupt their education. The unique academic excellence and personality development

program for deserving, talented girls from disadvantaged socio economic backgrounds aims to transform students into empowered and dignified women- "Shalinis." Unlike a typical scholarship, it supports higher education while providing sustained mentoring, leadership development, and a strong sense of social responsibility. In Ernakulam, Kerala, the BC Jindal Foundation's partnership with Chinmaya Vishwa Vidyapeeth (CVV) for the 'Utthista Bharata - Arise India Scholarships programme' stands as a distinctive initiative aimed at aiding students hailing from underprivileged and underserved communities throughout India. Beyond traditional education, the Foundation is deeply committed to preserving India's cultural

## Odisha Health Minister Inaugurates Vedanta Lanjigarh's First-of-its-Kind 24x7 Telemedicine Facility

Lanjigarh, Kalahandi District,9/5(DMS): Dr. Mukesh Mahaling, Hon'ble Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Government of Odisha, today inaugurated Vedanta Aluminium's first-of-its-kind 24x7 Telemedicine Facility in Lanjigarh, Kalahandi district, launched in partnership with Tata 1mg through a virtual event. The initiative marks a major step towards strengthening healthcare access in Kalahandi by bringing timely specialist medical consultation closer to communities across remote villages, employees, families, business partners, etc. A dedicated Telemedicine Room has also been established at Vedanta Lanjigarh Hospital for assisted consultations. In addition, through the Tata 1mg App, beneficiaries can access free audio and video consultations with nearly 30 specialist and super-specialist doctors, reducing the need for long-distance travel for medical guidance. The service is expected to benefit more than 70,000 people across nearly 70 remote villages in Kalahandi and adjoining regions. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Mukesh Mahaling, Hon'ble Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Government of Odisha, said, "Vedanta's 24x7 telemedicine



facility is a meaningful step towards improving healthcare access for communities in Kalahandi, especially in remote tribal and rural areas where timely medical consultation can make a significant difference. Vedanta's broader work in healthcare, education, women empowerment and livelihoods reflects how responsible industry can support the state's development priorities. Continued collaboration between government, industry and communities will be important for ensuring inclusive and

balanced development across Odisha." According to Mr. Pranab Kumar Bhattacharyya, CEO Vedanta Alumina Business, "Odisha remains central to Vedanta's growth journey, and the well-being of local communities is at the heart of our work in the state. With the launch of this telemedicine service, we are enhancing last-mile access to quality healthcare for those who need it the most. Across Odisha, especially in Kalahandi and Rayagada, many such meaningful interventions are rapidly bringing these areas to the socio-economic

mainstream of the state. We remain committed to working closely with our local communities and the government to contribute meaningfully to Odisha's inclusive and sustainable development." Vedanta's diverse community projects such as Project Aarogyais bringing healthcare closer to remote villages through preventive care, health camps and medical outreach, while Project Sakhi is helping women build skills, confidence and income opportunities through entrepreneurship and self-help groups. Project Sangam is strengthening farmer livelihoods through watershed development, irrigation support and climate-resilient agriculture. Vedanta's education initiatives, including DAV Vedanta International School, the first English-medium school in the region, and Nand Ghars which are modernized anganwadis, are expanding access to quality learning, early childhood care, nutrition, healthcare support and women empowerment. Together with youth skilling and community infrastructure projects, these initiatives are helping build healthier, more educated, self-reliant and empowered communities across the region.

## Nifty, Sensex Rise Notably This Week As Crude Prices Ease, Rupee Strengthens

Mumbai,9/5: The Indian equity benchmarks posted notable gains during the week over easing crude prices, a firmer rupee and softer 10-year bond yields despite lingering geopolitical tensions. Nifty gained 0.76 per cent during the week and dipped 0.60 per cent on the last trading day to reach 24,180. At close, Sensex was down 516 points or 0.66 per cent at 77,328. It advanced 0.54 per cent during the week. "The improvement in macro conditions shifted sentiment from early-week caution to a more constructive stance, allowing markets to absorb profit booking triggered by fresh headlines towards the end of the week," an analyst said.

Investor confidence was further supported by favourable state election outcomes and Q4 earnings that came in better than cautious expectations. Midcap and smallcap indices outperformed benchmark indices, while sectors such as autos, defence, realty, and pharma witnessed strong buying interest. Nifty Midcap100 added 3.49 per cent, while Nifty Smallcap100 gained 4.05 per cent during the week. While stable crude prices and rupee recovery offer near-term support, a renewed escalation in West Asia remains a key risk, particularly for commodity-sensitive sectors,



they added. The markets ended lower on the last day of the trading week as the United States and Iran exchanged fire which prompted investors to reassess expectations of a near-term peace deal and rekindled energy supply chain concerns. Iran claimed the US had violated the ceasefire agreement. However, US President Donald Trump reaffirmed that the ceasefire remained in effect, and Iran said the situation has returned to normal. Brent crude oil declined over 3 per cent in international markets to trade below the \$95-per-barrel mark, while domestic crude futures slipped below the Rs 9,000 level,

reversing much of the previous session's escalation-driven rebound. Meanwhile, Nifty 50 is expected to see the 24,250-24,300 level as an immediate resistance zone and the 24,100-24,000 band remains a crucial support area, market participants said. In Bank Nifty, a sustained move above 55,500 could extend the recovery toward 55,800-56,000, strengthening near-term momentum, they added. Investors remain keen on cues from India and US inflation data, along with domestic credit growth trends, as these will influence RBI rate expectations and corporate margin outlook.

## CBDT Plans Recovery Drive For Rs 2.57 Lakh Crore Tax Arrears: Report

New Delhi,9/5: The Central Board of Direct Taxes is stepping up efforts to recover Rs 2.57 lakh crore in confirmed tax demands in the current fiscal year, a report has said. Under the enforcement drive, special teams will track the top 10,000 high value arrears cases nationwide in FY27, the tax department officials told NDTV Profit. Tax recovery and compliance monitoring will see a technology-driven push from artificial intelligence, data analytics and digital forensics, they said. The CBDT officials said recovery teams may also use the CERSAI mortgage and asset database to trace properties and secured assets linked to defaulters. The tax department will monitor top advance tax payers and identify misuse of

exemptions and deductions, it added. In FY26, the board disposed of 2.24 lakh appeals involving disputed demand of Rs 8.27 lakh crore. Pending appeals have declined from 5.40 lakh to 4.95 lakh during FY26, the department officials said, adding that directions have been provided to officers to focus on recovery from non-compliant taxpayers. FY27 direct tax collection target stood at 26.97 lakh crore as per the Budget 2026. Moreover, India's direct tax collections inched up moderately in FY26 on an annual basis but missed the government's revised estimates, due to evolving macro-economic conditions. Net direct tax collections rose 5.1 per cent year-on-year to Rs 23.4 lakh

crore in FY26 as per provisional data, short of the Revised Estimate (RE) of Rs 24.21 lakh crore by approximately Rs 81,000 crore, highlighting weaker-than-anticipated buoyancy in tax revenues. The government's newly implemented Income Tax Act 2025 has made India's tax system simpler, easier to understand and more taxpayer-friendly, Chief Commissioner of Income Tax (IT & TP) Nirupama Kotru said on Friday. Speaking to IANS on the sidelines of an awareness programme here, she said the reforms are aimed at helping ordinary citizens file returns without confusion and reducing dependence on tax professionals for basic compliance.

## SEBI Mulls Additional Changes To Strengthen Buyback Framework

Mumbai,9/5: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has proposed additional measures to its plan to reintroduce open-market buybacks through stock exchanges, including a shortened completion timeline and new safeguards for minority shareholders. SEBI, after consultation with the Primary Market Advisory Committee (PMAC), said companies would be allowed to undertake open-market buybacks which must be completed within 66 working days from the offer opening, and must use at least 40 per

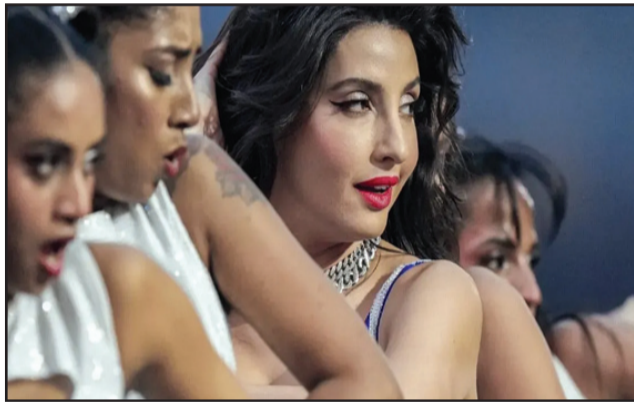
cent of the buyback size within the first half of the offer period. The regulator said a 66-day timeline is warranted due to recent changes under the Finance Act, 2026 to the Companies Act, with respect to the permissible gap between two buyback offers, which necessitates a balanced approach. The regulator said that a six-month-long period proposed by PMAC may make buybacks irrelevant in the context of market developments and could prove difficult for shareholders to track. As an additional safeguard,

SEBI may direct freezing of shares and other specified securities held by promoters and their associates at the ISIN level during the buyback period. Existing rules bar promoters from dealing or transferring company shares from the board decision until the buyback closes. The regulator has proposed removing the requirement for a separate trading window for buyback transactions and conducting such trades through the normal market mechanism. Further, it proposed dispensing with the requirement to display the company's identity as a

purchaser on the trading screen. The regulator also proposed introducing an explicit provision to ensure buybacks do not breach minimum public shareholding norms and aligning the interval between two buyback offers with provisions under the Companies Act, 2013. It also mulls making companies mandatorily send an intimation to shareholders through electronic mode regarding the buyback offer within one working day of such public announcement.

## Nora Fatehi set to perform at FIFA World Cup 2026 opening ceremony in Toronto

Bollywood star and dance sensation Nora Fatehi has been confirmed to perform at the FIFA World Cup 2026 opening ceremony on June 12 at BMO Field in Toronto, Canada, making her one of the most prominent Indian performers on a global stage. She will join a star-studded lineup of Canadian and international artists, including Michael Bublé, Alanis Morissette, Alessia Cara, Elyanna, Jessie Reyez, Sanjoy, Vegedream, and William Prince. The opening ceremony in the USA will feature global music icons Anitta, Future, Katy Perry, Lisa, Rema, and Tyla, highlighting the World Cup's celebration of international music, culture, and entertainment across the three co-hosting nations. FIFA President Gianni Infantino described the Toronto event as "a powerful reflection of Canada's identity," adding that it would welcome the world through music and culture in a celebration that is "uniquely Canadian while also connected to a larger story unfolding across Mexico and the United States." The FIFA World Cup 2026 is set to be the largest tournament in history, with 104 matches across 16 host cities. The opening match will take place on June 11 in Mexico City, while the grand final is scheduled for July 19 at the New York New Jersey Stadium. Nora Fatehi, 34, made her acting debut in the 2014 Hindi film Roar: Tigers of the Sundarbans and rose to fame through special appearances in Telugu blockbusters like Temper, Baahubali: The Beginning, and Kick 2. She has since built a versatile career spanning Bollywood films such as Street Dancer 3D and Bhuj: The Pride of India, reality TV appearances on Bigg Boss and Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa, and judging roles on Dance Deewane Juniors and Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa 10, establishing herself as one of India's most internationally recognized entertainers.



## Mahesh Babu production 'Rao Bahadur' postponed, new release date announced

Mahesh Babu's production house GMB Entertainment has announced a new release date for its upcoming film 'Rao Bahadur', starring Satya Dev in the lead role. The psychological thriller, directed by Venkatesh Maha, was earlier scheduled to release on June 5, 2026. The makers have now postponed the film and locked July 3, 2026, as the new release date. On Saturday, the makers shared a new poster of the film on social media along with the announcement. The caption on the post read, "A nEW DATE. An UnORgETTAbLE CInEMA ExPERIEncE. #RaoBahadur in cinemas worldwide from rd JULY. RAO BAHADUR / Remember - 'Doubt is a Demon'." The teaser for Mahesh Babu Productions' much-awaited film 'Rao Bahadur' was unveiled last year. It was shared by SS Rajamouli and gives a glimpse into a dark and mystical world. The film is described as a "psychological drama" with touches of mystical realism, promising a unique cinematic journey. Earlier, the makers had also unveiled the first-look poster of the film. The poster featured Satya Dev in a royal look, surrounded by peacock feathers and decorative elements. It also showed children hanging onto his outfit and moustache.



Adding a quirky touch to the visuals. The movie is directed by Venkatesh Maha and presented by Mahesh Babu. Mahesh Babu and Namrata Shirodkar's GMB Entertainment are backing the project. Before this, the first look at the film was unveiled. The poster featured Satyadev in the ensemble of a king, surrounded by peacock feathers and ornate details. It also depicts kids hanging onto Satyadev's attire and moustache, offering a humorous touch to the narrative.



## SPORTS

### RR vs GT IPL 2026 Match 52 Preview as Playoff Battle Intensifies in Jaipur

NEWDELHI: Rajasthan Royals aim to protect their top-four standing against an surging Gujarat Titans unit at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium this Saturday. Both squads enter this 52nd fixture of the season tied on 12 points, making this encounter a virtual four-pointer for postseason qualification. While the hosts recently suffered a setback against Delhi, the visitors arrive in Jaipur carrying the momentum of a three-match winning streak. Skipper Riyan Parag remains the central figure for the home side after his valiant 90-run effort in the previous outing. His leadership faces a stern test against a Gujarat bowling attack led by a disciplined Jason Holder and the pace of Mohammed Siraj. The Royals will rely heavily on their young opening pair, Yashasvi Jaiswal and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, to set a high tempo during the powerplay overs. Jaipur's surface traditionally offers a balanced



contest, though recent games suggest a high-scoring trend with averages crossing 210 runs. Boundary dimensions here are larger than most Indian venues, which might bring veteran spinners like Ravindra Jadeja into play during the middle phase. Dew is expected to influence the second innings, often prompting captains to choose

chasing upon winning the toss. Historically, Gujarat Titans have held a dominant grip on this rivalry, winning six out of their last eight meetings. However, the Royals can take confidence from their narrow six-run victory against the Titans earlier this April. This venue holds deep significance for local fans, as it was the fortress

that helped Rajasthan secure the inaugural title back in 2008. Gujarat's resurgence is largely credited to the consistency of Sai Sudharsan and the tactical calm of Shubman Gill. With both teams desperate to avoid the mid-table scramble, tonight's result could dictate the final composition of the 2026 knockout bracket.

### 'His Vision Is Very Clear': Sumit Rathi Praises Coach Khalid Jamil Approach Towards Players

New Delhi, 9/5: Indian footballer Sumit Rathi has praised new India head coach Khalid Jamil for creating a positive atmosphere in the national team setup and increasing competition among players through a simple and clear approach. Rathi said Indian coaches understand Indian players better and highlighted it as one of Jamil's biggest strengths since taking charge of the national team. "To be honest, Indian coaches understand Indian players better. That is a fact. That is a plus point in the atmosphere of the current national team. It is very important for any country. His vision is very

clear. He won't go to the players and say that you have to do this. He won't complain that we didn't play in one style or didn't get enough training sessions. He tells us to do what is our strong point," Rathi told IANS. "He will never force the players to do what he wants. You have to do what you can do best, what you have been doing for your club and country, but you have to find the best version of that," Rathi added. The 48-year-old Khalid Jamil became the first Indian in over a decade to take charge of the men's national team full-time in August last year. He immediately stabilised the team by leading a depleted squad to a bronze medal at the

2025 CAFA Nations Cup, featuring wins over Tajikistan and Oman, which showed some good signs for the future. Rathi also credited the coach for creating healthy competition within the national team setup by rewarding players based on current performances rather than reputation. "He has created an atmosphere and increased the competition level. He doesn't think about whether a player is from ISL or I-League. He gives chances to the players he likes and the ones performing well for their clubs. The player who does well should get a chance. He should be called to the camp and given a chance to represent the national team. These things

are very important in any sport," he added. He further revealed that Jamil personally watches both ISL and I-League matches closely, something he believes has positively impacted player morale. "Khalid sir personally watches the matches. It doesn't matter whether it is ISL or I-League. I think he has done two or three things very well since joining the national team," Rathi said. Widely respected in Indian football circles, Jamil made history by guiding Aizawl FC to a remarkable I-League title in 2017 and later impressed with clubs like NorthEast United FC and Jamshedpur FC in the ISL.

### Kim Kardashian helps incarcerated Mothers reunite with children ahead of Mother's Day

As Mother's Day approaches, global star Kim Kardashian is lending a hand to help incarcerated mothers reunite with their children. In partnership with REFORM Alliance and Ladies of Hope Ministries, Kardashian has organized a special initiative for 50 mothers in federal prisons across the United States to meet their children this Sunday. The program covers travel and other expenses, allowing families to celebrate the occasion together. According to PEOPLE magazine, families were chosen on a first-come, first-served basis, with many mothers having been separated from their children for years. Speaking about the initiative, Kim said, "So many of these mothers have spent years away from their children and families, missing birthdays, holidays, and everyday moments most of us take for granted." She added, "I'm honored to partner with Reform and LOHM to help reconnect these families so they can hold their children, laugh together, and simply be a family again." Recently, Kim, along with her mother Kris Jenner and REFORM Alliance member Jessica Jackson, visited the women's prison in Chowchilla, California. They met incarcerated women, including those in hospice care, witnessing deeply emotional moments. Kim shared on Instagram, "Many of the women there have spent decades in prison and become family to one another, caring for women in hospice so no one has to die alone." In recent years, Kardashian has been a vocal advocate for prison reform, working with organizations to support incarcerated individuals and strengthen family connections.



### Isha Ambani honours her mother Nita Ambani's legacy at inaugural NMACC dinner in La Biennale di Venezia

Businesswoman, philanthropist, and arts patron Isha Ambani paid tribute to her mother and Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC) founder Nita Ambani at the inaugural NMACC dinner on the occasion of the opening of the India Pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. While addressing the gathering of artists and cultural leaders from around the world, Isha Ambani reflected on her mother Nita Ambani's journey from being a classical Indian dancer to working in education, sports, and later founding the Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre. "Good evening, everybody, and welcome to our first inaugural NMACC dinner in Venice to celebrate the India Pavilion. It is such an honour to be in this room today with each and every one of you, and I'm so touched that you took the time to be here today. My mother grew up a classical Indian dancer, then became a teacher, then dived into the world of education and sports, and then came back to her roots with launching the NMACC," said Isha Ambani. While reflecting on NMACC's mission, Isha Ambani added, "Our mission has always been to take the best of India to the world and to bring the best of the world to India, and I was so excited to be part of this wonderful group who's put together the India Pavilion. I'd just like to raise a glass to art, to friendship, and to a conversation around culture that keeps continuing." NMACC shared the speech of Isha Ambani at the inaugural dinner on their Instagram handle today. For the inaugural dinner in Venice, Nita Ambani wore a shimmering ivory-gold silk sari featuring intricate woven patterns, paired with a matching blouse. She completed her look with colourful gemstone jewellery and a small ornate gold handbag, reflecting a blend of elegance and traditional craftsmanship. Isha Ambani, on the other hand, made a striking appearance in a wine-coloured satin saree-style gown with sculptural pleats and a modern silhouette. The ensemble featured embellished circular jewelled detailing around the neckline and waist, adding a contemporary edge to the traditional-inspired outfit.

