

Dumani Mail

Published simultaneously from Bhubaneswar (Odisha), Keonjhar (Odisha) and New Delhi.



PM Modi arrives in Delhi after concluding five-nation tour

New Delhi : Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived at the Delhi airport on Thursday after concluding his five-nation visit to the United Arab Emirates, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and Italy.

The Prime Minister's final stop was Italy, where he held extensive talks with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and elevated bilateral ties to a "Special Strategic Partnership."

In a post on X after concluding the Italy visit, PM Modi said his discussions with Meloni covered a wide range of sectors and would add new momentum to India-Italy cooperation.

"A key outcome of the visit was our decision to elevate India-Italy ties to a Special Strategic Partnership, which will add new momentum to our cooperation in the years to come," the Prime Minister said.

During the visit, PM Modi also shared glimpses of what became a widely discussed "Melody moment," where he gifted a packet of "Melody" toffees to Meloni.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs, the two leaders discussed bilateral relations as well as regional and global developments, including



the situation in West Asia and the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs, Sibi George, said the leaders

agreed to deepen cooperation across sectors, including trade and investment, defence and security, science and technology, research and

innovation, energy, space, artificial intelligence, education, culture and people-to-people ties.

Several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) were also signed during the visit in areas such as defence, connectivity, agriculture, traditional medicine, education, mobility and critical technologies.

George further said that both countries have set a target of increasing bilateral trade to Euro 20 billion by 2029, aided by the conclusion of India-European Union Free Trade Agreement negotiations earlier this year.

Before concluding the

tour in Italy, Prime Minister Modi visited the UAE, the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway as part of his five-country outreach.

Following his return, PM Modi is scheduled to chair a meeting of the Council of Ministers at Sewa Teerth in the national capital at 5 pm on Thursday, sources said.

The meeting is expected to serve as an important midterm review of the government's performance and comes amid concerns over rising global fuel prices and energy security due to the ongoing West Asia conflict and disruptions around the Strait of Hormuz.

Delhi riots 2020: HC grants bail to Salim Malik in UAPA case



New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Thursday granted bail to Salim Malik in a case under anti-terror law UAPA concerning the "larger conspiracy" behind the February 2020 riots in the city's northeastern parts.

The relief was granted by a bench of Justices Prathiba M Singh and

Madhu Jain on Malik's appeal challenging a trial court order of January 29 that denied him bail in the case.

His counsel argued that he was entitled to bail in view of the Supreme Court granting the relief to identically-placed co-accused Saleem Khan and Shadab Ahmed.

Diesel demand shifts to PSU retail pumps, India has sufficient fuel supplies: Govt

New Delhi : Demand for diesel is increasingly shifting from bulk buyers to retail outlets operated by government oil companies, but the country has sufficient fuel supplies to meet demand, Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, said on Thursday during an inter-ministerial press briefing on the situation in West Asia.

"Bulk supplies of diesel are shifting to retail. Demand is shifting to government companies, and we have sufficient supplies," Sharma said. She added that India currently has sufficient

supplies of petrol, diesel, LPG and natural gas despite global geopolitical tensions impacting imports, and said the government has taken steps to reduce the burden on citizens. "Our imports are impacted, but the Government of India made efforts to reduce the burden on citizens," Sharma said. The official said LPG production has been ramped up to meet rising demand across the country.

Sharing operational updates, Sharma said around 1.34 crore LPG cylinders were delivered, while commercial LPG sales stood at 23,588



tonnes. On the natural gas front, she said 7.99 lakh new customers have been registered.

The official also detailed enforcement action being taken to monitor fuel distribution and prevent irregularities. "Five hundred

raids conducted, 111 show cause notices issued, 35 distributors got notice and one suspended," Sharma said. Earlier, OMC sources had told ANI that India continues to remain surplus in petroleum products and there is no shortage of petrol,

diesel or LPG in the country. "There is no shortage of petrol/diesel/LPG as India is a net exporter and surplus in petroleum products," according to OMC sources. The sources added that higher sales at some retail outlets were being seen due to seasonal demand and pricing shifts in the market. On crude oil imports, the sources said supplies from Russia remain stable despite ongoing geopolitical tensions in West Asia and concerns over global energy supply disruptions.

"There is no reduction in crude oil coming from Russia," the sources added.

Education Ministry says SMC guidelines not applicable to private unaided schools

New Delhi: The Ministry of Education has clarified that the School Management Committee Guidelines 2026 are not applicable to private unaided schools, as such institutions do not receive any grants from the government or local authority towards meeting their expenses. Recently, Mr Pradhan launched School Management Committee Guidelines in New Delhi to strengthen community participation and school governance.

In a social media post, the Ministry said, such schools and institutions are encouraged to constitute School Management Committees to promote greater transparency, accountability and participatory governance. It said education is a shared responsibility of the government, schools, parents and the community.

The Ministry said that strengthening collaboration among parents, schools, and other stakeholders is essential to improving the overall functioning of schools and ensuring better learning outcomes for children.

Woman, son stabbed to death in Delhi's Govindpuri; robbery suspected

New Delhi: A 38-year-old woman and her teenage son were stabbed to death inside their house in southeast Delhi's Govindpuri area in the early hours of Thursday, with robbery likely the motive, police said. The victims were identified as Sharda Sahu, a homemaker, and her son, a 13-year-old class 7 student. According to the police, a call about the killings was received at 1.11 am.

India, African Union Postpone New Delhi Summit Amid Ebola Outbreak

New Delhi: A major summit of the African Union and India scheduled to be held in Delhi from May 28 has been postponed due to the "evolving health situation in parts of Africa", the government said in a statement today. Several parts of Africa have reported cases of the deadly Ebola virus, the latest from the Democratic Republic of Congo's South Kivu province. India and the African Union had been preparing to hold the Fourth India-Africa Forum Summit when the two sides, taking into account the situation in Africa, "reaffirmed the importance of continued cooperation in strengthening public health preparedness and response capacities across the continent, including through support to Africa CDC and relevant national institutions," India said in the statement.

The summit's new dates will be finalised through mutual consultations and communicated in due course, the government said. The decision to postpone the summit was taken after consultations were held between India and the chairperson of the African Union and the African Union Commission. "Following these consultations, the two sides agreed that it would be



advisable to convene the Fourth India-Africa Forum Summit at a later date," it said.

India has not reported any case of Ebola. The Centre has also stepped up surveillance and preparedness measures nationwide after the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the outbreak in parts of Central Africa a public health emergency of international concern.

States and Union Territories have been told to ensure readiness at all levels with standard operating procedures (SOPs) on pre-arrival and post-arrival screening, quarantine protocols, case management, referral

mechanisms and laboratory testing, sources said.

The necessity for such international caution is heightened by the fact that, far from being a monolith, the Ebola virus manifests through distinct viral strains, each having unique characteristics regarding its lethality, how rapidly it spreads, and its vulnerability to medical interventions.

Driving this specific health crisis is the Bundibugyo variant, a less common iteration of the pathogen that historically emerges far less often than the notoriously virulent Zaire strain, which fueled the catastrophic West African epidemic from 2014 to 2016.

Supreme Court Refuses Plea To Club 53 FIRs In Rs 49 Crore Fraud Case

New Delhi: The Supreme Court today refused to entertain a plea seeking a direction to club 53 FIRs pending in seven states in relation to the alleged duping of Rs 49 crore from investors, observing that instead of a victim-centric judicial approach, pro-accused judgements were being passed in the name of consolidation of FIR and speedy trial. A bench comprising Chief Justice

Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi did not agree to the submissions of senior advocate Aman Lekhi, appearing for the accused Upendra Nath Mishra and Kali Prasad Mishra. This led to the withdrawal of the plea.

Several criminal cases are pending against the accused in Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa and Andhra Pradesh.



Referring to previous apex court judgements which ordered consolidation of FIRs in big fraud cases, the

bench asked what would happen to the rights of the victims of such crimes, while refusing to order consolidation of the FIRs. The CJ referred to recent amendments in criminal law and said that now the rights of victims have been acknowledged.

Every case of fraud is distinct and separate, as the victim and the defrauded amount are different, the bench said, adding that, of

course, the accused remains the same. The bench said that for investigation, the FIRs cannot be clubbed, adding that such victims of fraud are also invisible victims of the judicial system, which did not think about them. Justice Bagchi said every crime of fraud, cheating and conspiracy is separate and distinct and asked why should the victims of such offences suffer.

CM Rekha Gupta Introduces Work From Home, Virtual Meetings In Delhi Govt Offices

New Delhi: Delhi Government is reshaping daily office work to cut pollution and fuel use in the capital. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta has started a hybrid working model, with many official meetings now held online. The plan supports Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent call to save petrol and diesel and reduce vehicle dependence.

Under the 'Mera Bharat, Mera Yogdaan' campaign, the administration plans to promote virtual meetings and work from home wherever it is practical. Officials expect fewer government vehicles

on roads, lighter traffic and lower emissions. Departments have been asked to identify tasks that can shift online without affecting public services or decision-making.

Delhi Government Hybrid Model work from home and virtual meetings

Rekha Gupta held several departmental review meetings on Wednesday from the official residence. Many senior officers and departmental heads joined through video conferencing instead of travelling to the secretariat. According to officials, guidelines have gone out asking

departments to use online options whenever office presence is not essential. The Chief Minister had announced new workplace rules for government offices last week. The plan includes allowing employees to work from home two days each week. On Mondays, ministers and officers have been asked to use the Delhi Metro for commuting. The government has also appealed for one voluntary 'No-Vehicle Day' every week. Several ministers have already adjusted their routines to match the new approach. Education Minister Ashish Sood, Tourism Minister

Kapil Mishra and Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa handled official work from home on Wednesday. These ministers conducted departmental meetings online. Officials indicated that more departments could adopt similar hybrid arrangements in the coming days. Delhi Government Hybrid Model health and NDMC reviews Health Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh also used the hybrid system for a virtual review meeting. The discussion covered vaccination drives, maternal health, child nutrition, family planning and nutrition help for people affected by

leprosy. Health department officials briefed on the status of various programmes in Delhi. The government's stated priority is to strengthen public health services. From home, New Delhi Municipal Council Vice-Chairperson Kuljit Singh Chahal joined a separate review through video conferencing. The meeting assessed preparations for a major upcoming conference in the capital, where foreign delegates are expected. Officials presented plans on cleanliness, city beautification, traffic management and other civic facilities.

Paradip Port receives largest VLGC Polar ammonia vessel



Paradip, (DMS), 21/5 :- Paradip Port receives the largest VLGC Polar which is the largest carrier of its type to come to India with ammonia. Under current crisis of shortage of ammonia, companies have been working with suppliers to find innovative solutions to obtain raw materials. This was one such example wherein Paradip Phosphates Ltd. agreed and managed exceptionally to berth this vessel at its jetty with the help of capable team. The cargo was supplied by Agrifields DMCC. It's a great example of powerful collaboration between all parties and exemplary leadership by Paradip Phosphates Ltd. assisted by Paradip Port. The vessel steamer agents is M/s. Seatrans Shipmanagement Services Pvt Ltd.

Tent collapsed: 3 dead and one seriously injured in Keonjhar

Chief Minister announces Rs 4 lakh assistance

Keonjhar : Three workers died tragically this afternoon when a tent collapsed due to a thunderstorm in Naranpur village under the Town police station, while another is battling for his life in critical condition at the hospital. They worked at the a Maa tarini Tent House. According to the sources the laborers were resting in a tent inside a roofed house in Naranpur. Around 2:30 p.m., the tent collapsed due to the sudden thunderstorm . As a result, all of them were trapped under the tent. They were suffocated by the tent cloth and became seriously injured due to the bamboo fallen on them. After the locals informed them, the fire brigade team of Keonjhar reached the spot and carried out the rescue operation. The fire brigade rescued them after they



were trapped under bamboo and cloth for hours. They were taken to the district headquarters hospital in a vehicle. The doctors there declared three of them dead while another is undergoing treatment at the district headquarters hospital.

The deceased have been identified as Alok Chipindia, Sagar Nayak, Petu Nayak of local areas and their ages are between 20 and 22 years old and the injured person is identified as Samit Nayak (17), according to the local

sources. The police reached the spot after receiving the information and started an investigation. Meanwhile, officials from the district administration and police rushed to the spot to investigate the incident. The incidents have spread sorrow in that area.

On the other hand, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi expressed deep grief and condolences to the families of the deceased. He also announced an assistance of Rs 4 lakh from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund for the next of kin of each deceased person. IIC Town police station's Srikanta Sahu said that it is a very unfortunate incident. The bodies were sent to the hospital for an autopsy after registering an Unnatural Death (UD) case. Further investigation is ongoing.

Collector sought help of political leaders to make SIR work in khordha district flawless.



Khordha-21/5- A meeting was held under chairmanship of Collector, Khordha Amrit Raturaj inbetween khordha district administration and the political parties leader's in the special circuit house regarding the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter list in khordha district. ADM (Administration) Pratap Chandra Beura, ADM (Revenue) Safalya Mandit Pradhan, ADM , Bhubaneswar, Ramesh Chandra Jena, Sub-Collector, khordha, Sankalp Swastik Sahu, Deputy Collector, Ranjan Kumar Mohanty, Sangram Kishore Jena and Indian National Congress khordha district general secretary Soumya Pattnaik, BJD, khordha district president, Rajendra Kumar Sahu, BJP, khordha district vice-president Narendra Badjena were present and participated in the discussion. The special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls aiming to ensure a clean, updated and error free voter database ahead of upcoming electoral exercises. The drive will involve active participation from electors, political parties and election officials. Preparatory work including

training and printing will be carried out between May 20 and May 29. Booth level officers (BLOs) will then visit households from May 30 to June 28 for field verification. In parallel, rationalisation of polling stations will also be completed by June 28 to improve accessibility for voters. The draft electoral roll will be published on July 5 after which citizens can submit claims and objections till Aug 4. The disposal of claims and objections will continue until Sept.2 and the final electoral roll is scheduled to be published on Sept.6 said Collector Mr. Raturaj. Citizens can use the online ECI net to add, delete and change in the voter list. To maintain impartiality the Collector has urged all recognised political parties to appoint at least one BLA in each polling booth. The exercise is crucial to strengthen the integrity of the electoral process and enhance voter confidence. Collector appeal all political parties have co-operated with the booth level official's and sought the help of political leaders to make the SIR work in khordha district flawless.

Daylight Stabbing in Puri Leaves One Critically Injured, Three Auto Drivers Attacked



Puri : Panic gripped Odisha's Puri town on Wednesday after three young men were allegedly attacked with knives in broad daylight in the Baliapanda area, reportedly over an old rivalry. One of the victims sustained critical injuries, while two others suffered minor wounds.

The injured have been identified as Ramesh Pradhan, Guddu Pradhan and Nitish Behera, all residents of Baliapanda and reportedly auto-rickshaw drivers. Police said Ramesh Pradhan is in critical condition.

According to preliminary information, the incident took place around 4 pm near Prachi Chowk. Eyewitnesses told police that four assailants arrived on a Bullet motorcycle and another vehicle before suddenly attacking the trio with sharp weapons. The

attackers fled the spot immediately after the assault. Local residents rushed the injured men to Puri District Headquarters Hospital. Hospital sources said one of the victims remains in a serious condition.

Following the incident, personnel from Baliapanda police station along with the City DSP reached the spot and began an investigation. Police suspect that the attack may have been linked to previous enmity between the groups involved.

Search operations are underway to identify and apprehend the accused, police said.

The incident has triggered fear among local residents and members of the auto-rickshaw drivers' community, with concerns growing over law and order in the area.

Jharsuguda Police has swiftly cracked a sensitive sexual assault case registered at Airport Police Station under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

The incident occurred during the late night hours of 17th May 2026. Based on the complaint received, an FIR was registered on 18th May 2026, following which Jharsuguda Police immediately launched a swift, professional, and scientific investigation.

During the course of investigation, it was revealed that the main accused, Raja Besan, sexually assaulted the victim near the Sagwan

jungle area situated opposite the District Headquarters Hospital premises. Investigation further established that the victim was called outside the hospital premises by Trupti Nayak, cousin sister of the main accused, on the pretext of having tea, after which the accused took advantage of the situation and committed the offence.

Further enquiry revealed that Trupti Nayak and Akash Pradhan, a close

associate of the main accused, actively facilitated and assisted for reaching of the victim near Raja Besan.

Immediately after registration of the case, multiple police teams were constituted. Scientific and forensic evidence were collected, the statements of victim recorded under audio visual, medical examination was conducted, witnesses were examined, and technical evidence was thoroughly analysed. Acting

swiftly on credible leads and technical evidence, Jharsuguda Police apprehended all the accused persons on 19th May 2026 and subsequently forwarded them to the Hon'ble Court.

Jharsuguda Police maintains absolute zero tolerance towards crimes against women and remains firmly committed to ensuring strict legal action against all persons involved in such offences

Senior Citizens Must Be Respected in Society: Speakers at Puri meet

Puri : Stressing the need to restore dignity and respect for senior citizens in society, the Puri District Senior Citizens' Forum organised a discussion meeting at Maruti Nagar Kalyan Mandap here recently.

The programme was presided over by the forum's district president, Professor Kartik Kumar Das. Among those present as guests were noted dramatist Prasanna Kumar Mishra, educationist Bijay Kumar Panda, Patitapaban Samantaray, Er. Girija Shankar Padhi and Kahnu Charan Mallik.

Speakers at the meeting

expressed concern over the declining respect, affection and emotional bonding towards elderly people in modern society. They observed that senior citizens had made significant contributions to society in various capacities as teachers, professors, engineers, public servants and professionals, discharging their duties with dedication and sincerity.

However, the participants noted that the present social environment has changed considerably and warned that the future



consequences of such a trend could be alarming. Concerns were also raised over the growing misuse of social media and increasing incidents of harassment in

different forms. The speakers emphasised that awareness at every level of society is essential to address these issues.

At the outset, forum

vice-president Santosh Kumar Mohanty outlined the objectives of the discussion and stressed that pensioners should receive proper justice

under the proposed Eighth Pay Commission. General secretary Deben Das introduced the guests.

Among others who participated in the discussion were Pratibha Tripathy, Bijayalakshmi Dash, Prashant Kumar Das, Banamali Prusti, Purnachandra Biswal and Gundicha Baral.

The event was coordinated with the assistance of treasurer Golak Chandra Jena, Sanjay Kumar Das and Shankar Kumar Barik. The vote of thanks was proposed by Prafulla Kumar Rout.

Paradip Port Authority Hosts Annual Awards Nite 2026

Paradip, (DMS):- Paradip Port Authority (PPA) hosted its prestigious Annual Awards Nite 2026 & Stakeholders' Meet on the evening of 20th May at Mayfair Bay Resort (Orchid Hall), Paradip, dedicated to recognising and celebrating the outstanding achievements and contributions of various stakeholders who have played a pivotal role in the Port's success during the past fiscal year. The event brought together key figures from the maritime sector including exporters, importers, officers, staff unions, PPP operators, stevedores, shipping agents, Railways, Customs and State Government officials.

Shri P. L. Haranadh, IRTS, Chairman, Paradip Port Authority, along with Shri T. Venu Gopal, Deputy Chairman, Paradip Port Authority, presented awards and shared prize money with

award-winning stakeholders in recognition of their exemplary performance, operational excellence and valuable contribution towards the Port's historic growth and achievements.

In his address, Chairman Shri P. L. Haranadh stated that Paradip Port Authority is on a trajectory of unprecedented growth, establishing itself as a premier maritime hub both nationally and internationally. He expressed his deep gratitude to the port's stakeholders, including exporters, importers and ship owners, for their unwavering confidence and support.

Highlighting the port's remarkable performance, Shri Haranadh noted that Paradip has achieved a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of nearly 9% over the last four years, which is more than double the national maritime sector's average growth of 4%. This resilience



has enabled Paradip Port to consistently outperform other major domestic ports and register its best-ever performance in the Port's history since operations began in 1967.

Despite facing significant recent challenges, such as a substantial dip of over 10 million tonnes in iron ore

traffic and stagnant coastal thermal coal volumes due to the nation's increasing reliance on renewable energy and imports, the Port is looking toward a highly promising future. Shri Haranadh emphasized that the ongoing domestic import substitution strategy, driven by the Government of India's

focus on conserving foreign exchange reserves, is expected to generate massive domestic coal demand from power generation companies.

To seamlessly accommodate this growing demand, Paradip Port has launched a major infrastructure expansion programme. The Port, which

currently operates 18 berths, is set to add five new cape-able berths within the next two to three months, increasing the total number of berths to 23. Additionally, the remaining four semi-mechanized berths will be fully mechanized within a month to enhance operational productivity.

The Chairman further informed that Paradip Port is also on the verge of awarding an exclusive container terminal in the coming months. Simultaneously, tender processes are underway for a dedicated green hydrogen, green ammonia and liquid cargo berth. These strategic developments will elevate the Port's handling capacity from 290 million tonnes to 350 million tonnes by 2030, positioning Paradip as the largest port by capacity in the country.

Reiterating the Port's commitment to transforming into a customer-centric

"smart port," Shri Haranadh highlighted the successful implementation of the Enterprise Business System (EBS) from January 1st and thanked all users for their swift adaptation. He emphasized that the core philosophy of Paradip Port is firmly rooted in enhancing the "Ease of Doing Business."

He reassured stakeholders that the Port management functions as a proactive facilitator rather than a rigid government organisation, always ready to address concerns and deliver solutions efficiently. These initiatives are aimed at creating a more congenial, reliable and convenient ecosystem where all stakeholders can mutually benefit and grow alongside Paradip Port's historic expansion.

Shri Haranadh also expressed sincere gratitude to Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Hon'ble Union Minister of

Ports, Shipping & Waterways, and Shri Shantanu Thakur, Hon'ble Minister of State, for their guidance and leadership. He acknowledged the continued support of the Ministry of Railways, Government of Odisha and the Department of Customs in strengthening Paradip Port's growth story.

The Awards Nite 2026 celebrated the spirit of partnership, dedication and shared achievement that continues to drive Paradip Port towards greater milestones in operational excellence, sustainability and innovation. On the occasion, Seatrans Ship Management Services Pvt. Ltd. has been awarded as best Shipping Agent for the year 2025-26 by Paradip Port Authority. At the end, Capt. Alekha Charan Sahoo, Deputy Conservator, Paradip Port Authority, delivered the vote of thanks, concluding the evening on a high note of camaraderie and shared vision.

Vedanta Aluminium Transforms Last-Mile Healthcare in Kalahandi and Rayagada, Benefiting Over 65,000 People

Bhubaneswar 21 May 2026: Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest producer of aluminium, is strengthening rural healthcare delivery in Odisha through its Mobile Health Unit (MHU) initiative, aimed at improving access to primary healthcare in underserved regions. In FY26, the company delivered free healthcare services to 65,000 patients across 126 villages, including 35 villages in Rayagada, 31 villages in Sijimali and 60 villages in Kalahandi.

essential medical tools and are staffed by qualified healthcare professionals, helping bridge critical accessibility gaps by bringing medical services directly to the doorsteps of communities. The MHUs provide a range of primary healthcare services, including health check-ups, blood pressure and blood sugar testing, maternal and child healthcare support, basic diagnostics, and distribution of free medicines. In addition, the medical teams regularly conduct awareness sessions on preventive healthcare, hygiene, nutrition, seasonal diseases, and early diagnosis to encourage healthier communities. The initiative has received appreciation from both healthcare workers and community members for

improving access to reliable medical care in remote locations. Ms. Basanti Bhag, an Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) worker, said, "Vedanta's Mobile Health Units have played a crucial role in improving access to essential healthcare services in the region. The initiative has brought quality healthcare closer to our communities while also increasing awareness about preventive healthcare practices among villagers." Speaking about the impact of the initiative, Ms. Sarkar Majhi, a resident of Upar Ambapadar village in Kalahandi District, said, "I am grateful to Vedanta Aluminium for its development efforts, as the Mobile Health Unit has been a great support for our village, especially for elderly

people and children who otherwise had to travel long distances to access medical services." Access to healthcare remains a major challenge in many remote regions of Odisha, where distance, limited infrastructure, and shortage of healthcare professionals often prevent timely treatment. By delivering doorstep services, the MHU initiative eliminates the need for travelling long distances to address basic medical needs. Demonstrating its continued commitment to community healthcare, the company has also organized 11 multispecialty health camps benefiting 1,949 patients across 51 villages. Furthermore, 40 cataract surgeries have been facilitated for elderly residents, restoring vision and

improving quality of life for vulnerable beneficiaries in Sijimali area. Across Odisha, Vedanta Aluminium's healthcare initiatives, including MHU services, have positively impacted more than 1 lakh people. These extensive healthcare interventions reflect Vedanta Aluminium's broader commitment to sustainable development and community welfare in Odisha. By working closely with local authorities, healthcare institutions, and community stakeholders, the company continues to drive impactful initiatives in healthcare, education, livelihood development, women empowerment, and rural infrastructure, contributing significantly to the socio-economic progress of the region.

Meeting of Chief Secretary with Japan Consul General to Strengthen Odisha-Japan Collaboration

Bhubaneswar 21.05.2026 : The Government of Odisha is taking forward discussions with the Government of Japan towards establishing a formal Friendship Agreement between Odisha and Tottori Prefecture, aimed at strengthening cooperation across industrial development, skill development, tourism, culture, youth exchange, and people-to-people ties. Following the meeting between the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha with the Consul General of Japan in Kolkata, yesterday on 20th May, 2026, an in-person meeting was held between Chief Secretary, Government of Odisha, Smt. Anu Garg, IAS, and the Consul General of Japan in Kolkata, ISHIKAWA Yoshihisa. Additional Chief Secretary, Home, Industries and I&PR Department, Shri Hemant Sharma, IAS, was also present during the discussions.

The meeting focused on the proposed Friendship Agreement between Odisha and Tottori Prefecture and explored opportunities for deepening bilateral cooperation in sectors of mutual interest. The draft framework of the agreement envisages collaboration in areas including economy and industry, tourism promotion, youth and student exchange, personnel exchange, culture, and environment. Discussions were also held regarding coordination

meeting involving the Government of Odisha, the Embassy of India in Tokyo, and the Tottori Prefectural Government to finalize modalities and timelines for the partnership. The Government of Odisha highlighted the State's growing industrial ecosystem and emerging opportunities in sectors such as advanced manufacturing, skill development, tourism, and cultural exchanges. Both sides also discussed possibilities for cooperation in Japanese language training, student and faculty exchanges, tourism promotion with focus on the Buddhist circuit, sports collaboration, and industry linkages. The proposed Odisha-Tottori partnership is envisioned as an important step towards enhancing Odisha's engagement with Japan and promoting long-term cooperation in economic, cultural, educational, and industrial sectors.

4th India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi postponed over Ebola outbreak scare

New Delhi : The upcoming Fourth India-Africa Forum Summit, which was scheduled to take place in New Delhi next week, has been postponed due to the Ebola outbreak in Africa, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Thursday. The critical diplomatic gathering was deferred following detailed deliberations convened between Indian administrative authorities, the Chairperson of the African Union, and the African Union Commission to evaluate the feasibility of hosting the high-profile assembly and its ancillary events under current conditions. According to an official communique released by the Ministry

of External Affairs (MEA), the Government of India and the African Union exchanged views on the evolving health situation in parts of Africa and reaffirmed the importance of continued cooperation in strengthening public health preparedness and response capacities across the continent, including through support to Africa CDC and relevant national institutions. In light of the unfolding medical emergency, New Delhi has re-emphasised its unwavering alignment with African populations and their respective administrations. Furthermore, India has voiced its complete preparedness to provide

material and strategic assistance to operations spearheaded by the Africa CDC, ensuring all actions remain perfectly aligned with the shared commitment to an Africa-led response. The scheduling of fresh timelines for the multilateral conference and its supplementary conventions remains under review. The MEA indicated that the new dates for the Summit and its associated meetings will be finalised through mutual consultations and communicated in due course. Underscoring the deep historical and diplomatic ties that tie the two regions together despite the temporary delay, the official document emphasised a

mutual dedication to joint advancement. "India and Africa reaffirmed their longstanding partnership founded on solidarity, mutual respect, South-South cooperation, and a shared commitment to peace, development, prosperity, and the well-being of their peoples," read the statement. This major diplomatic decision comes as global attention has once again shifted to Ebola following the World Health Organisation's decision to designate the escalating crisis across Congo and Uganda as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

UNION BANK OF INDIA INAUGURATED KUKUDAKHANDI BRANCH



Berhampur: Union Bank of India inaugurated its new Kukudakhundi Branch. Sanjeev Ranjan Sahay, Zonal Head of Union Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Zone inaugurated the new branch. L. Sangita Kujur, Regional Head, Berhampur Region, Bibhuti Bhusan Mohanty, Deputy Regional Head, Berhampur Region, Dillip

Kumar Behera, Branch Manager of Kukudakhundi Branch along with other senior Bank officials were present on this occasion. Sri Sahay informed to the gathering that Union Bank is committed to give its best service to the public of Kukudakhundi and will continue to be a part in financial progress of the Region.

Vigilance nabbed Male Health Worker of Haladia CHC, taking bribe for issue of death certificate

Khordha-21/5-Bibhuti Bhusan Sahoo, Male Health Worker (MHW) of Haladia, Community Health Centre (CHC) of Khordha has been apprehended by Odisha Vigilance while demanding and taking bribe ₹1,000/- from a complainant for facilitating issuance of death certificates of his deceased parents.



The poor complt. had submitted the application to the Sub-Collector, Khordha, who had passed orders directing the Registrar, Birth & Death-cum-Medical Officer, Haladia CHC to issue the death certificates. The MHW Bibhuti Bhusan Sahoo, demanded bribe ₹1,000/

- and refused to take up the matter unless the demanded bribe ₹1,000/- was paid to him. Finding no other means, the complainant approached the vigilance authorities narrating his

harassment by the MHW, Mr. Sahoo. Upon receiving the information, a team of vigilance department nabbed, today, Mr. Sahoo, while taking bribe money of ₹1,000/- from the complainant. The entire tainted bribe money ₹1,000/- has been recovered from the possession of Mr. Sahoo and seized. Following the trap, simultaneous searches are going on at two locations linked to Mr. Sahoo from DA angle. In this connection, Vigilance P.S. Case No. 08 dated 20.05.2026 u/s 7 of the P.C. (Amendment) Act, 2018 has been registered. Investigation is going on progress against the Mr. Sahoo, MHW.

KIIT, ABI Showatech Implement MoU Through Recruitment, Research and Industry Integration Initiatives

Bhubaneswar: KIIT University and ABI-Showatech (India) Limited are implementing their Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), signed in October 2025, through a series of initiatives focused on recruitment, talent development, research collaboration and industry integration. As part of the initiative, ABI Showatech will coordinate the onboarding of 40 ITI and Diploma graduates already recruited from KIIT, while recruitment of additional professionals is expected to be finalized next week. The collaboration aims to create a sustainable talent pipeline from KIIT to meet the company's evolving workforce requirements. Students selected from KIIT are undergoing an internship at ABI's Pullivalum



manufacturing facility in Tamil Nadu and will come back to Odisha once the company's upcoming greenfield plant in the state becomes operational in the coming years. Expressing satisfaction over the initiative, the Founder of KIIT and KISS Dr Achyuta Samanta said KIIT has always emphasised placement and skill development of its students.

As a result, most Indian and multinational companies select students from KIIT through the campus placement process. The partnership is also designed to enhance industry exposure for students through structured internships and hands-on training opportunities at ABI's manufacturing facilities, with

provisions for accommodation, meals, and possible stipends. On the research front, three joint proposals are currently under evaluation, with selected projects expected to commence shortly. The collaboration will focus on applied research in manufacturing process optimization, materials

engineering and supply chain innovation by leveraging KIIT's academic expertise and ABI Showatech's industrial strengths. The partnership is expected to benefit both institutions through skilled manpower development, stronger industry linkages and collaborative innovation opportunities. Dr. Ajay Pradhan, Vice President, KIIT; Mr. R. Ramanujam, Chairman, ABI Showatech; Dr. Mrutyunjay Jena, Dean, Aerospace Engineering; Dr. P. C. Mishra, Dean; Dr. Benugopal Mohapatra, Director, Consultancy; T. T. Hatagrave, CFO, ABI; Dr. Debashish Deb, Adjunct Faculty and Consultant to ABI; and M. Sundar, Executive Director, ABI Showatech, were present on the occasion.

ଓଡିଶା ସରକାର
ପିପିଲି ବ୍ଲକ୍, ପିପିଲି, ପୁରୀ (ଓଡିଶା) - 752104
Letter No: 199/11 Date: 20-05-26
TENDER CALL NOTICE

Tenders are invited for the following work through online process. Tender document is available on www.tenderodisha.gov.in interested parties can submit their tender document within stipulated time period as mentioned in the tender document further details can be seen from the given web site.

Tender Description

Sl No.	Name of the Projects	Tender cost	Cost of Tender paper in Rs. Including GST 18%	Class of Contractor	Bid Security/ EMD (1% of Estimated Cost part to tender)	Time of completion
1	CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL CLASS ROOM AT RAJATEE PPS AT SAMPUR GP OF PIPILI BLOCK OF PURI DISTRICT (Bid ID No.-05/26-27)	14,91,013/-	7080/-	"B" & "C" Class Contractor	Rs.14,910/-	90 days
2	CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL CLASS ROOM AT SARASWATIPUR PUPS AT SARASWATIPUR GP OF PIPILI BLOCK OF PURI DISTRICT (Bid ID No.-06/26-27)	14,91,013/-	7080/-	"B" & "C" Class Contractor	Rs.14,910/-	90 days

19001/71/2627 Block Development Officer Pipili

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL: RAYAGADA
DIST-RAYAGADA
PIN CODE-765001, ODISHA
E-mail ID - rayagadam.hud@od.gov.in,
web-www.rayagadamunicipality.in
Phone- 06856-235052
Date: 20/5/26

Letter No. 2408

CORRIGENDUM

This is to inform all that the Bid identification No. RGDA-MUN-08/2025-26, has been published vide "e-tender notice no. 1101 dated 12.03.2026 for the 21 nos of work. Due to technical issues faced during decryption of the bids, the said tender process could not be completed successfully. Hence the aforesaid e-tender is hereby cancelled due to unavoidable Technical reasons. Further course of action regarding re-tendering will be intimated separately.

13001/575/2627 Executive Officer Rayagada Municipality Rayagada Municipality

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
E-Procurement Notice, Superintending Engineer, M.I. Division, Angul
Bid Identification No.-06 OF 2026-27
E-mail ID- semidivisionangul@gmail.com
Letter No. 1414 /Date:- 21.05.2026

1.	Number of Works	: 02 (Two) numbers of Civil work
2.	Approximate estimated cost	: From 29.04 Lakh to 38.49 Lakh
3.	Cost of Tender Paper	: Rs. 6000/- (Non-Refundable)
4.	Period of completion	: 06 (Six) Calendar Months
5.	Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	: Dt. 28-05-2026 at 10.00 A.M. to Dt. 05-06-2026 up to 5.00 P.M.
6.	Last date / Time for receipt of bid in the portal	: Dt. 05-06-2026 up to 5.00 P.M.
7.	Date of opening of bid documents	: Dt. 06-06-2026 up to 10.00 A.M.
8.	Date of lottery if required	: Dt. 11.06.2026 at 11.00 A.M.
9.	Name and address of the Office Inviting Bid	: Superintending Engineer, Minor Irrigation Division, Angul. At / P.O.: Hakimpada, College Square, District: Angul, PIN-759143 Ph. No.06764- 236522 Email ID: semidivisionangul@gmail.com
10.	The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal	: http://tendersorissa.gov.in

32001/261/2627 Superintending Engineer M.I. Division, Angul

Simultaneous Polls

A Joint Parliamentary Committee is holding nationwide consultations on two Bills related to the politically divisive issue of 'One Nation, One Election' (ONOE). PP Chaudhary, the BJP MP who is heading the multi-party panel, has stated that India can save Rs 7 lakh crore if Lok Sabha and Assembly elections are held simultaneously. According to him, this exercise would raise the country's GDP by 1.6 per cent and the money saved can be used for development works and welfare schemes. There is no quarrel with the argument that ONOE would lead to considerable savings in terms of money, time and manpower. However, there is much more to electoral democracy than convenience and cost-



benefit calculations.

The Congress and many other Opposition parties are calling simultaneous polls an attempt by the BJP-led Union government to centralise power and undermine the federal structure. These concerns have only grown after the saffron party added West Bengal to its burgeoning kitty of states. The Centre, however, is insistent that ONOE will benefit the nation. The lack of consensus makes it vital for the parliamentary committee to engage with a wide range of stakeholders — political parties, constitutional authorities, legal experts, administrative bodies, financial and educational institutions, industry and civil society.

One of the biggest challenges is to synchronise elections — different states go to the polls in different years. Also, there has to be a concrete plan for the worst-case scenario — when a government falls mid-term due to defections or a no-confidence motion. Moreover, Lok Sabha elections focus on national issues, while Assembly battles primarily revolve around state/regional matters. Clubbing the two contests may give an unfair advantage to the ruling party at the Centre, especially in states where it is not in power. The panel must take diverse factors and perspectives into account before submitting its findings. After all, the proposal, if implemented, will have far-reaching implications for India's democratic and federal framework.

Healthcare System

The public healthcare systems of Punjab and Haryana have received a much-needed jolt from the Punjab and Haryana High Court. It has directed both states to ensure CT scan and MRI machines, along with ICU facilities, in every district hospital. The court's intervention exposes the widening gap between healthcare promises and healthcare delivery. During the hearings, Punjab



informed the court that MRI facilities were available in only six of its 23 districts, while more than 2,000 posts of General Medical Officers and hundreds of specialist positions remained vacant. Several district hospitals still lacked functional ICUs. Haryana, too, was asked to explain gaps in diagnostic and critical-care facilities. These shortages explain why costly medical equipment in many government hospitals often lies unused or underutilised.

The HC rightly observed that access to CT scans, MRIs and ICUs was no longer a luxury but a basic healthcare necessity. It also underlined that governments could not rely indefinitely on outsourcing or referral systems in place of functional district-level infrastructure. Public healthcare system suffers not merely from lack of procurement, but from procurement without planning. MRI machines remain uninstalled because technicians are unavailable. Ventilators gather dust because maintenance contracts lapse. Diagnostic services are outsourced because radiologists and biomedical engineers are absent. Repeated audit reports have shown equipment worth crores lying idle for months or even years.

The consequences are severe. Every dysfunctional CT scanner delays diagnosis for accident victims, cancer patients and stroke sufferers. Every vacant specialist post pushes families towards expensive private hospitals. Rural patients often travel long distances only to discover that machines are non-functional or there is no staff to operate them. Installing machines alone will not cure the crisis. Public hospitals need doctors, technicians and accountability as urgently as they need equipment. Healthcare cannot be measured by machines purchased, but by patients treated in time.

Indian Economy: Past, Present, and Future

Suresh Chandra Sarangi

Rating agency Moody's has slashed India's 2026 GDP growth to 6% for the financial year 2026_27, in its latest forecast. This contradicts the IMF's April World Economic Outlook, which was jointly released by the IMF and the World Bank, at 6.5%, revised from an earlier forecast of 6.6%. However, the Reserve Bank of India has revised its GDP forecast for the current financial year to 6.9%, an upward revision from the past. Mody's estimate comes at a time when India is facing a significant challenge due to global geopolitics, the energy shock resulting from the Gulf War, and the seizure of the Strait of Hormuz. A steep depreciation of the Rupee, around 11% in a year, FII outflows, and diminishing forex reserve.

Mody's concern was based on subdued private consumption, lower capital formation, and the impacts of the high energy shock, dampening the positive national economic outlook. Moody's forecasts speak of imported inflation and global economic uncertainty. Of course, Moody's views speak of a higher agricultural export, on account of the Rupee depreciation, the same may be neutralised because of enhanced fuel and fertiliser cost, leaving the economy gasping, with public finance remaining under strain. Economists are more cautious in their assessment, by contemplating that the recovery and rehabilitation of the world economy may take time up to the end of March 27.

Let us discuss the Indian Economy, in retrospect, to have a bird's eye view of how we reached here. Angus Maddison, the Nobel laureate, had described that in 1000 AD, India and China put together were contributing 50% of the World Economy, and by 1950, it had reduced to 10%. That time, it was with a higher per capita income for India, more than that of European countries. The British rule in India drained India, and it continued unabated till India attained freedom in 1947. The subcontinent's enduring sea trade had provided the subcontinent with economic clout. After freedom, Nehru, inspired by the Bombay plan, had gone for a five-year planning model, with industrialization till the famous American economist and apostle of free market economy, Milton Friedman, hit at the public investment policy with absolute state control of the economy, and counselled that India has to go for a free market economy, export growth,

However, as per the NPC report, the focus was on planned development, including land, water, natural resources,



labour, Agriculture, industry, trade and credit, finance, and education. As an emerging economy, within the iron frame of bureaucratic planning, economic crisis developed, with industrialisation, but the license raj was almost eating away at the vitality of economic development. The economy became insular, and government regulation and control were detrimental to the philosophy of free market economy and to the growth of enterprises. During the sixties, India witnessed the food crisis and received wheat from the USA under the PL 480 programme, and then the green revolution in Agriculture, which created surplus food grain and created a rural rich community, who became active participants in the Indian democratic process. It is estimated that from 1950 to 1980, the GDP growth remained approximately 3.5%, and from 1980_2000 it improved to 5.5%. Nehru's dream of a stable India was gradually making inroads into the frontier of prosperity, with Indra Gandhi's policy of Bank Nationalization, which opened the floodgates of success.

The year 1991 was a turning point in India's economic history, and touted that the PV Narsimha Rao-Manmohan Singh combine mega reform, made India Unbound, and the elephant danced. Though India won political freedom in 1947, it gained economic freedom in 1991. The landmark journey of India started thereafter, with the avowed objective of achieving democratic socialism. Not that the journey was simple and easy going, a huge external debt, balance of payment problem, and unsustainable fiscal deficit were the choke points. But after 1991, the fiscal deficit gap was reduced, the balance of payment crisis was minimised, the trade and industrial policy was liberalised, and the Rupee was made partially convertible on the current account to discover its worth in international payment and settlements. Thereafter, there was no looking back. There has been a significant transformation of the Indian economy, despite the globe_trotting global financial crisis. India remained insulated, and there was no such direct impact.

, except for the global supply chain derailment. The 2019 Covid pandemic, of course, had completely derailed the Indian economy, and the shock had a devastating effect on our economy, clocking a negative rate of growth, the worst in the comity of nations. Population has been a double-edged sword, with 50% of people below the age of 19, adding to the demographic dividend, while it reduces the per capita income with heavy consumption of resources. Gradually, India became the fastest-growing emerging economy, gaining 4th position in the world in GDP terms, now revised to 6th rank.

From 2000 to 2015, the average growth has been 7.5%. From 2001 to 2009, it was the golden period of growth, sometimes clocking 9% per annum. India is currently on the cusp of a revolution, with the establishment of a globally competitive service economy. In the field of Agriculture and Allied activities, India is leading in either the number one or two position, with good food security. Of course, in manufacturing, in spite of policy-specific measures like Make in India, Atmanirbar Bharat, and PM Gati Shakti, etc. India has been a laggard in comparison with China, as manufacturing has not picked up to the desired level.

The biggest reform in this century, of course, was the GST reforms, a bright example of cooperative federalism. The PLI scheme has boosted India's entrepreneurs' morale, and the result is so many unicorns. The demonetisation of high-value currency, of course, destabilised the economy for a while, more so in the unorganised sector, but it has paid dividends by transforming India from a cash society to a less cash society by extending the UPI (United Payment Interface), which has triggered a million mutinies.

Normally, the Indian economy was not so export-oriented from the beginning. Of late, export and defense exports are picking up, IT service orientation, and expansion of the manufacturing sector, education sector is bringing laurels to the economy. Despite the progress in education, manufacturing, controlling the concern of poverty with emphasis on Trickle down theory, controlling inflation

by proper inflation targeting, the golden quadrilateral, and the superfast express train, all lead to a revival and nourishment of the Indian economy.

India suffers from an unemployment problem. The ease of doing business has improved, and pay phones, phone pay etc has provided the teeth to explore business opportunities across India. India lacks global competitiveness. Despite these weaknesses, India is almost fourth largest economy (recent change to 6th position on account of the Rupee depreciation and adoption of new series), in terms of purchasing power parity. The start-ups, the digital economy, and defence export are new thrust areas that add to its new status as a superpower in the world. Despite Trump's tariffs, India's exports have been eye-catching with 863 billion dollars, a milestone, during 2025_26. India's effort to gear up its semiconductor business speaks of the new economy and its adoption.

The West Asia war with America supporting Israel has unnerved the world. A black swan moment that has brought volatility, uncertainty, instability, threatening global peace, disrupting supply chains, globalisation, and inducing degrowth and the appearance of inflation or stagflation. This has also affected the Indian economy, with a flight of capital and currency depreciation. The oil shock is unimaginable, triggering a rupee depreciation of 11 to 12% against the dollar and has depreciated 25% against the Australian dollar, significantly against the Chinese yuan, and has depreciated against 25 currencies. CPI inflation has been rising continuously for six months, and in April, it was 3.48%, and food inflation 4.1%. The foreign currency reserve has come down to 690.69 billion dollars. India imports approximately almost 88% of its oil requirement, and that has triggered a vicious cycle.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent appeal to the nation to maintain austerity, by curtailing petrol expenditure, making a full stop to gold purchase (gold import has increased by 24%), and going for conservation. This appears to be a stress test from India, and the economy is reeling under the oil shock, and is clearly undergoing a bad phase. It may persist further if Xi and Trump meet fails in stopping the war in West Asia.

The broader economy is still under stress, because of the energy shock and despite the government's importance to energy security, by bringing austerity and enhancing renewable energy production. Kristalina Georgieva's faith in India's economy, its resilience, and its growth momentum is noteworthy, as she firmly believes that India remains the fastest-growing economy.

Raja Rammohan: The First Beacon of Renaissance Consciousness in India

The Indian Renaissance began in the early 19th century, around the 1820s, with figures like Raja Ram Mohan Roy (22 May 1772- 27 September 1833) as its pioneer. It was a cultural and intellectual revival aimed at social reform, rational thinking, and modernization, influenced by Western ideas but rooted in Indian context. Unlike the

European Renaissance, it was not a sudden artistic or scientific explosion but a gradual awakening focused on education, abolition of practices like sati, and religious reform. The movement gained momentum through institutions like the Brahma Samaj and later inspired leaders such as Vivekananda and Tagore.

The consciousness of the Renaissance in India did not emerge suddenly; rather, it was the culmination of a long historical process. During the 18th and 19th centuries-when European powers had established their presence in India through trade and governance-the influence of Western education, science, and modern ideas gradually permeated Indian society. This influence inspired Indian intellectuals to re-evaluate their own traditions and social structures. The consciousness of the Renaissance first took root in Bengal. This phase is known as the "Bengal Renaissance." The advent of English education and the printing press accelerated the dissemination of ideas. Raja Rammohan Roy is regarded as the first and most significant pioneer of this Renaissance. He synthesized Western science and rationality with India's spiritual traditions. His efforts compelled society to recognize that true progress could only be achieved by liberating itself from superstition, orthodoxy, and bigotry.

Rammohan Roy campaigned against the practice of *Sati*, advocated for women's education, and sought to interpret religion through the lenses of reason and humanism. Following in his



footsteps, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar spearheaded movements for widow remarriage and women's education. Continuing this legacy, Swami Vivekananda linked religion to humanitarian service, while Dayanand Saraswati issued a call to "Return to the Vedas." Thus, the consciousness of the Renaissance in India originated in Bengal and gradually spread across the entire nation. However, the visionary who laid its foundation-the first great pioneer-was Raja Rammohan Roy. He demonstrated to Indian society that we can advance toward a new era only by striking a balance between modernity and tradition.

Today, as society once again appears to be drifting toward parochialism and bigotry, it is imperative to recall the courage and wisdom with which the Renaissance in India began. That very spirit of Rammohan Roy can continue to guide us even today. A glance at India's

current social landscape makes it evident that the spirit of the Renaissance within our collective consciousness has been supplanted by narrow-mindedness, bigotry, and divisive ideologies. Casteism, social hierarchy, violence in the name of religion, and communalism have gripped society. Mob lynchings and riots are no longer uncommon occurrences. In such times, revisiting the ideology of Raja Ram Mohan Roy is not merely a historical tribute, but an endeavor to provide direction to contemporary society. On his birth anniversary, we must recognize that his vision remains just as relevant today as it was two hundred years ago.

The Courage of Social Reform: Ram Mohan Roy raised his voice during an era when society was shackled by rigid traditions and superstitions. He spearheaded the struggle against the practice of *Sati* and played a pivotal role in enacting legislation to save the lives of women. Today, when violence, discrimination, and inequality against women persist, his philosophy reminds us that the liberation of society is attainable only through the freedom and dignity of women. Religious Tolerance and Reason: Ram Mohan Roy strove to liberate religion from the clutches of fanaticism. While interpreting the Vedanta and the Upanishads, he prioritized logic and reason. For him, the essence of religion lay in humanity, not in parochialism. Today, amidst the divisions and violence perpetrated in the name of religion, his ideology serves as a reminder that the true purpose of religion is to unite people, not to divide them. Consciousness Against Caste and Hierarchy: He challenged the rigidity of the caste system. To him, a human being's worth was determined not by their caste, but by their moral character and deeds. In contemporary India-where caste-based discrimination and violence continue to fracture society-his vision teaches us that true freedom

lies in equality.

The Emphasis on Education and Modernity: Ram Mohan Roy regarded education as the most potent instrument for social reform. He championed English education to enable Indian society to engage with modern science and ideas. Today, as the objective of education increasingly narrows to mere employability, his vision serves as a reminder that the true purpose of education lies in the expansion of consciousness and the cultivation of wisdom. His Message Against Communalism: Ram Mohan Roy consistently prioritized dialogue and tolerance. He engaged in discourse even with Christian missionaries and undertook the study of Islamic thought. To him, truth was not the exclusive preserve of any single religion. Today, as communalism threatens to fracture society, his vision reminds us that India's true strength resides in its diversity.

Relevance in the Contemporary Context: Given the phase India is currently traversing, Ram Mohan Roy's ideology serves as a cautionary signal: if we abandon reason, equality, and tolerance, society risks plunging into violence and darkness. His philosophy teaches us that true modernity stems not merely from technology, but from human values. The Call for Renaissance: Ram Mohan Roy's life conveys the message that the emancipation of society is achieved not solely through legislation or political power, but through a transformation of consciousness. Until we purge narrow-mindedness and bigotry from within ourselves, a genuine renaissance remains an impossibility.

Asit Mohanty
Columnist & Convener, Odia
Language
Protection Campaign
Sujanpur, Jajpur
Cell - 9437288028

AIIMS Doctors Advise Precautions As Delhi Heatwave Triggering Rise In Dehydration, Heat Stroke Cases

New Delhi, 21/5: Doctors from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) have urged people to take preventive measures against heat-related illnesses as soaring temperatures continue to impact several parts of the country. Dr Piyush Ranjan, Additional Professor in the Department of Medicine at AIIMS Delhi, said that cases of dehydration and heat stroke tend to rise sharply whenever temperatures increase. "Whenever the temperature rises, health problems related to heat begin to appear. The first and mildest condition is dehydration, in which the body loses water and salts," he said. He warned that dehydration can progress to heat stroke, commonly known as 'loo lagna', and in severe situations, patients may even lose consciousness. Highlighting



precautionary measures, Dr Ranjan advised people to avoid stepping outdoors during peak afternoon hours. "As far as possible, people should avoid going outdoors between 11 a.m. and 4-5 p.m., when temperatures are at their peak," he said. He added that if venturing outside is unavoidable, people

should wear full-sleeved clothes, full-length trousers, and keep their heads covered with caps, scarves, or turbans. He also recommended the use of umbrellas and staying indoors, whenever possible. Dr Ranjan stressed the importance of proper hydration before going outdoors. "People should drink

sufficient water before stepping outside. Ideally, one or two litres of water should be consumed before leaving home. While outdoors, people should also consume electrolytes or ORS to maintain the balance of water and salts in the body and prevent dehydration," he said. Dr Neeraj Nishchal, Professor in the Department of Medicine, said plain water alone may not be sufficient during extreme heat conditions because the body loses salts through sweating. "It is important to understand that drinking only plain water is not enough, because during extreme heat, the body loses not just water but also salt through sweating. Therefore, ORS solutions or electrolytes are considered more beneficial," he said. He also suggested consuming traditional drinks and

foods such as Bel ka Sharbat, shikanji, and lentil water to help the body stay hydrated during the heatwave. According to Dr Nishchal, hospitals are witnessing a growing number of heatwave-related health complaints. The most common symptoms include dehydration, weakness, dizziness, headaches, excessive sweating, vomiting, and low blood pressure. "In severe cases, heat stroke is being reported, where the body temperature rises dangerously high. Patients may suffer from high fever, unconsciousness, confusion, and sometimes even seizures," he said. He added that elderly people, children, pregnant women, and individuals suffering from illnesses such as diabetes or heart disease are among the most vulnerable groups during extreme heat conditions.

Delhi-NCR Sizzles Round The Clock As Warm Nights Worsen Heat Misery

New Delhi, 21/5: Residents of the National Capital Region (NCR) are grappling with an unrelenting spell of heat, with discomfort now extending well into the night. Not just the daytime, but warm and humid nights are making conditions increasingly unbearable, as temperatures stay above normal levels. According to the latest India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast, the region is likely to continue experiencing heatwave conditions over the next six days. Daytime temperatures are hovering around 45 degrees Celsius, while the minimum temperature remains unusually high, ranging between 30 and 32 degrees Celsius. The lack of nighttime cooling has worsened public discomfort. The maximum temperature in Delhi-NCR on Thursday was recorded at 44 degrees C and is expected to cross 45 degrees Celsius on Friday. The IMD has issued a warning of heatwave conditions accompanied by strong surface winds during the afternoon and evening hours, along with the possibility of a 'warm night'. Similar conditions are



expected to persist on Friday, with the maximum temperature at 45 degrees and the minimum around 31 degrees Celsius. Heatwave warnings remain in place, with strong winds likely during the latter half of the day. From May 23 to May 24, the temperature is projected to remain steady at around 45 degrees Celsius, while minimum temperatures are likely to stay near 31 degrees. Heatwave conditions and strong surface winds are expected to continue during the afternoon and evening hours. For May 25 and 26, the IMD has forecast no relief, with

maximum temperatures likely to stay at 45 degrees and minimum temperatures hovering around 30 degrees Celsius. Amid the severe heat, the Health Department has stepped up measures to tackle health problems. Hospitals have been directed to arrange additional beds, set up separate wards for heatstroke cases, and ensure the availability of specialised medical care. Health experts have advised residents to avoid stepping out between 12 p.m. and 4 p.m., stay well-hydrated, wear light clothing, and cover their heads when venturing outdoors.

Delhi HC Disposes Of PIL Seeking Cow Dung Logs As Alternative To Firewood In Cremation Grounds

New Delhi, 21/5: The Delhi High Court has disposed of a public interest litigation (PIL) seeking directions to promote the use of Gaukash (cow dung logs) as the primary fuel in cremation grounds across the national capital in place of conventional firewood. A Division Bench of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia granted liberty to the petitioner to approach the concerned authorities by way of a representation raising the issues flagged in the plea. "Having regard to the issues raised in the present Petition, we dispose of the same with a liberty to the Petitioner to approach the various authorities... by way of making a representation for redressal of the grievance and issues raised in the present Petition," the Delhi High Court said in its order passed on Wednesday. The CJ Upadhyaya-led Bench directed that the representation be submitted within two weeks along with all supporting documents relied upon by the petitioner. It further ordered that the concerned authorities take a "workable decision as per law" and communicate the same to the



petitioner. Filed by Ajay Kumar Ghakar, trustee of Gaudaan Foundation, the PIL sought directions to the Centre, Delhi government, Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), and Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) to establish a dedicated 100 per cent biomass fuel-based cremation system using Gaukash. The plea also sought guidelines for better management of gaushalas, including ensuring adequate fodder, veterinary care and welfare measures for animals housed in cow shelters. The petition claimed that cremation grounds in Delhi presently use

From Melody Toffees to Madhubani Art: PM Modi's Gifts During 5-Nation Tour Win Hearts Worldwide

NEWDELHI, 21/5: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's five-nation diplomatic tour may have focused on strengthening global partnerships, but it was his thoughtful gifts to world leaders that captured massive attention online. From viral Melody toffees to handcrafted Indian art pieces, each present reflected the diversity and richness of Indian culture. The gifts presented during visits to Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and the UAE showcased traditional Indian craftsmanship, regional heritage and cultural diplomacy. One of the most talked-about moments from the tour came during PM Modi's meeting with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. The Prime Minister gifted her a pack of Melody toffees, sparking another wave of "#Melodi" memes and jokes across social media platforms. Apart from the viral chocolates, Meloni also received two elegant stoles from Northeast India — a Muga Silk stole from Assam and a Shirui Lily silk stole from Manipur. Muga silk is famous for its natural golden shine, durability and eco-friendly production process. The Shirui Lily stole drew attention for its inspiration from Manipur's rare Shirui Lily flower, which symbolises purity and cultural pride. Madhubani Painting And Blue Pottery In Netherlands During his visit to the Netherlands, PM Modi gifted King Willem-Alexander a traditional Blue Pottery artwork from Rajasthan. The GI-tagged craft is known for its bright blue-and-white floral designs and intricate detailing. Queen Máxima received beautifully crafted Meenakari and Kundan earrings that highlighted India's rich jewellery-making traditions.

India-Africa Summit Postponed Over Ebola Scare As WHO Declares Health Emergency

NEWDELHI, 21/5: The Fourth India-Africa Forum Summit, scheduled to be held in New Delhi from May 28 to 31, has been postponed following growing concerns over the Ebola outbreak in parts of Africa. The decision was taken jointly by India and the African Union after consultations on the evolving public health situation across the continent. The summit, which was expected to bring together several African leaders and key stakeholders, will now be held at a later date. Fresh dates have not been announced yet and will be finalised through mutual consultations between both sides. According to a joint statement, India, the Chairperson of the African Union and the African Union Commission reviewed the emerging health crisis and agreed that postponing the summit was the most appropriate step to ensure full participation and safety. Both sides also reaffirmed their long-standing partnership based on solidarity, mutual respect, South-South cooperation and shared goals of peace, development and prosperity. The statement highlighted the importance of strengthening public health preparedness and cooperation across Africa, including support



for Africa CDC and national health institutions. The postponement comes shortly after the World Health Organization declared the Ebola outbreaks in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the outbreak remains a serious concern, with more than 130 deaths linked to the disease and over 500 suspected cases reported so far. Health officials have also warned that ongoing challenges in reaching affected populations are complicating containment efforts. In response to the

situation, India's Union Health Ministry issued an advisory for travellers arriving from or transiting through Ebola-affected nations including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and South Sudan. Passengers experiencing symptoms such as fever, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhoea, sore throat or unexplained bleeding have been asked to immediately report to airport health authorities. Travellers have also been advised to seek urgent medical attention if symptoms develop within 21 days of arrival and inform healthcare officials about their travel history. Delhi Airport also

released a separate advisory urging passengers from high-risk countries to cooperate with health screening protocols. The India-Africa Forum Summit is considered one of the most important diplomatic engagements between India and African nations, aimed at strengthening cooperation in trade, health, technology, infrastructure and global partnerships. While the postponement reflects rising caution over the Ebola outbreak, both India and the African Union stressed that their strategic partnership remains strong and committed to future collaboration.

Maharashtra Farm Loan Waiver To Be Completed By June 30, Says CM Fadnavis

Mumbai, 21/5: Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Thursday announced the definitive timeline for the implementation of the state government's farm loan waiver scheme, officials said. Addressing a press conference after the meetings to review the preparations for the Kharif season and State Level Bankers' Committee, the Chief Minister declared that all eligible farmers will receive their loan waivers before June 30. This timely implementation will clear the path for farmers to secure fresh credit for the upcoming agricultural season, he added. The Chief Minister directed nationalised banks to strictly achieve at least 80 per cent of their designated agricultural loan distribution targets. While the state government had previously announced the loan waiver scheme, the lack of a specific execution date had caused significant confusion among both farmers and banking institutions. The Opposition had also capitalised on the delay to criticise the state administration. Putting an end to the uncertainty, the Chief Minister made this major announcement to execute the waiver well before the crucial June 30 deadline. Statistical data indicates that District Cooperative Banks and Rural

banks currently account for 67 per cent of agricultural loans, whereas other nationalised banks account for 26 per cent. Noting that nationalised banks frequently fall short of their agricultural credit goals, the Chief Minister emphasised that they must fulfil their 80 per cent distribution targets. Chief Minister Fadnavis said that the state government has issued absolute directives to banking institutions prohibiting them from demanding CIBIL scores from farmers seeking crop loans. "We have informed nationalised banks in very strict terms that no farmer should be inconvenienced by CIBIL requirements," he added. He said that banking headquarters must issue explicit notification letters to every local branch clarifying that CIBIL scores are not mandatory for crop loans. Officials from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) attended the meeting and confirmed this regulatory stance, ensuring that no farmer's crop loan process will be obstructed. According to the state cooperation department officer, the CIBIL Score is a three-digit number representing an individual's creditworthiness. It helps lenders understand how responsible you are with credit and your repayment behaviour.

But how important is this three-digit score? This guide will break it down. Acknowledging major climate risks, the Chief Minister noted that current Meteorological forecasts project only 88 per cent rainfall, with expectations of a declining precipitation trend. This pattern is expected to increase moisture stress on crops. The state has formulated comprehensive contingency plans based on these weather indicators, including accelerating the deployment of the 'Jalyukt Shivar' (water conservation) initiatives. To assist the farming community, the state has launched the 'Mahavistar' mobile application. The app utilises Artificial Intelligence (AI) to provide tailored insights on crop patterns and answer direct agricultural queries from farmers. Additionally, the Maharashtra government is strictly monitoring the supply of fertilisers, which faces global manufacturing pressures this year. "To prevent the illegal diversion of agricultural fertilisers to industrial sectors, the state administration will implement mandatory videography protocols," Chief Minister Fadnavis said. With the crucial Kharif sowing season rapidly approaching, farmers across Maharashtra had been demanding swift execution of the relief measures.

China University Smoking Area Row Highlights Wider Tobacco Control Challenge

New Delhi, 21/5: A student's complaint over the absence of benches in a university smoking area in China, saying it was "exhausting" to smoke while standing, has reignited debate over the country's broader tobacco control challenge. The report received global coverage, where a student at the Xian International Studies University in China's northwestern Shaanxi province was said to have filed a complaint in the school's internal feedback channel. It cited the absence of benches in designated areas, making smoking too "exhausting". The student further asked the administration to provide an adequate seating facility. In response, a "university teacher responded with a lengthy letter saying that making smokers feel tired was exactly why the area was designed in the way it was," reported the South China Morning Post on Wednesday. "The smoking area is not for resting. We set them up to provide a transition space for those who temporarily cannot quit smoking, to smoke away from the crowd and reduce the influence of second-hand smoke on other people," quoted the report. It added that the letter slammed the student's request by saying: "When you complain about



feeling 'tired' smoking while standing, have you thought of how tired other people are withstanding your second-hand smoke?" Studies show that smoking among young people in China remains alarmingly high, despite government campaigns to curb tobacco use. Beijing, emphasises China's media, prohibits smoking in public places, indoor workplaces and in lines of people outdoors. Some cities ban smoking in indoor workplaces, indoor public places, public vehicles and outdoor areas in schools, parks

and medical institutions, according to an earlier report in China Daily. A World Health Organisation (WHO) report put China as the largest producer and consumer of tobacco in the world. There are more than 300 million smokers in China, which the WHO described as nearly one-third of the world's total. "More than half of adult men are current tobacco smokers. About one in every three cigarettes smoked in the world is smoked in China. In addition, over 700 million non-smokers in China, including about 180 million

children, are exposed to second-hand smoke (SHS) at least once a day in a typical week. Exposure to SHS causes 100,000 deaths annually," it added. The study found that 26.6 per cent of adults aged 15 years and above in China are current smokers. The US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) describes a "current smoker" as an adult who has smoked 100 cigarettes in his or her lifetime and who currently smokes cigarettes. Beginning in 1991, this group was divided into "everyday" smokers or

"somedays" smokers. China itself has been actively involved in monitoring and addressing smoking rates in the country. "Chinese men consume around 40 per cent of the world's cigarettes, causing a substantial and growing burden of tobacco-attributed death and disease. In 2005, the Chinese Government ratified the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, and tobacco control measures have since increased nationwide," observed science journal The Lancet. "Traditionally, tobacco in China was regarded as a delightful gift akin to tea and wine, with ancient medical literature suggesting tobacco to refresh the chest and ward off impurities, although tobacco dependence was associated with premature death," it observed. China ramped up efforts to control smoking, with 254 cities altogether till 2024 introducing or revising measures to curb it, some reports said, quoting health authorities. At the provincial level, 24 regions in China have rolled out regulations on smoking, with the proportion of the population protected by comprehensive smoke-free regulations continuing to increase, according to experts from the National Health Commission, said an earlier China Daily report.

Pakistan: Two Miners Killed, Another Injured In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Islamabad, 21/5: Two miners were killed and another injured in two separate coal mine incidents in Shangla district of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, local media reported on Thursday. The first incident took place at Mine No 5 of Akhorwal coal mines. The sources revealed two workers were buried during debris during operations in the mine. Rescue teams, fellow miners and local residents retrieved the trapped workers after working for nearly two and a half hours, Pakistan's leading daily The Express Tribune reported. The deceased miner and injured worker hailed from Shangla district. In a separate incident, a miner died while working in a coal mine in Chaparmashti area. The body of the deceased worker was taken to his native village for last rites after conducting necessary formalities. Local residents and labour organisations have voiced serious concern over the lack of safety measures in Pakistan's coal mines and called on the government and authorities to take notice of the issue. People in the area termed recurring accidents in coal mines a constant threat to the lives of labourers. They called for strict implementation of safety

measures in all mines to stop the loss of human lives in the future. The Express Tribune reported. Last month, five coal miners were killed and another injured in two separate mining accidents in Bolan and Duki coalfield areas of Pakistan's Balochistan province. Officials said three miners died after they were trapped underground while methane gas accumulated in a coal mine in the Bolan coal mining field near Mach area. Other miners were able to escape from the affected mine and informed authorities about the incident, Pakistan's Dawn reported. Rescue teams from the Mines and Minerals Department and local workers started an operation to rescue trapped miners. However, the miners had died due to suffocation caused by inhaling methane gas. The bodies of workers were found in the mine and taken to the hospital. In a separate incident, two coal miners were killed and another was injured in an accident in the Duki coal mining area, Dawn reported. Police said that three coal miners were seriously injured after a trolley carrying coal hit them. They were immediately rushed to the hospital, where two miners succumbed to their injuries.

Iran's Supreme Leader Rejects U.S. Demand to Remove Enriched Uranium, Hardening Stance Amid Fragile Diplomacy

Tehran, 21/5: Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei has directed that the country's stockpile of enriched uranium "should not leave Iran," defying a key demand from U.S. President Donald Trump, Reuters reported, citing two Iranian sources. President Trump had earlier assured Israel that Iran's inventory of highly enriched uranium—the core material needed for nuclear weapons—would be fully removed from the country, according to Israeli officials speaking to Reuters. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has similarly maintained a firm position, insisting that hostilities will not end until Iran relinquishes its uranium stockpiles, halts financial and material support to regional proxy militias, and dismantles its ballistic missile infrastructure. However, Tehran has pushed back against these demands. One of the anonymous Iranian sources described the internal consensus at the highest

levels of government: "The Supreme Leader's directive, and the establishment's consensus, is that the stockpile of enriched uranium should not leave the country." Officials fear that transferring the material abroad would compromise national security and make Iran more vulnerable to potential U.S. and Israeli military action. Under Iran's constitutional framework, the Supreme Leader retains ultimate authority over all critical state policies, Reuters noted. This diplomatic stalemate comes amid a tenuous cessation of hostilities since April 8, following a series of U.S.-Israeli strikes on Iran on February 28. In retaliation, Tehran launched counterstrikes against Gulf nations hosting American forces, while clashes escalated between Israeli forces and Iran-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon. Although active fighting has paused, negotiators have yet to achieve a meaningful breakthrough. Talks are complicated by a U.S. naval

blockade restricting Iranian shipping, countered by Tehran's strategic control over the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial global energy route. Pakistani mediators are facilitating the current negotiations. According to the Iranian sources, skepticism is widespread among Tehran's leadership, with many viewing the current lull as a tactical pause designed by Washington to mask preparations for renewed military action. Echoing these concerns, Iran's chief negotiator Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said on Wednesday that "obvious and hidden moves by the enemy" indicate that the U.S. military is preparing for further offensives. President Trump also warned on Wednesday that the United States is ready to launch additional strikes if Iran refuses to sign a comprehensive peace treaty, though he suggested a short window of a few days for Tehran to provide "the right answers."

India Calls For Making BRICS Counter-Terrorism Body More Resilient, Future-Ready

New Delhi, 21/5: Secretary (West) at the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Sibi George, on Thursday expressed India's concern over cross-border terrorism and called for concerted and united efforts to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Delivering his keynote address at the 11th Annual BRICS Counter Terrorism Working Group (CTWG) Meeting in New Delhi on Thursday, George emphasised the need for robust collaborative approach to tackle the challenges to counter terrorism like evolving terror funding mechanism, radicalisation and use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist while adopting zero tolerance against terrorism. The seasoned diplomat called for strengthening the existing global counter terrorism architecture through active, comprehensive and sustained global efforts and international cooperation, according to the statement



released by MEA on X. He stressed the need to make BRICS CTWG more resilient, future-ready, innovative, inclusive and outcome-oriented. Sibi George also reaffirmed India's commitment to further deepen cooperation with BRICS member countries for secure and terror-free world. India holds the BRICS chair in 2026 guided by the theme of 'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability', reflecting a

people-centric and humanity-first approach articulated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the 17th BRICS Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 2025. BRIC was formalised at the first meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York in 2006. The inaugural BRIC Summit was convened in Russia's Yekaterinburg in 2009. It was agreed to expand BRIC into BRICS with the inclusion of

South Africa at the BRIC Foreign Ministers' meeting in New York in 2010. South Africa attended the third BRICS Summit in 2011. Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the UAE became full member of BRICS from January 2024 and Indonesia in January 2025. Belarus, Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Cuba, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda, Uzbekistan and Vietnam joined BRICS as Partner Countries in 2025.

Trump Netanyahu phone call sparks friction as Washington pursues diplomatic pact with Iran

USA, 21/5: Disagreement derailed a highly anticipated communication link between Washington and Jerusalem as a new diplomatic blueprint for the Middle East caused a significant rift. United States President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu shared an exceptionally difficult conversation regarding a freshly revised diplomatic draft aimed at resolving hostilities with Tehran. Sources familiar with the interaction noted that the Israeli leader left the conversation in an absolute frenzy, with one insider describing him as having his "hair on fire" due to the sudden shift in American strategy toward regional diplomacy. Insiders reveal that the current friction stems from a coordinated effort by regional mediators, including Qatar and Pakistan, to construct a formal letter of intent. This proposed framework aims to establish a structured timeline for direct negotiations between Washington and Tehran, offering a potential path toward lifting specific sanctions in exchange for strict



verifiable limits on nuclear development. While the American administration indicates a desire to exhaust all diplomatic avenues before reverting to military measures, Jerusalem remains deeply suspicious of any agreement that allows the Iranian government room to manoeuvre. Precedents show that Washington and Jerusalem frequently diverge when calculating long-term deterrence. During previous rounds of regional stabilisation talks, Israeli

defence officials consistently argued that structural disruption of adversary infrastructure yields better security results than international paperwork. The current friction mirrors past policy divides over the 2015 nuclear pact, a scenario that local analysts note heavily influences modern Israeli defensive calculations. Reports indicate that Israel's ambassador to Washington took the unusual step of briefing American lawmakers regarding the

Prime Minister's profound anxieties following the communication. Though embassy representatives later downplayed the briefing by refusing to verify private discussions, the diplomatic community remains on high alert. The White House and the Israeli Prime Minister's Office have officially maintained strict silence regarding the leaked details of the confrontation, even as regional actors continue reviewing the updated proposal drafts.

Thailand Tightens Aviation Ebola Screening After WHO Emergency Declaration

Bangkok, 21/5: The Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT) said on Thursday that it has elevated surveillance and prevention measures for the Ebola virus disease within the country's civil aviation system. This move follows the World Health Organization (WHO)'s declaration of the Ebola virus outbreaks in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda as a public health emergency of international concern due to the risk of cross-border transmission, reports Xinhua news agency. The Thai public health ministry on Wednesday designated both African nations as dangerous communicable disease zones for the Ebola virus, prompting coordinated screening and response measures in civil aviation. In a statement, the CAAT said it has joined planning sessions with the ministry's Division of International Communicable Disease Control and Quarantine, alongside carriers and other stakeholders, to align public health protocols across the sector. Authorities have urged the

public to avoid non-essential travel to Congo and Uganda and neighbouring high-risk areas. Those who must travel are required to register through the Thai Health Pass system, while foreign nationals must accurately complete the Thailand Digital Arrival Card to support contact tracing and disease monitoring. Airlines operating routes connected to affected regions have been instructed to inform passengers of public health requirements, screen passengers at the point of origin, and share passenger seating and travel data with disease-control officers to enable rapid follow-up. The quarantine division has also rehearsed response plans for suspected cases identified on board or after arrival in Thailand, establishing coordination procedures between airlines, airports, health authorities, and supporting agencies to ensure



continuity and limit operational disruption. Speaking at a press conference, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said that a WHO Emergency Committee met on Tuesday and agreed with his earlier assessment that the Ebola situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Uganda is a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC), but is not a pandemic emergency. Tedros early on Sunday declared the PHEIC for the Ebola outbreak in the two countries, marking the first time a WHO chief had done so without first convening an Emergency Committee.

Vedanta Aluminium Transforms Last-Mile Healthcare in Kalahandi and Rayagada, Benefiting Over 65,000 People

Bhubaneswar 21/5(DMS): Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest producer of aluminium, is strengthening rural healthcare delivery in Odisha through its Mobile Health Unit (MHU) initiative, aimed at improving access to primary healthcare in underserved regions. In FY26, the company delivered free healthcare services to 65,000 patients across 126 villages, including 35 villages in Rayagada, 31 villages in Sijimali and 60 villages in Kalahandi. Mobile Health Units (MHUs) are specially designed vehicles that deliver essential healthcare services directly to communities, particularly in remote, rural, and underserved areas where access to hospitals and clinics is limited. Functioning as 'clinics on wheels', these units are fully equipped with essential medical tools and are staffed by qualified healthcare professionals, helping bridge critical accessibility gaps by bringing medical services directly to the doorsteps of communities. The MHUs provide a range of primary healthcare services, including health check-ups, blood pressure and blood sugar testing, maternal and child



healthcare support, basic diagnostics, and distribution of free medicines. In addition, the medical teams regularly conduct awareness sessions on preventive healthcare, hygiene, nutrition, seasonal diseases, and early diagnosis to encourage healthier communities. The initiative has received appreciation from both healthcare workers and community members for improving access to reliable medical care in remote locations. Ms. Basanti Bhag, an

Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) worker, said, "Vedanta's Mobile Health Units have played a crucial role in improving access to essential healthcare services in the region. The initiative has brought quality healthcare closer to our communities while also increasing awareness about preventive healthcare practices among villagers." Speaking about the impact of the initiative, Ms. Sarkar Majhi, a resident of Upar Ambapadar village in Kalahandi District, said, "I am grateful to Vedanta Aluminium for its

development efforts, as the Mobile Health Unit has been a great support for our village, especially for elderly people and children who otherwise had to travel long distances to access medical services." Access to healthcare remains a major challenge in many remote regions of Odisha, where distance, limited infrastructure, and shortage of healthcare professionals often prevent timely treatment. By delivering doorstep services, the MHU initiative eliminates the

need for travelling long distances to address basic medical needs. Demonstrating its continued commitment to community healthcare, the company has also organized 11 multispecialty health camps benefiting 1,949 patients across 51 villages. Furthermore, 40 cataract surgeries have been facilitated for elderly residents, restoring vision and improving quality of life for vulnerable beneficiaries in Sijimali area. Across Odisha, Vedanta Aluminium's healthcare initiatives, including MHU services, have positively impacted more than 1 lakh people. These extensive healthcare interventions reflect Vedanta Aluminium's broader commitment to sustainable development and community welfare in Odisha. By working closely with local authorities, healthcare institutions, and community stakeholders, the company continues to drive impactful initiatives in healthcare, education, livelihood development, women empowerment, and rural infrastructure, contributing significantly to the socio-economic progress of the region.

Maruti Suzuki India To Hike Vehicle Prices By Up To Rs 30,000 From June

New Delhi, 21/5: India's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India on Thursday announced a price hike of up to Rs 30,000 with effect from June 2026.

In its stock exchange filing, the domestic carmaker said that the company has decided to increase the prices of its models across its portfolio. "In view of the sustained increase in input costs, the company has decided to increase the prices of its models across its portfolio by up to Rs 30,000 with effect from June 2026," it said in its regulatory filing. In an official statement, the company attributed the decision to sustained increases in raw material and operational costs impacting the automotive industry. "For the past few months, the Company has been making continuous efforts to mitigate the cost impact to the extent possible through cost reduction measures," the carmaker added. Maruti Suzuki India said it had undertaken several cost-reduction initiatives over the past few months to absorb part of the cost burden, but the adverse cost environment has



made a partial pass-through unavoidable. The company added that it has attempted to minimise the impact on customers as much as possible. "However, with inflationary pressures now at elevated levels and the adverse cost environment persisting, the company has to pass on a portion of the increased costs to the market, while continuing to ensure that the impact on customers is kept to the minimum extent possible," it added in its filing. "The exact quantum of change will vary from model to model," it added. The latest announcement comes at a time when several automobile manufacturers in India have revised prices upward in response to higher commodity prices, logistics expenses and inflationary pressures across supply chains. Earlier, Mahindra and Mahindra announced a price increase across its SUV and commercial vehicle portfolio effective April 6. The company said prices would rise by up to 2.5 per cent, with an average increase of around 1.6 per cent across models, citing rising input and operational costs.

SEBI, NISM and IICA sign MoU to Advance Corporate Governance, ESG and Capital Markets

Delhi, 21/5: The National Institute of Securities Markets (NISM), established by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), and Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA), under Ministry of Corporate Affairs, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to advance Corporate Governance, ESG and Capital Markets in the country. The two institutions will jointly design and deliver capacity building programmes, certification courses, executive education modules, and training programmes including for SEBI officers and officials of other regulatory and financial sector institutions. The MoU was signed in Mumbai, on 19 May 2026, and signing ceremony was graced by Chairman, SEBI, Tuhin Kanta Pandey. The SEBI Chairman underscored the importance of building a performance-driven corporate governance ecosystem, is to enable MSME access to capital markets, strengthening



sustainability disclosures, and fostering evidence-based research in emerging regulatory domains. The collaboration has been envisaged by Gyaneshwar Kumar Singh, Director General & CEO, IICA, who has been instrumental in IICA's strategic initiatives across corporate governance, ESG, responsible business conduct, aligning them with national development agenda. The MoU signing ceremony also witnessed the presence of Director NISM Shri Sashi Krishnan, and was

signed by Ms. Yogita Jadhav, Registrar, NISM, on behalf of NISM, and by Dr. Garima Dadhich, Head, School of Business Environment, IICA, on behalf of IICA. This MoU establishes a long-term strategic collaboration between the two institutions for strengthening knowledge exchange, capacity building, research, policy support, and institutional cooperation in areas like securities markets, sustainability and ESG reporting, Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR).

Sensex, Nifty End Flat Amid West Asia Tensions; Rupee Holds Stronger

Mumbai, 21/5: Indian benchmark equity indices ended marginally lower on Thursday as losses in IT, FMCG and financial stocks weighed on investor sentiment amid continued monitoring of the geopolitical situation in West Asia. The Nifty settled at 23,654.7, slipping 4.3 points or 0.02 per cent, while the Sensex declined 135.03 points, or 0.18 per cent, to close at 75,183.36. Commenting on technical outlook, experts said that 23,700 followed by 23,800 continues to act as the immediate resistance zone where supply pressure may remain elevated. "Above this, 24,000 remains the major psychological resistance and a strong Call OI wall aligned with the previous swing high," an analyst stated. "On the downside, the 23,500-23,600 range continues to act as a key support zone. Below this, 23,300 remains an important support level backed by strong



Put OI concentration and previous buying demand," an analyst mentioned. Shares of Bajaj Finance, Infosys and Tech Mahindra emerged among the top laggards on the Sensex. On the Nifty index, Bajaj Finance, Tech

Mahindra and Hindustan Unilever were among the major losers. In the broader market, the Nifty MidCap index ended 0.04 per cent lower, while the Nifty SmallCap index outperformed the benchmarks and closed 0.63 per

cent higher. Sectorally, the Nifty FMCG, Nifty IT and Nifty Financial Services indices witnessed the sharpest declines during the session. On the other hand, the Realty and Cement sectors outperformed the broader market. The Nifty Cement index surged more than 2 per cent by the close of trade, emerging as one of the strongest sectoral performers of the day. "Looking ahead, the near-term trajectory hinges on the RBI's June policy decision, progress in US-Iran talks, and the stability of key growth indicators and the rupee," an analyst stated. Rupee witnessed a sharp recovery towards 96.15, gaining around 65 paise or 0.68 per cent, as short covering emerged after the currency touched near 97 lows in the previous session. Meanwhile, the volatility index, 'INDIAVIX', eased by 3.5 per cent to 17.80 levels and any further cooling in volatility may provide some comfort to the bulls."

OMCs Dismiss Fuel And LPG Shortage Concerns, Urge Public Not To Rely On Rumours

New Delhi, 21/5: India's leading state-run oil marketing companies (OMCs) — HPCL, IOCL, and BPCL — on Thursday assured customers that petrol, diesel and LPG supplies remain stable across the country, while urging people not to rely on rumours or unverified social media messages regarding fuel shortages. Taking to the microblogging platform X, Indian Oil Corporation (IndianOil), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) said fuel distribution networks are functioning normally with adequate stock availability and regular replenishment. HPCL clarified that fuel and LPG supplies remain stable across Rajasthan, Karnataka and parts of Uttarakhand despite rumours of shortages and restrictions circulating on social media. The company said all retail outlets in Rajasthan, including Jaipur, are



operating normally with continuous replenishment and adequate fuel stocks. According to HPCL, petrol supplies in Rajasthan increased 19 per cent between May 1 and May 20 compared to historical sales, while diesel supplies rose 24.5 per cent during the same period. The company further dismissed reports regarding fuel shortages in Uttarakhand's Augustmuni and Guptkashi areas, stating that nearby retail outlets currently have

sufficient stock availability and no restrictions have been imposed on fuel sales. Separately, HPCL said LPG supplies across Karnataka remain stable despite enforcement action against black marketing and irregularities. The Karnataka government has seized 1,874 LPG cylinders and initiated cases against irregular activities as of May 19, 2026, the company said. Similarly, IndianOil said its retail outlets across the country continue to

maintain sufficient supplies of petrol and diesel to ensure uninterrupted availability for consumers. "Indian Oil's network continues to ensure adequate Petrol (MS) and Diesel (HSD) supplies across the country. Drive responsibly, refuel calmly, and trust only verified information," the company said in a post on X. Meanwhile, BPCL clarified that fuel availability at its retail outlet in Kaladhungi in Uttarakhand's Nainital district remains normal and adequately positioned to meet demand. The company said current fuel stocks at the outlet are sufficient to cater to nearly four days of regular sales requirements. BPCL added that fresh replenishment supplies have also been received, ensuring uninterrupted availability of petrol and diesel. Additionally, the OMCs requested customers to avoid panic buying and depend only on official communication channels for verified information regarding fuel supplies.

Mumbai, 21/5: Gold and silver prices traded lower on Thursday, while investors closely monitored safe-haven demand and ongoing geopolitical uncertainties. On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold futures (June 5) fell as much as 0.42 per cent or Rs 687 to hit an intraday low of Rs 1,59,319 at around 12 pm. The yellow metal was trading at Rs 1,59,400, down 0.38 per cent or Rs 606. It touched an intraday high of Rs 1,59,992. Silver futures (July 3) declined 1.4 per cent or Rs 3,864 to Rs 2,70,401, its intraday low so far. The white metal was trading at Rs 2,70,810, down 1.26 per cent or Rs 3,455. During the session, it touched an intraday high of Rs 2,73,196. Earlier in the day, gold and silver opened on the commodity exchange at Rs 1,59,900 and Rs 2,72,275, respectively. In the international market, precious metals were also trading lower. COMEX gold traded 0.21 per cent lower at \$4,525.80 per ounce, while COMEX silver declined 1.06 per cent to \$75.37 per ounce. Analysts



said MCX silver opened sharply lower and continued to trade cautiously above the Rs 2,72,000 level. According to market experts, the Rs 2,75,000-Rs 2,76,000 range remains an immediate resistance zone, and a sustained move above these levels could support a recovery towards Rs 2,78,000-Rs 2,80,000. On the downside, they noted that a breach below Rs 2,71,000 may pull silver prices towards the Rs 2,68,000-Rs 2,67,000 range. Experts added that the near-term trend in silver prices will largely depend on safe-haven

demand and developments surrounding global geopolitical tensions. For gold, they said MCX gold opened with a mild gap lower and continued to hold above the Rs 1,59,500 level during the session, adding that the near-term outlook for gold remains cautious, with price direction likely to depend on global risk sentiment and geopolitical developments. Meanwhile, international benchmark Brent crude rose 1.55 per cent to \$106.65 per barrel, while US WTI crude climbed nearly 2 per cent to \$100.11 per barrel.

Sara Tendulkar calls out pap over body-shaming remarks

Legendary cricketer Sachin Tendulkar's daughter Sara on Thursday called out a shutterbug over his body-shaming remarks directed at her. A Mumbai-based pap recently shared a video of Sara and her sister-in-law, Saaniya, arriving at the airport. While the clip simply showed the two entering the terminal, it was the paparazzo's demeaning caption that sparked backlash online and drew criticism from netizens, including Sara herself. "Moti wali Sara hai. Bagal wali bhabhi hai," the caption read. The post caught Sara's attention, and in no time, she slammed the pap for his "disgusting" remark. "@tahirjasus, you are disgusting. This is not journalism. Leave us alone," she posted. Following Sara's befitting response, the paparazzo deleted the post. However, Sara wasn't done yet and continued to call him out with another savage remark. Meanwhile, on the professional front, Sara serves the role of a director of the Sachin Tendulkar Foundation (STF). "I'm overjoyed to share that my daughter Sara Tendulkar has joined the @STF_India as Director. She holds a Master's degree in Clinical and Public Health Nutrition from University College London. As she embarks on this journey to empower India through sports, healthcare, and education, it serves as a reminder of how global learning can come full circle," Sachin Tendulkar earlier said. Last year, Sara also launched her Pilates Academy in Mumbai, promoting fitness, wellness, and a healthy lifestyle.



Bandar' trailer out: Bobby Deol plays troubled TV star in Anurag Kashyap crime thriller

The lead trailer of 'Bandar', starring Bobby Deol in the lead role, was released on Thursday, unveiling a gritty crime-thriller directed by Anurag Kashyap. The film marks the first collaboration between the filmmaker and the actor and is scheduled for a theatrical release across India on June 5. The trailer introduces Bobby Deol as Samar Mehra, a fading television superstar struggling with fame, loneliness and a flirtatious public image. The story takes a dark turn after Samar connects with a woman, played by Sapna Pabbi, through a dating app. She later accuses him of rape, blackmail and extortion. While Samar insists he is innocent and describes the woman as a stalker, the trailer shows him being pulled into a legal battle against what appears to be a deeply corrupt system. Apart from Bobby Deol and Sapna Pabbi, 'Bandar' also features Sanya Malhotra, Saba Azad, Raj B Shetty, Jitendra Joshi, Riddhi Sen, Indrajith Sukumaran and Nagesh Bhonsle in key roles. The screenplay has been written by Sudip Sharma and Abhishek Banerjee, known for acclaimed titles such as Paatal Lok, Kohrra and Uda Punjab. Directed by Anurag Kashyap, the film is produced by Nikhil Dwivedi's Saffron Magicworks and backed by Zee Studios. 'Bandar' is slated for a worldwide theatrical release on June 5, 2026.



SPORTS

FIFA World Cup 2026 India broadcast rights in limbo as Doordarshan drops legal battle

NEW DELHI, 21/5: Football viewers in India face an unprecedented blackout threat as Prasar Bharati clarified it holds no legal obligation to purchase television rights for the upcoming global tournament. Speaking before Justice Purushendra Kumar Kaurav, the state-run network asserted that acquiring commercial media properties sits squarely outside its public service remit. Consequently, the petitioner chose to withdraw the legal action from the Delhi High Court, looking for alternative statutory remedies. This dramatic development arises just weeks prior to the June kickoff in North America. Historically, local sports fans have relied heavily on terrestrial networks



like Doordarshan for major events, particularly across football-crazy pockets like Odisha, West Bengal, and Kerala where free-to-air access drives community viewership. Negotiations remain completely stalled due to steep

pricing mismatches between the global governing body and regional networks. Reports indicate that football administrators dropped their initial subcontinental valuation from \$100 million to \$35 million, even rejecting a recent \$20 million proposal from JioStar. Local corporations remain cautious about heavy financial commitments because of unfavorable kickoff timings. With matches broadcasting from Canada, Mexico, and the United States, primary fixtures will stream during early morning hours locally, lowering projected advertising revenue.

Hardik Pandya Fined After MI's Crushing Loss to KKR, Mumbai Indians' IPL 2026 Misery Deepens

MUMBAI, 21/5: Mumbai Indians captain Hardik Pandya faced another setback in a difficult IPL 2026 season after being fined and handed a demerit point following MI's defeat to Kolkata Knight Riders. The all-rounder was found guilty of breaching the IPL Code of Conduct during the match, adding to Mumbai Indians' disappointing campaign. According to the IPL statement, Pandya violated Article 2.2 of the Code of Conduct, which relates to the misuse of cricket equipment or ground fixtures during a match. The incident took place on the fourth ball of the 10th over in KKR's innings when Pandya forcefully knocked the bails off the stumps while returning to his run-up. The IPL confirmed that the Mumbai Indians skipper accepted the offence and the punishment imposed by the match referee. As a result,



Pandya was fined 10 per cent of his match fee and received one demerit point. The punishment came on a night when Mumbai Indians suffered their ninth

consecutive defeats against Delhi Capitals, Rajasthan Royals, Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Punjab Kings pushed the team into crisis early in the tournament. Hardik Pandya's return match after a break was expected to inspire a turnaround, but MI once again failed to deliver under pressure. Injuries and poor form have further complicated Mumbai Indians' campaign. Rohit Sharma has battled fitness concerns, Suryakumar Yadav has struggled for consistency, and Jasprit Bumrah has not produced his usual wicket-taking impact. Pandya's own numbers have also remained below expectations. The MI captain has scored only 172 runs and picked up four wickets in nine matches this season, increasing scrutiny around his leadership and performances.

'Ishqa' set to become first Bollywood film to be shot in Cyprus

Anjali Bhushan Mago, who began her career assisting Karan Johar on 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai' 31 years ago, has joined hands with ace composer duo Meet Bros, best known for chartbusters like 'Baby Doll' and 'Chittiyaan Kalaiyaan', to launch their production house Yantra Films with the unveiling of their first film, 'Ishqa', a romantic dramedy, that will be shot in Cyprus. The film, which is also written and directed by Anjali, shall be the first-ever Bollywood feature film to be shot, co-produced and post-produced in Cyprus under the CIPA Scheme, marking a significant cultural and cinematic collaboration between India and Cyprus, according to the press release. The unveiling event was attended by the President of Cyprus Nikos Christodoulides, along with members of the Indian film fraternity including actors Jaaved Jaaferi, Ravi Kishan, Shreya Dhanwanthary, Elnaaz Norouzi, Gaurav Chopra, Aaditi S Pohankar, and Preeti Panigrahi, among many others. Other guests at the unveiling included entrepreneurs Sanjay Tugnait and Fokion C. Karavias. Casting for the film is



currently underway, with the makers promising a well-known ensemble cast. Cyprus President welcomed the collaboration. "The first Bollywood movie in Cyprus. I am looking forward to receiving you this summer. I am sure that this is going to be the beginning of a lot of more cooperation. It is a great word of confidence for Cyprus and I am sure that you will enjoy it," he told the media. "We are excited for the collaboration in this sector. Last year, we had the honour of receiving PM Modi in Cyprus in June. It was a visit after 22 years. It was the beginning of a new era in our relationship. We have turned a page and we are working very closely together in all sectors, including filming," he added. The Cyprus President highlighted growing economic ties between India and Europe. "Cyprus currently holds

the presidency of the Council of the European Union. We are very glad that during the first week of our presidency, we had the announcement of the very important agreement of the European Union with India - the Free Trade Agreement (FTA). We are working hard to sign this agreement by the end of the year. Cyprus is the entry point, the gateway of India in Europe," he said. "And that's why I'm here and be sure that it's not going to be the last time, I will be back," he added. Speaking about what led her to direct her first feature now, Anjali said she has been directing since 1996, beginning with television and documentaries, but directing a fiction feature film required a much deeper understanding of every aspect of filmmaking.

'Bokhla gye log...': Amitabh Bachchan's cryptic midnight post on X leaves netizens baffled

: Megastar Amitabh Bachchan has once again stirred social media curiosity after sharing a cryptic late-night message on X, prompting widespread reactions from fans. On May 21, 2026, at 1:23 am, the 83-year-old actor posted under his trademark chronological tweet format: "T 5747 - Bokhla gye log; vichar vyakt kiye - koi samjhein ya na samjhein, liye ke diye ban gye zarur." He wrote in a post on X. The statement roughly translates to, "People got flustered; expressed thoughts - whether understood or not, they certainly became like the givers for the taken." Within hours, the post drew tens of

thousands of views and hundreds of responses, with users attempting to interpret the meaning behind the veteran actor's words. While some followers viewed the message as a philosophical reflection on human behaviour and online discourse, others admitted they found the wording difficult to understand. One user jokingly commented, "Your thoughts are like that, which only your own mind can decode." The actor has not issued any clarification or follow-up post explaining the remark. However, the post comes amid ongoing online reports claiming that Big B has

been hospitalised due to health issues. Known for maintaining a highly active presence on social media, Bachchan has for years used his X account as a digital diary, numbering each post with a "T" followed by a running count. In recent years, he has increasingly shared abstract observations, philosophical one-liners, and brief reflections on life and human nature, often leaving followers to interpret the context themselves. On the professional front, he was last seen in 'Kalki 2898 AD', directed by Nag Ashwin and co-starring Prabhas, Deepika Padukone, and Kamal Haasan.