

# Dumani Mail

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Supreme Court expresses concern over repeated lapses in conduct of NEET examination



New Delhi: The Supreme Court today expressed concern over repeated lapses in the conduct of the NEET examination saying that it was sad that the National Testing Agency had not learnt any lesson from the earlier paper leak controversy. A bench of Justices PS Narasimha and Alok Aradhe sought responses from the Centre, the National Testing Agency (NTA) and the CBI on petitions demanding replacement of the testing agency with a more robust and autonomous body to conduct the medical entrance examination. The court directed the NTA to file an affidavit by Thursday detailing compliance with recommendations made last year by a committee headed by former ISRO chief K Radhakrishnan for overhauling the agency's functioning. The petitions alleged recurring paper leaks had affected the rights of over 22 lakh students. The plea also sought the formation of a high-powered monitoring committee headed by a retired Supreme Court Justice to oversee future examinations. The NEET-UG exam conducted on 3rd of this month was cancelled following allegations of a paper leak.

Delhi court sends physics lecturer Manisha Sanjay Havaldar to six-day CBI custody in NEET-UG paper leak case



New Delhi: A Delhi court has sent Pune-based physics lecturer Manisha Sanjay Havaldar to six days of Central Bureau of Investigation custody in the NEET-UG paper leak case. Special Judge Ajay Gupta allowed the CBI's plea seeking custodial interrogation of the accused. Havaldar was arrested on 22nd May and was produced before the court on transit

remand. According to the CBI, Havaldar, who worked as a translator for NEET-UG examination material and is associated with Seth Hiralal Saraf Prashala in Pune, allegedly circulated physics questions meant for translation along with other accused. The agency has described her as a key link in the alleged leak of NEET-UG physics question papers.

PIB debunks fake claim linking Rajnath Singh to support for BLA

New Delhi: The Press Information Bureau's (PIB) Fact Check unit on Monday dismissed as "fake and fabricated" a social media claim alleging that Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had expressed support for the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA). In a post on X, the PIB Fact Check unit said a Pakistani propaganda account was circulating a false claim that the Defence Minister had spoken about India's support to the BLA.

"The claim is fake and fabricated. The Defence Minister has not made any such statement. Beware of accounts propagating false narratives about the Government of India," the PIB Fact Check unit said. According to the viral post, Rajnath Singh was falsely quoted as saying that India "fully supports the BLA and will continue providing financial aid and weapons" to the outfit. The fabricated content also carried a YouTube video link from an event in Shirdi, Maharashtra, where the Defence Minister had inaugurated a private-sector defence manufacturing complex on Saturday.

The PIB Fact Check unit also urged people to



report suspicious content related to the central government through its official WhatsApp helpline and email channels. Earlier on May 24, the government had flagged another fake online investment scheme circulating in the name of Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. PIB clarified that the so-called 'Quantum AI' investment platform, which promised monthly returns of Rs 3 lakh on an investment of Rs 22,000, was fraudulent and had no connection with the government.

## SC notice to Centre on plea seeking ban on child employment in orchestras, spas

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday, May 25, sought responses from the Centre, child rights body NCPCR, and the NHRC on a PIL seeking an absolute ban on the employment of children and adolescents in orchestras, dance troupes, massage parlours, and spas. A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi took note of the submissions of senior advocate H S Phoolka, appearing for child rights

collective 'Just Rights for Children Alliance' (JRCA), and issued the notices to Union ministries of labour and law and justice.

Phoolka argued that minor girls aged 10 and 11 years were being employed in orchestras and dance bars. "For spas and massage parlours, some states have made rules of 18 years as the minimum age," he said.

Termining the situation "serious", the bench also issued notices to the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights

(NCPCR) and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on the PIL.

"Issue a writ of mandamus or appropriate directions directing the Central Government... to exercise its powers under Section 4 of the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, to include the employment or performance of children below 18 years in orchestras, dance bars, dance troupes, nautanki performances, massage



parlours, spas, and salons, or any similar establishments that depict children in obscene or

exploitative manner in Part A of the Schedule to CALPRA, thereby categorically prohibiting such employment," the plea said.

The petition alleged that these sectors had evolved into "clandestine fronts" for organised trafficking, sexual exploitation, and forced labour of minor girls across the country.

The petition, filed by the JRCA through Advocate Sonali Jain, highlighted a critical

"enforcement vacuum" in the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (CALPRA), 1986.

Under the law, "hazardous" occupations where adolescent labour is strictly prohibited are listed under Part A of the CALPRA Schedule.

However, massage parlours and spas currently fall under Part B, meaning the employment of adolescents (aged 14-18) is merely "regulated" rather than banned.

## Petrol, diesel prices raised by Rs 2.61 to Rs 2.71

New Delhi: Petrol prices were raised by Rs 2.61 a litre and diesel by Rs 2.71 on Monday, May 25, the fourth increase in less than two weeks that extended a delayed pass-through of soaring global crude oil costs triggered by the Iran conflict.

The latest increase took cumulative hikes since May 15 to nearly Rs 7.5 per litre.

In Delhi, petrol prices rose to Rs 102.12 per litre from Rs 99.51, while diesel climbed to Rs 95.20 from Rs 92.49, according to industry sources.

Fuel prices have now reached their highest levels since May 2022 after remaining largely frozen for more than two years, barring a Rs 2-per-litre cut in March 2024 ahead of national elections.

The hike came as global oil prices fell sharply amid tentative hopes for a deal to



end the US-Israel war on Iran. Brent crude, the primary benchmark for global oil prices, fell more than 5 per cent after the US and Iran agreed in principle to reopen the Strait of Hormuz.

Global crude oil prices had surged more than 50 per cent since late February following US-Israeli strikes on Iran and disruptions to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, a key global oil

(BJP) expanded its electoral footprint by winning three of five state and UT elections, including West Bengal.

Since the start of war, domestic cooking gas LPG prices have been raised by Rs 60 per 14.2-kg cylinder and that of compressed natural gas (CNG) by Rs 4 per kg since mid-May.

Despite the price increases, auto fuels petrol and diesel, and domestic cooking gas LPG continue to be sold at a substantial loss. Besides the three fuel, state-owned fuel retailers — Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) — have paused increase in jet fuel (ATF) rates. The three firms together control 90 per cent of India's fuel market.

The May 15 increase came after the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party

## Centre moves to overhaul CBSE payment gateway system amid re-evaluation portal issues

New Delhi: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Sunday held discussions with Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman over the technical and payment-related difficulties faced by students during the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) post-result and re-evaluation process.

Following the meeting, it was decided that four major public sector banks — State Bank of India, Bank of Baroda, Canara Bank and Indian Bank — will assist CBSE in strengthening its

payment gateway infrastructure and integrating it more effectively with the board's post-examination services portal.

According to the Education Ministry, the banks will help establish robust payment protocols to ensure smoother transactions, timely processing of payments, quick resolution of payment failures, and automatic refunds in cases of excess payments.

Pradhan also directed CBSE to undertake a complete overhaul of its

payment gateway system in order to improve reliability and reduce technical disruptions faced by students and parents.

The coordinated effort between the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, and the participating public sector banks is aimed at ensuring seamless digital transactions, enhanced payment gateway stability, and a smoother user experience for students applying for re-evaluation and other post-result services.

## Delhi CM Rekha Gupta leads 'Metro Monday' drive

New Delhi: Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta spearheaded the government's inaugural 'Metro Monday' campaign today. The Chief Minister opted for the Delhi Metro and public feeder buses to reach the Delhi Secretariat, setting a personal example for commuters across the capital.

Aligned with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's nationwide call for energy security and environmental preservation, the initiative marks a concerted effort by the Delhi administration to reduce reliance on private and official vehicles. Joining the Chief Minister in this drive, cabinet ministers and senior officials also traded their official fleets for public transit, signalling a significant push toward greener, more efficient urban mobility.

Earlier on May 18, setting an example to combat urban pollution and traffic congestion, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on

Monday dumped her official vehicle to commute via the Delhi Metro and a feeder bus to reach her office at the Delhi Secretariat.

The commute began in the morning when CM Gupta walked from her official residence, Mukhyamantri Jan Seva Sadan in Civil Lines, to Lok Niwas for a meeting with Lieutenant Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu.

Following the meeting, she walked to the Kashmere Gate Metro Station, boarded a train to the ITO Metro Station, and then took a public feeder bus to reach her office at the Delhi Secretariat.

Senior leaders Parvesh Verma and Ravindra Indraj accompanied the Chief Minister throughout the public transit journey.

The commute was part of the Delhi government's newly launched 'Metro Monday' initiative, organised under the broader national framework of

'Mera Bharat, Mera Yodgan'.

Responding to the Chief Minister's call, ministers and officials of the Delhi Government used Metro and public transport today to reach their respective offices.

Speaking to reporters, Delhi CM Rekha Gupta said, "I appeal to all citizens to make maximum use of public transportation. This will not only conserve the nation's fuel resources, but it is also absolutely essential for our city, Delhi. Given the rising levels of pollution and the traffic congestion issues in Delhi, if all of us, even if only on a small scale, begin incorporating the Metro, public transport, and buses into our daily routines, it will prove immensely beneficial for us all... We are working extensively to enhance 'last-mile connectivity'; if every individual contributes even a little to this endeavour, it will yield truly remarkable results

for the city of Delhi.

Travelling by the transit network alongside her ministers, MLAs, and top officials to set an example, Gupta expressed gratitude to the large numbers of residents who participated in the mass campaign to help build a cleaner and more efficient Delhi.

"This approach will provide a solution to every challenge facing our city, be it the issue of pollution or any other problem. Today, on the occasion of the 'Metro Monday' initiative, for which we had issued a city-wide appeal across Delhi, I, along with all my colleagues, ministers, MLAs, and officials, have made a collective effort to travel by Metro today. I am delighted to observe that a great many residents of Delhi have also resolved to travel by Metro today. I express my heartfelt gratitude to one and all. Together, we will make Delhi even better", the CM added.

## Don't take it so sentimentally: CJI on Cockroach Janta Party plea

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday, May 25, declined to urgently list two petitions linked to the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) — a satirical social media movement that briefly went viral before its handles were suspended — telling one of the petitioners not to take the matter too emotionally.

Advocate NK Goswami mentioned the first petition before a bench of Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi, submitting that despite the CJI's clarification, a "distorted and malicious narrative" was being kept alive. The CJI was having none of it. "Don't take it so sentimentally," he told the lawyer.

Second petition seeks CBI probe

A second petition, also filed in the backdrop of the CJP controversy, was mentioned separately by another advocate seeking urgent listing. This plea sought a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) investigation into the use of fake law degrees and asked the court to prohibit the monetisation of oral observations made during

court proceedings, arguing that judicial remarks were being deployed for publicity campaigns.

The CJI said there was no grave urgency and that the matter would be listed in due course.

How it started The CJP controversy traces back to May 15, when the CJI made remarks during a hearing on senior designation for a lawyer, equating those who attack institutions under the guise of online activism with "cockroaches" and "parasites." The comments were widely reported as a broadside against unemployed youth, triggering a social media backlash and the birth of the satirical CJP, which amassed millions of followers within days before its handles were taken down.

On May 16, the CJI issued a strongly worded clarification saying he was "pained" by the coverage, stressing that his remarks were directed specifically at those entering the legal profession through "fake and bogus degrees" and had been "misquoted by a section of the media."

## Marco Rubio calls Taj Mahal a 'true treasure of the world' during visit with wife Jeanette

New Delhi: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Monday visited the iconic Taj Mahal along with his wife, Jeanette Rubio, describing the monument as "one of the true treasures of the world." The couple spent nearly one-and-a-half hours at the UNESCO World Heritage site in Agra and later penned a message in the visitors' book, writing, "Thank you for allowing us to visit one of the true treasures of the World." US Ambassador to India Sergio Goro also accompanied the Rubios during the visit.

The Taj Mahal, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, has long remained a major attraction for global leaders and dignitaries visiting India.

Last year, US Vice President JD Vance visited the monument with his wife Usha Vance and their children — Vivek, Mirabel, and Ewan.

US President Donald Trump had also toured the Taj Mahal during his first presidential term alongside former First Lady Melania Trump. During that visit, Trump described the monument as "a timeless

According to the official Taj Mahal website, the monument is regarded as the finest example of Mughal architecture, blending Persian, Indian, and Islamic architectural styles. UNESCO declared it a World Heritage Site in 1983, calling it "the jewel of Muslim art in India and one of the universally admired masterpieces of the world's heritage."

testament to the rich and diverse beauty of Indian culture."

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**Spiritual & Social activist Narendra Kumar Nanda Passed Away**

Paradip/Kujang, (DMC) 25/05 : Narendra Kumar Nanda (popularly known as Naru Bhai), a well-known devotee of Sri Sri Thakur Nigamananda Saraswati Maharaj and former secretary of the Kujang Saraswat Sangha, passed away due to a heart attack on Monday at his residence in Samagola. He was 70 years old at the time of his demise. He had served as the secretary of Kujang Saraswat Sangha as well as the Jagatsinghpur District Saraswat Sangha. He worked as a



Sanskrit teacher at Basudev Vidyapith, Chakradharpur in the Paradip region and retired in 2014. After retirement, he played a significant role in the construction of the ashram and various developmental activities of the Kujang branch of the Saraswat Sangha, affiliated to Nilachal Saraswat Sangha at Biratunga under Gop Block of Puri district. His contribution towards the successful organization of the 74th Regional Devotees' Conference held in 2025 was especially memorable. His social contributions included distribution of

winter clothes among the poor, widows, and underprivileged people, distribution of saplings to various educational institutions, organizing quiz competitions among devotees, and honoring meritorious participants. His service and dedication will always remain memorable in the hearts of the devotees of Nilachal Saraswat Sangha. He is survived by his wife Nilima Nanda, elder son Purnachaitanya Nanda, younger son Shaktichaitanya Nanda, two daughters-in-law, and a grandson. His last rites were performed at the cremation ground of his native village, where his elder son lit the funeral pyre.

Several dignitaries and members of the Saraswat Sangha expressed deep grief and paid tribute to the departed soul. Similarly among others, Biratunga Nilachal Saraswat Sangha President Gaganendra Mahapatra, former secretary Brahmananda Behera, Central Women's Management Committee President Subasini Behera, Vice-President Sumila Sahu, members Sudhanshubala Behera and Nirupama Behera, District Saraswat Sangha President Birakishore Barik.

**BJD gheraoed Collectorate for women's rights**

NUAPADA/KHARIAR ROAD, May 25 : Under the leadership of BJD District President Abani Ranjan Joshi, the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and its women's wing, held protests and collectorate gheraos demanding women's rights and safety in Nuapada on May 25 (Monday).

A party meeting was organised at the local police ground. After meeting they took out a massive rally and

reached Collectorate. They submitted a memorandum addressing to the President of India through collector demanding the immediate implementation of the 33% Women's Reservation Bill based on current Lok Sabha and Assembly seats, without waiting for the delimitation process. They also protests against the rise of crimes against women and raised slogans against the BJP



government. Khariar MLA Adhiraj Panigrahi, BJD State Secretary Mohammad Juned, Zilla Parishad President Doli Majhi, Vice President Kaushalya Deep, Zilla Parishad Member Bhanu Pratap Majhi, Churan Singh Majhi, Reeta Kashyap, Anup Deep and Raju Chauhan alongwith more than hundreds of BJD activities were present in the protest rally.

**Public grievances hearing camp held collector resolved 12 grievances on the spot**



Khordha -25/5 -Public grievances hearing camp was held in Bishnu Diha GP, High School, Khanata under Banpur Block, Khordha. The public grievances hearing camp was held under the chairmanship of Collector ,Amrit Raturaj. Zilla Parishad Vice-President, Khordha Gopinath Maharana, DFO, Balugaon, Zilla Parishad Chief Development and Executive Officer, Jyoti Shankar Sahu, Sub-Collector , khordha Sankalp Swastik Sahu, DSP, Balugaon, CDM & PHO,

khordha Dr. Sanjaya Chandra Ray, Assistant Collector, Grievance, Bhubaneswari, Kanhar, . BDO, Banpur Poonam Mohapatra, Tehsildar, Banpur, Kahnu Charan Ghadai, participated prominently in the public grievance hearing camp. 44 grievances were received in this camp, 36 grievances were individual and 8 grievances were collective problems .

Collector ,Mr.Raturaj resolved 12 grievances on the spot and provided financial assistance of ?

20,000 from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund to Suchitra Biswal of Bishnu Diha village for medical treatment. The departmental officers were instructed to take immediate action on all other grievances. Later, Collector, Mr.Raturaj, and all the officers visited the education, information and communication stalls opened for the successful implementation of various development and flagship schemes of the state and central governments. All the district-level officers, public and media representatives were present.

**Administrative Preparations Reviewed for Holy Rath Yatra in Puri**



Puri: Ensuring smooth and timely healthcare services for lakhs of devotees during the sacred Rath Yatra remains a key priority for the district administration. With this objective, a high-level review meeting was held today at the Sadbhavana Conference Hall under the chairmanship of Puri Collector Divyajyoti Parida.

The meeting focused on strengthening and streamlining medical and emergency response arrangements during the annual festival. Discussions were held on coordinated healthcare management, deployment of medical teams, ambulance services and emergency response mechanisms to ensure the safety and well-being of devotees.

Among those present

were Puri SP Prateek Singh, Puri Municipal Corporation Commissioner S. Arugula, Additional District officials including Sharat Chandra Behera, the Chief District Medical Officer, Additional SP and senior officers from various departments. Representatives of several voluntary organisations also attended the meeting.

Officials reviewed preparedness measures related to emergency health services, crowd management support and rapid medical assistance during the Rath Yatra festivities. The administration stressed coordinated efforts among departments and volunteer groups to ensure a safe and hassle-free experience for devotees visiting the pilgrim town during the grand festival.

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**Puri Police, SSMSV Battalion distribute curd water to devotees amid soaring heat**

Puri: With the summer heat intensifying across the state, devotees visiting Shree Jagannath Temple in Puri were seen struggling in the scorching weather conditions. In a humanitarian initiative, Puri Police, in collaboration with SSMSV Battalion Puri, distributed refreshing curd water among devotees visiting the temple. The service initiative provided much-needed relief to pilgrims affected by the intense heat and helped make their spiritual journey more comfortable and safe. The effort by Puri Police towards devotee service, compassion and public welfare has been widely appreciated by local residents and devotees alike.



**Nari Adhikar Abhiyan Protestation Rally held in Bari**



Jajpur :-Bari BijuJanata Dal under the leadership of Local MLA Biswa Ranjan Mallick on Monday massively submits memorandum at Bari BDO in the campaign of "Nari Adhikar Abhiyan" protesting against the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party for its alleged anti-women policies and failure to implement the Women's Reservation Bill.

Above of 4K women along with party workers were united in a mega meeting held at Bari Ramachandrapur GC College play ground and

shouted against the ruling party.

Among with Bari MLA, BJD senior Leader Pranab Prakash Das, Ex MP Smt. Sarmistha Sethy, Bari Block Vice Chairperson Archana Mallik, All ZP members, Sarapanchas, PS members were prominently present and spoke about the campaign.

Addressing the crowd, Bari MLA Stating that the Naveen Pattanaik Government had given 33 percent seats to women in 2019 & 2024 Lok Sabha &

general elections, "Empty vessels are now making much noise." People who have done nothing for women are now making big claim, Sri Mallick added.

Pranab Prakash also interacted with women leaders, taken blessings from them and extends gratitude towards their great support.

Sarmistha Sethy , Bari block Vice Chairperson along with all Women leaders were also targeted the government over the increasing crime against women in the state.

**Major Breakthrough in Rayagada Firing and Murder Case; Total Arrests Reach 16**



Rayagada : Rayagada Police have achieved a major breakthrough in the sensational firing and murder case of Nikhil Hadappa, which occurred on May 10, 2026, at Indira Colony in Rayagada town. With the latest arrests, the total number of accused apprehended in the case has risen to 16.

According to police sources, twelve accused persons had already been arrested and forwarded to court earlier during the investigation. In a fresh development, police arrested three more key conspirators from Karnataka after an

extensive multi-state operation.

The arrested accused have been identified as Chintu alias Debasis Bibhor, Paban Kalpa, and Sagar Kalpa. Police teams reportedly tracked the accused across several locations, following their movements from Visakhapatnam to Goa and finally to Hubballi in Karnataka, where they were successfully apprehended.

In another operation, accused Ajaya Devarapalli was arrested from Palnadu district of Andhra Pradesh. Police officials stated

that the accused are being brought to Rayagada following due remand procedures.

To crack the case, Rayagada Police had deployed multiple special teams across different parts of the country to trace and arrest the absconding accused. The coordinated efforts ultimately led to the successful capture of all the newly arrested suspects.

The investigation into the murder case is still underway, and police are continuing further inquiries to uncover additional details related to the conspiracy and execution of the crime.

**'Utkarsh Nimapada 2.0' to Begin from June 3, Aiming to Expand Development Vision**

Puri: Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida on Sunday said that "Utkarsh Nimapada" is not merely a slogan, but a reflection of the government's commitment and collective resolve towards development. She urged people to work together to establish Nimapada as a model region under the vision of a developed Odisha by 2036.

Addressing a press conference at the Nimapada Town Hall, Parida announced that "Utkarsh Nimapada 2.0" will be organised on June 4. The initiative aims to preserve the culture, traditions and heritage of the Nimapada-Gop region while promoting the talent and skills of local youth.

She said a comprehensive development roadmap, prepared through consultations with experts, experienced individuals and public participation, would be implemented to build a "better Nimapada".

Earlier, on May 17, a



pathsav was organised in Nimapada with considerable public participation. During the event, the mascot, jersey and medal for Utkarsh Nimapada 2.0 were also unveiled.

Series of Sports and Social Activities Planned As part of the programme, marathons will

be organised in Nimapada on May 24 and in Gop block on May 31. From May 25 to 31, panchayat-level cricket and football tournaments for men and cycling competitions for women will be held.

June 1 will be observed as 'Seva Diwas', featuring plantation drives and village

and booth-level cleanliness campaigns. On June 2, collective sankirtan and a traditional food fair competition will be organised, followed by constituency-level sports competitions on June 3.

On June 4, the Deputy Chief Minister will present a report card and felicitate

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The press conference was conducted by Information and Public Relations Department Deputy Director Santosh Kumar Sethi. Among those present were BDO Dr Abhijit Sadangi, Tehsildar Dr Manoj Kumar Pradhan, SDPO Janardan Padhi and MP representative Meenalata Mohanty, along with several other dignitaries.

## Father arrested in sex case with minor daughter



Jagatsinghpur : As per complain of Mina rani Maity at Erasama Police station accused father Prasanjit Maity arrested in sex case with his minor daughter. Erasama Police registered case no. 165/11/5/26 and started investigation. As per investigation report declared at Press meet at SP Office, it was clear that , father Prasanjit Maity of Erasama was indiscipline and arrogant man. On 27/4/2026 morning while the minor daughter of Prasanjit Maity was engaged in telephone call her father attacker him physically. Again at 3.30 PM in absence of mother Mina rani Maity father attacked sexually without consent of daughter. When minor daughter cried, her father threatened her to kill if she disclose the matter before any body. The minor

girl remain silent and latter on disclose the matter before her mother. Mother Mina rani Maity disclose the matter before respected people of her village and Women group. Minor girl said about brutality of her father before them. Then matter was reported before Police but the accused fled away.

Special team of Erasama Police went to Hyderabad where the elder brother of Prasanjit was a Security advisor. As the accused was absent then Police went to Khurda (Jankia) in- law house of elder brother Pratap Maity. Pratap Maity was aware of the fact and tried to save his brother Prasanjit Maity. Finally Erasama Police arrested accused Prasanjit Maity and Pratap Maity and forwarded them to court.

## Bail application of fake Police broker Sk.Latif Uddin rejected



Jagatsinghpur, To- day JMFC, Tirtol rejected the bail application of fake Police broker Sk.Latif Uddin rejected and sent the accused to Jail. As per information Sk. Latif Uddin, husband of ex- Sarpanch of Biritol GP use to collect money from People to solve their case with Tirtol Police. Tirtol Police arrested Sk. Latif Uddin vide case no. 248/26 and produced before JMFC, Raghunath pur on Sunday. JMFC reject bail application and ordered to Produce the accused on 25 th May 2026 with all criminal case records against him. To- day Sk. Latif Uddin produced before JMFC , Tirtol with criminal case no. 310/19, 387/19, 380/24, 623/25, 248/26 and APP Sasmita Rout & Pravat Ranjan Palauri objected bail application. Besides that they produced the conviction record of Sk. Latif Uddin bt honourable CJM , Jagatsinghpur on case no. 116/16. To- day joint enquiry of revenue department made regarding illegal sale of Govt. Property in Biritol Mauza by accused Sk. Latif Uddin by taking 1 lakhs each from five steak holders.

## Cancer-stricken journalist seeks help

Keonjhar: Magan Kumar Mallick (57), a social worker and senior journalist from Kamargoda in Keonjhar city, has been admitted to the AIIMS in Bhubaneswar due to cancer. Now, lakhs of rupees are required for treatment, and the family is worried about financial problems. Mr. Mallick has always helped the helpless and homeless people at the Keonjhar District Head Hospital and has been receiving appreciation from various quarters. In this hour of grief, the family has requested the district administration and the state government to provide him with proper treatment and financial assistance.



## Three minor dead, Two minor commits suicide in silly matter, another drowned in drain



Keonjhar : Three minor died in three tragic incidents that took place in different police station area of Odisha's Keonjhar district. One 15 years old killed self by hanging in iron rod in Telkoi police station area, whereas another 9 years old died consuming poison in Soso police station area after parents scold on silly matter. Another 2 years old drowned in ditch in Soso police station area.

According to the sources in Telkoi block Deulidih panchayat Jenadar village, Sumit Kisan (15) son of Babaji Kisan committing suicide after his mother scolded him while moving outside in the heat. He was completed matric examination this year and waiting for admission.

His dead body was found hanging in the under-

construction house at night and the family informed the police. The police reached and recovered the dead body and sent it to Telkoi Community Health Center for autopsy. He committed suicide by hanging his pant belt from the iron rod that was being used in under construction house. "Police have registered a case of unnatural death and an autopsy will be conducted today and the investigation is underway, said police station officer Anjan Kumar Patra. In another incident in Soso Thana area of Keonjhar district on Sunday, Lambu Munda (9), son of Laxman Munda of Podasingidi village, died after consuming poison. He was studying in class IV of Rangamatiya School. Sources said that Lambu consumed poison after a fight with his father

on a matter. Similarly, Anil Khandwi (2), son of Arun Khandei of Jhanjhana village, drowned in water today. Sources said that a pipe line has broken near Jhanjhana village. There is a road for traffic on the pipe line. Due to the bursting of the pipe line, a small artificial pond was formed on the the road. Anil fell into and sank. Sources alleged that after repair of the pipe, the pipe construction company could not fill up the ditch, hence demanding compensation and action.

In both the incidents, the police have recovered the bodies and sent them for post-mortem at Anandpur Sub-divisional Hospital.

IIC Soso police station Kanan Sahu said Two separate UD cases have been registered and further investigation is on".

## Innovative protest for drinking water



Keonjhar: While the temperature in Keonjhar district is 40 degrees, the people of Patulu Sahi of Banmahuldiha village under Dumuria Panchayat, Patna block are struggling for drinking water. Due to damage of tubewell, they facing water shortage . When the panchayat could not repair they have staged an innovative protest for drinking water on Monday.

Woman above 50 of from the said village reached the Patna block office on a tractor about 20-kilometer with holding bucket and protest in front the block demanding drinking water.

They entered in to the office and appeal the BDO with holding buckets for supply of drinking water, as they are facing lot of difficulties.

Patna BDO Manas Ranjan Dandapat said " We have not received neither any complaint not known hence it could not settled. The mechanical team already went to the spot for repair. If not in condition of repair alternative arrangement will be done".

It is reported that the only tube well in the said Sahi has been blocked and no water is coming out past few days. In the summer heat it becoming difficulties to arrange a bucket of water, the villagers said.

*Turning Potential into Paychecks:*

## How Vedanta Aluminium Is Empowering Youth in Odisha

Bhubaneswar, 25th May 2026 : In the tiny village in Odisha's Kalahandi district, Abhiram Saha, a bright young man with big dreams, once spent his days undertaking various odd jobs that helped him earn a meagre living but often left him with barely enough to survive. With limited social support and few entrepreneurial opportunities, a stable livelihood was hard to find. Today, with help from Vedanta Aluminium's skill development initiatives, he has found a job in the hospitality sector, equipped with professional skills that are helping him earn a regular income and building a sense of confidence that once felt out of reach.

His journey is not an isolated one. Across Odisha, hundreds of young people are finding new pathways to sustainable livelihoods through structured skill development and industry-linked training initiatives, empowering them to build brighter futures for themselves and their communities.

As India accelerates its

emergence as a Viksit Bharat, unlocking the potential of its young population is central to the nation's growth story. With one of the world's largest youth populations, India's demographic dividend presents a powerful opportunity, particularly for young people between the ages of 18 and 30. However, for this demographic advantage to translate into long-term economic development, access to employable skills and sustainable livelihood opportunities remains critical.

In remote and economically underserved regions such as Odisha's Kalahandi district, many young people continue to struggle with subsistence livelihoods, irregular incomes and limited exposure to formal employment opportunities. Geographic isolation, financial hardship, and lack of access to industry-oriented training often prevent rural youth from participating meaningfully in the country's growth journey. In such regions, skill development becomes a crucial enabler for

integrating youth into the mainstream and boosting their contribution to the nation's economy.

Recognizing this gap, Vedanta Aluminium has been strengthening employability opportunities through its Vedanta Skill Development Centres in Lanjigarh and Bhawanipatna. Focused on youth from underserved and economically vulnerable communities, the centers are designed to bridge the divide between aspiration and employment through structured vocational training, soft skills development and placement support.

Established in partnership with NABARD and the Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA), the centers are contributing to a more inclusive skilling ecosystem, one where training is closely aligned with industry demand and long-term employability. The programmes are designed to equip youth with practical, market-relevant capabilities while also nurturing communication skills, digital literacy, workplace etiquette, and professional confidence.

## G. Kishan Reddy Directs Agencies to Fast-Track Pending Mining & Exploration Projects During Bengaluru Review Meetings

Bhubaneswar/New Delhi : Hon'ble Union Minister for Coal & Mines G. Kishan Reddy on Monday directed all mining and exploration agencies under the Ministry to fast-track pending projects and adopt a mission-mode approach to strengthen India's mineral security and strategic growth objectives.

"All organisations must fast-track pending projects and ensure that technology, transparency and efficiency become the foundation of every institutional process. The people of India and the Government of India expect speed, accountability and visible outcomes from every agency working in this sector," the Minister said while chairing a series of high-level review meetings in Bengaluru with senior officials of the Geological Survey of India (GSI), National Institute of Rock Mechanics (NIRM), Indian Bureau of Mines

(IBM) and the Remote Sensing & Aerial Survey (RSAS) division.

The meetings focused on accelerating mineral exploration, strengthening scientific and technological capabilities, promoting sustainable mining practices and aligning institutional efforts with the national vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

During the review, the Minister assessed ongoing projects, technological advancements and exploration activities being undertaken across the country, particularly in the field of critical and strategic minerals including Rare Earth Elements (REE), Lithium, Nickel, Cobalt, Tungsten, Vanadium and Platinum Group Elements (PGE). The organisations presented detailed updates on resource augmentation, mineral targeting, scientific surveys, mine sustainability, geospatial

technologies and advanced exploration systems being implemented to strengthen India's mineral security and strategic growth objectives.

Addressing the officials, Shri G. Kishan Reddy stated:

"Under the leadership and vision of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji, India is moving decisively towards becoming a self-reliant and globally competitive economy. The mining and exploration sector has a critical role in securing India's future growth, industrial expansion and strategic mineral security."

He further directed all organisations to work in a coordinated mission-mode approach with clearly defined timelines, measurable outcomes and greater accountability.

The Minister also emphasised the importance of advanced technologies, data integration and



scientific innovation in strengthening India's exploration ecosystem.

"The future of mineral exploration lies in technology-driven systems including AI, remote sensing, integrated geoscience analytics and advanced exploration methodologies. Our institutions must lead this transformation to make India future-ready and resource-secure," he said.

The Geological Survey of India highlighted major exploration outcomes across Karnataka and Goa,

including the identification of gold, copper, PGE, nickel and cobalt-bearing zones, along with significant augmentation of mineral resources following reforms introduced under the MMDR Amendment Act, 2015. GSI also outlined its five-year roadmap involving large-scale thematic mapping, AI/ML-enabled mineral targeting and advanced-stage exploration projects covering nearly 48,000 sq. km.

The National Institute of Rock Mechanics showcased its contributions

towards nationally significant infrastructure and mining safety projects including hydropower, metro rail, tunnel engineering, seismic monitoring and controlled blasting near sensitive infrastructure. The institute also presented its capabilities in rock mechanics, engineering geology, micro seismic monitoring and geotechnical solutions supporting strategic national development projects.

The Indian Bureau of Mines reviewed progress in sustainable mining practices, operationalisation of auctioned mineral blocks, scientific mine closure, mineral beneficiation and environmental safeguards. IBM also presented findings related to critical mineral enrichment and recovery potential from existing mining

ecosystems under the National Critical Mineral Mission.

The RSAS division presented the progress achieved under the National Aereogeophysical Mapping Programme (NAGMP), including airborne geophysical surveys, hyperspectral remote sensing and AI/ML-driven mineral prospectively mapping. The review highlighted that more than 6.5 lakh sq. km. has already been covered under the programme, generating over 200 exploration projects using aero-geophysical datasets.

As part of the Bengaluru visit, Hon'ble Minister Shri G. Kishan Reddy also visited the Art of Living Foundation International Centre and interacted with members of the Art of Living family. The Minister visited the Gurukul and Exhibition Centre and appreciated the institution's efforts

towards value-based education, spiritual awareness and social transformation rooted in India's cultural heritage.

The Minister also had the privilege of interacting with Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and sought his blessings. Reflecting on the visit, Shri G. Kishan Reddy said:

"India's development journey towards Viksit Bharat 2047 must be guided not only by economic progress and technological advancement, but also by spiritual consciousness, cultural values and a spirit of collective service towards society."

The visit concluded with a renewed emphasis on nation-building through scientific progress, sustainable development, cultural values and institutional excellence in alignment with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

## Cockroach Controversy

AMID an economic crisis and the NEET fiasco, the traction gained by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) on social media reflects the discontent among India's youth, particularly the jobless ones. This online movement has revealed that a generation frustrated by unemployment, exam scandals and political apathy is turning to satire as a form of democratic expression. What began as a sharp response to the Chief Justice of India's remark comparing a section of youngsters with "cockroaches" has quickly evolved into a wider conversation about youth unrest, accountability and freedom of dissent. The symbolism of the cockroach is central to the



movement's appeal. Usually seen as a pest, the insect has been reimagined by CJP supporters as a metaphor for resilience. Their message is loud and clear: the ignored young citizens of India have somehow survived, and they will have their say.

The CJP's rapid popularity has prompted the ruling BJP to launch a counter-attack. Several party leaders have alleged that the platform is drawing social media support from Pakistan. However, the CJP's founder, Abhijeet Dipke, has claimed that over 94 per cent of its followers are from India. Dipke's allegations of account restrictions, hacking and platform takedowns have raised uncomfortable questions about democratic space in the digital age. Attempts to suppress satire strengthen the perception that the government is not receptive to criticism. Democracies are considered healthy when dissent is allowed to be expressed peacefully.

The rise of this protest movement should prompt all stakeholders to look within, be it the political class, the bureaucracy, the judiciary or the media. The CJP may or may not be able to establish itself as a durable force, but its emergence carries an unmistakable warning: beneath the memes lies a generation demanding dignity, opportunity and a voice in shaping the nation's future.

## Elderly Dealing

THE Punjab and Haryana High Court's ruling directing a son to provide his elderly mother a room, separate bathroom and basic amenities in the family home is more than a legal order. It is an indictment of a society increasingly failing its parents. Invoking the timeless dictum "matru devo bhava", the court reminded citizens that filial duty is not merely cultural ornamentation but a legal and moral obligation. The facts of the case are deeply unsettling. An elderly woman had to seek judicial intervention simply to secure a habitable corner in the house built by her late husband. That a mother should be compelled to fight her own children for shelter and dignity reflects the erosion of the joint family ethos that once defined Indian society. The high court was justified in rejecting the son's plea and imposing costs upon him.

Courts across the country are increasingly confronting disputes involving abandoned or harassed parents. In several rulings, tribunals and high courts have ordered eviction of abusive children, upheld parents' rights over self-acquired property and reinforced the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007. At the same time, the judiciary has carefully balanced welfare concerns with property rights, ensuring that the law is not misused in family feuds.

The larger concern, however, cannot be addressed through courtrooms alone. India's rapidly ageing population, urban migration and shrinking family structures are creating conditions where many senior citizens face loneliness, insecurity and economic dependence. Legal safeguards are essential, but social attitudes matter even more. A civilisation that reveres motherhood in scripture cannot abandon mothers in practice. Providing elderly parents with respect, care and security should not require judicial enforcement. The high court's verdict rightly emphasises that inheritance may be negotiable, but humanity is not.

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# Celebrating Without Transformation

PRASANNA MISHRA

India today lives amidst a curious contradiction. On television screens, in policy conferences, in glowing international headlines, and increasingly among sections of the intelligentsia, the nation is portrayed as an unstoppable rising power — the world's fastest-growing major economy, a digital giant, a geopolitical swing state, and the future engine of global growth. Yet outside these carefully curated narratives stands another India: millions of young men riding motorcycles through crowded streets delivering food parcels, groceries, medicine, and consumer goods to an urban middle class that celebrates convenience as progress. The delivery boy has quietly become the emblem of India's development model. This is not merely an economic irony. It is a civilizational warning.

No country can become a genuinely developed society by converting its demographic dividend into a vast reserve of insecure labour serving consumption-driven urban elites. A nation that once dreamed of scientific modernity, industrial self-reliance, intellectual confidence, and social transformation now risks normalising precarious employment as a sign of economic dynamism.

The deeper tragedy is that much of India's educated class — journalists, commentators, influencers, economists, corporate strategists, and sections of academia — increasingly participates in glorifying this condition. They celebrate digital transactions while remaining silent about the collapse of productive manufacturing employment. They applaud start-up valuations while ignoring the erosion of stable livelihoods. They praise "ease of doing business" while millions struggle for the ease of surviving.

India's development discourse has become strangely detached from the lived experience of ordinary citizens.

Economic growth indicators do matter. Roads matter. Digital systems matter. Infrastructure matters. Financial inclusion matters. But growth acquires legitimacy only when it expands human capability, deepens social dignity, enhances intellectual confidence, and creates productive human resource engagement and useful employment.

The central question therefore is not whether India is growing. The real question is: growing into what? A healthy economy transforms labour into productivity. A weak economy merely reorganises insecurity.

Across Indian cities, one increasingly encounters educated youth

working in app-based services with little social protection, unstable income, long working hours, and almost no upward mobility. These jobs are often described as "entrepreneurial flexibility," but such language frequently disguises the absence of structural opportunity. The celebrated gig economy is not necessarily evidence of innovation. In many cases, it is evidence of the failure to create large-scale, high-productivity manufacturing and knowledge-sector employment.

An economy becomes truly transformative when a worker can gradually move from low-productivity to higher-productivity occupations. When skills deepen. When wages rise. When industrial ecosystems generate technological competence. When ordinary families begin imagining a better future for their children.

The contrast with countries like China, South Korea, and Vietnam is deeply instructive.

These countries did not merely chase GDP numbers. They transformed the material foundations of society.

China built manufacturing capacity on a civilizational scale. It absorbed millions from low-productivity rural work into industrial employment. Entire ecosystems of supply chains, logistics, ports, research institutions, technical education, and export industries emerged together. The result was not merely economic growth but social transformation. A factory worker's child could aspire to engineering, research, entrepreneurship, or urban middle-class life.

South Korea achieved something even more remarkable. Emerging from war and poverty in the mid-twentieth century, it invested intensely in education, industrial competence, technology, and national discipline. It created globally competitive industries — automobiles, shipbuilding, semiconductors, consumer electronics — not merely platforms for urban consumption. Its transformation produced not only wealth but confidence, social mobility, and intellectual ambition.

Vietnam, despite immense historical trauma, followed a pragmatic path of export-oriented manufacturing integrated with global supply chains. It focused on labour-intensive industry, vocational capability, and competitive production. Today, global manufacturers increasingly look at Vietnam not as a market to sell into, but as a country capable of producing.

That distinction matters. A nation that mainly consumes remains dependent. A nation that

produces and acquires strategic autonomy.

India, despite its immense talent and population, has often appeared trapped between aspiration and execution. The country speaks the language of global power while large sections of its workforce remain underemployed, informally employed, or precariously employed.

One reason for this distortion lies in the political economy of contemporary India.

Modern politics increasingly rewards spectacle over structural transformation. Mega-events, media narratives, slogans, centralised personality cults, and endless digital messaging create the perception of national resurgence. Citizens are encouraged to emotionally consume nationalism while materially adjusting to stagnation. In such an environment, criticism itself begins to be viewed unkindly.

The political class benefits from this arrangement because perception management becomes easier than long-term institution building. Real transformation is difficult. It requires educational reform, judicial efficiency, scientific temper, decentralised governance, industrial policy, labour-intensive manufacturing, agricultural productivity, urban planning, and institutional accountability.

But spectacle offers quicker rewards.

The tragedy is not merely political. Sections of the intelligentsia have become participants in this culture of exaggeration. Instead of functioning as independent moral critics of power, many increasingly operate as amplifiers of official optimism.

A democracy weakens when intellectual classes stop asking uncomfortable questions.

Perhaps the gravest issue is not economic but intellectual.

A developed society does not merely produce infrastructure; it produces thinking citizens. It cultivates curiosity, reasoning, creativity, scientific temperament, artistic depth, and moral independence.

India's public discourse, however, increasingly appears dominated by emotional polarisation, shallow media cycles, performative outrage, and slogan-driven politics. Serious reading declines. Public reasoning weakens.

A population trapped in permanent economic anxiety also finds it difficult to cultivate intellectual freedom. When survival itself becomes exhausting, citizenship gradually shrinks into spectatorship.

This is why the quality of employment matters far beyond economics. A society of insecure workers cannot easily become a society of intellectually confident citizens.

The delivery worker rushing through traffic under algorithmic pressure becomes symbolic not merely of economic precariousness but of a larger civilizational exhaustion — human beings converted into endlessly measurable units of speed, ratings, and efficiency. Meanwhile, leadership is celebrated in increasingly mythic language.

No democracy should place leaders beyond scrutiny. Democratic maturity lies not in worshipping authority but in continuously evaluating whether power has genuinely improved the lives and capacities of ordinary citizens.

For real development, the country needs: Large-scale manufacturing capable of employing millions productively; massive investment in public education and research; vocational and technical capability linked directly to industry; urbanisation that preserves dignity rather than producing exclusion; public healthcare and social protection systems that reduce insecurity; decentralised governance that empowers local institutions; a cultural environment that values scientific reasoning and intellectual freedom; an economic philosophy centred not merely on billionaires and market valuations, but on the enhancement of human capability.

Most importantly, India needs honesty.

A nation cannot permanently sustain itself on exaggerated self-congratulation. The distance between propaganda and lived reality eventually produces cynicism, anger, and social fragmentation. True patriotism does not consist in endlessly praising the state. It consists in demanding that the nation live up to its civilizational promise.

India's greatness will not be measured by the number of billionaires it produces, nor by the volume of political adulation surrounding leaders. It will be measured by whether ordinary citizens acquire dignity, intellectual confidence, meaningful work, social mobility, and the freedom to think without fear.

The ultimate purpose of development is not to create obedient consumers or exhausted service workers. It is to create fully realised human beings.

That remains India's unfinished task.

(The writer is a former IAS officer)

## Super El Niño's Trillion-Dollar Warning

Raghunath Mahapatra

The Pacific Ocean is warming again. Climate agencies, including NOAA and the WMO have indicated higher probability of a strong El Niño developing by late 2026, with some climate models even pointing toward possible Super El Niño conditions. El Niño arrives differently from conventional disasters: as slow Pacific heat redistribution that later transmits into food inflation, fiscal stress, power shortages and economic slowdown. At peak intensity, it behaves less like weather and more like a trillion-dollar macroeconomic shock embedded in the global cycle.

Peruvian fishermen in the late 19th century first noticed unusually warm Pacific waters appearing near Christmas, reducing fish catches along the coasts of Peru and Ecuador. They called it El Niño de Navidad: "the Christ Child." Scientists later shortened the name to El Niño. It is not an abnormal event but a recurring climate cycle that appears every 2-7 years as part of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO). During an ordinary El Niño, sea-surface temperatures in the central and eastern Pacific typically rise by about 0.5°C-1.5°C above average, weakening trade winds and altering rainfall patterns across continents. The Pacific is uniquely capable of driving this phenomenon because no other ocean possesses the same scale of equatorial width, heat storage and ocean-atmosphere coupling capable of reorganising global weather systems on such a scale.

Historically, many El Niño events remained within manageable climatic and economic limits. A Super El Niño,

*For India, the concern is no longer theoretical. The extreme heat spreading across large parts of the country this summer offers a preview of how climate volatility is already entering the economy through energy demand, food systems and public health. Temperatures crossing 45-48°C in several regions have already pushed electricity demand toward record levels. Monsoon volatility, meanwhile, quickly translates into agricultural output loss, food inflation, rural demand contraction and fiscal pressure. For decades, climate was treated as external to economic modelling: a background variable rather than a core determinant of inflation, productivity and fiscal stability.*

however, is different in both intensity and consequence. It emerges when Pacific warming becomes exceptionally strong: often crossing nearly 2°C above average in key regions. Beyond this threshold, climate disruptions become simultaneous and globally amplified. Monsoon failures, crop losses, heat-waves, wildfires, water shortages, food inflation and energy disruption reinforce one another across economies rather than remaining isolated regional events. Super El Niño is therefore studied separately not merely because it is warmer, but because its economic effects become structurally harder to absorb and far more difficult to manage.

A 2023 Science study by Dartmouth researchers estimated that the 1982-83 and 1997-98 Super El Niño events caused global income losses of roughly \$4.1 trillion and \$5.7 trillion respectively, while projections suggest the economic effects of the 2023-24 El Niño could cumulatively approach \$3 trillion by 2029. These are not temporary disruptions but persistent growth losses. As climate economist Christopher Callahan observed, "Societies and economies absolutely do not just take a hit and recover." The historical record also reinforces this warning: the 1982-83 cycle devastated Peruvian fisheries and

intensified droughts, the 1997-98 events triggered Indonesian fires and Asian crop failures, while the 2015-16 episode affected over 60 million people globally. Each successive cycle has unfolded in a more interconnected and climate-sensitive world economy, magnifying shocks across food, energy, trade and finance.

What makes the 2026 concern more serious is the planetary baseline on which it may unfold. Ocean heat content is already near record highs after successive years of elevated sea-surface temperatures, reducing the system's cooling "reset" window. A future El Niño would therefore develop not on a neutral climate baseline but on a pre-warmed ocean-atmospheric system, increasing the probability of sharper climatic and economic shocks. In economic terms, shocks no longer arrive on stable cycles but on compressed recovery phases, where previous disruptions have not fully cleared. The result is cumulative vulnerability rather than cyclical risk.

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several regions have already pushed electricity demand toward record levels. Monsoon volatility, meanwhile, quickly translates into agricultural output loss, food inflation, rural demand contraction and fiscal pressure. For decades, climate was treated as external to economic modelling: a background variable rather than a core determinant of inflation, productivity and fiscal stability.

That assumption is now breaking, particularly in India and in other developing economies where food systems, water security, employment and energy demand remain deeply climate-sensitive. India has improved forecasting through IMD, expanded crop insurance under PMFBY and strengthened food-buffer systems. Yet these remain largely reactive instruments designed for cyclical shocks rather than repeated macro-climate stress. The next phase of preparation must therefore include climate-resilient agriculture, heat-adapted infrastructure, water-system reform and climate-linked fiscal planning.

Once again the Pacific is warming. The warning is not meteorological alone: it's macroeconomic and civilizational. For economies like India, the central question is whether growth can remain stable in the long run under repeated climate stress without losing momentum, equity or resilience. Super El Niño is no longer merely a forecast. It is becoming a test of development itself. For India, where monsoon stability still shapes agriculture, inflation and rural demand, the trillion-dollar warning of Super El Niño is ultimately a warning that climate resilience is no longer an environmental safeguard alone, but a precondition for stable development itself.

(The writer was with IIT Kanpur)

## Man guides census team to neighbour's house in Gzb, gets shot at

Ghaziabad, 25/5: A 65-year-old man was arrested on Saturday for allegedly shooting at his 55-year-old neighbour for guiding a census team to the suspect's house at Adarsh Colony in Muradnagar, police said. Police identified the suspect as Rampal Chaudhary, 65, who hails from Duhai in Ghaziabad and stays at Adarsh Colony in Muradnagar. The injured person was identified as Virendra Tyagi, 55. He is undergoing treatment at a hospital in Modinagar. ACP (Muradnagar) Bhaskar Verma told HT: "Around 11am, a team of census staff came to Adarsh Colony and sought Tyagi's help to guide them to households. Tyagi also guided them to Chaudhary's house for the exercise. However, when the census staff reached there, Tyagi started misbehaving with them during questioning and drove them away. The census team then called the police for help." However, officials said that when police reached Chaudhary's house, they did not find him. "After the police team left, Chaudhary returned, and learned from the census staff Tyagi had guided them to his house. Soon after, he went to Tyagi's house and shot at him in the chest before fleeing. Locals rushed Tyagi to a hospital in Modinagar," the ACP added. According to officials, the suspect was drunk when the incident occurred. Police registered an FIR under BNS sections 109(1) (attempt to murder), 352 (intentional insult in order to provoke breach of peace), and 351(3) (criminal intimidation) at Muradnagar police station following a complaint by Tyagi's elder brother, Gyanendra Kumar. Kumar said: "He fired at Tyagi as soon as he opened the door. My brother fell down and Chaudhary fled, hurling abuses and threats. One of our acquaintances rushed my brother to a hospital in Modinagar, where he is under treatment," Kumar told HT. The police later arrested suspect Chaudhary from Muradnagar. "He was arrested and is being interrogated in detail about the incident and also the weapon used during the crime," the ACP added.

## DTCP clears 3,420 illegal shanties from Saraswati Kunj in Gurugram

Noida, 25/5: The enforcement wing of the department of town and country planning (DTCP) on Friday said it has concluded its five-day demolition drive in Saraswati Kunj near Golf Course Road, during which 3,420 illegal shanties were demolished and around 19.5 acres of land were vacated. Officials said the drive was conducted on the directions of the deputy commissioner, Gurugram, who is also the administrator of the colony. On Friday alone, DTCP demolished around 850 illegal shanties spread across approximately 3.5 acres and 37 individual plots, officials said. The department also sealed two houses that were under construction without permission from the competent authority. Amit Madholia, district town planner, enforcement, said the demolition drive was carried out with assistance from Gurugram police from Sector-53 police station. "The department managed to clear approximately 19.5 acres of the colony's licensed land from illegal occupation. As part of the drive, 3,420 illegal shanties were removed, while a designated nursery school site, a green belt area, and other land earmarked for public use were also vacated," he said. DTCP officials said removal of construction and demolition (C&D) waste generated during the drive has also begun to ensure cleanliness and smooth traffic movement in the area. "Directions have been issued to the junior engineers concerned to conduct regular surveillance to prevent the possibility of re-encroachment in future. The department will now request the Deputy Commissioner of Gurugram to initiate the fencing process to ensure the security of the vacated land," Madholia said, adding that a report would soon be submitted to the deputy commissioner, Gurugram.

## Father of minor girl held for murder of Rajasthan athlete in Faridabad

Gurugram, 25/5: The father of a 16-year-old girl was arrested on Saturday for his alleged involvement in the murder of a 21-year-old man from Rajasthan who was allegedly beaten to death in Faridabad, while several other family members remained absconding, police said. Autopsy findings revealed the victim suffered multiple fractures and severe internal injuries. The attack was allegedly over his eloping with the minor girl. The victim, a state-level badminton player from Saidpur in Rajasthan's Bhiwadi, had reached Faridabad on May 17 to join an investigation related to the case before he went missing. He had allegedly been abducted and held hostage by the girl's family from Faridabad's Tigoan and repeatedly assaulted before the accused informed police about his recovery on Wednesday. He was rushed to the civil hospital in Ballabgarh, where doctors placed him on ventilator support. He died during treatment around 2am on Friday. The girl's maternal uncle lived in Saidpur, where the victim and the minor came in contact around eight months ago and entered a relationship. The duo eloped on April 20, following which the girl's family registered a kidnapping case against the victim at Tigoan police station. Police later recovered the girl, who denied any wrongdoing, while the man remained untraceable until the girl's family informed police they had caught him. A senior police official said the assault caused extensive injuries. "His ribs had also got fractured, and they had ended up puncturing his lungs. Besides, there were deep cut wounds on his limbs too which clearly indicated the brutality he was subjected to," he said, adding that the victim also suffered skull and nasal bone fractures. Yashpal Yadav, public relations officer of Faridabad police, said the girl's father orchestrated the assault after spotting the man in Tigoan on Wednesday. "He rang his son and nephews, who also reached the spot armed with rods and sticks, and brutally assaulted him, which resulted in his death in the course of treatment on Friday," Yadav said. The victim's father named 15 members of the girl's family in the case. "More family members who are on the run at present will be arrested soon," Yadav added.

## Relief from waterlogging, drain to be widened with Rs 18 crore

Noida, 25/5: 18 crore will be spent to eliminate waterlogging in the drain between Khoda Tiraha and Sector 59 Mamura. The drain will be widened by approximately two and a half meters to address the problems caused by rising water. The authority issued a tender after conducting a survey by an IIT team. This drain is joined by smaller drains at several points. Their filth also causes it to fill up quickly. Especially during the monsoon season, this drain overflows quickly, causing waterlogging on the road. In light of the problem, a survey was previously ordered. The IIT Delhi team visited the site, conducted a survey, and suggested widening the drain. Now, the authority has decided to carry out the work to address this problem.

## Microsoft techie couple in Noida breaks down 1.6 lakh monthly expenses, says city feels balanced despite rising costs

Noida, 25/5: A couple working as software engineers at Microsoft in Noida has opened up about their monthly expenses, lifestyle choices and why they continue to prefer the city despite a steady rise in the cost of living. Chhavi Maheshwari shared how she and her husband, Ripesh Yadav, manage their finances as a working couple and why Noida feels like the right mix of professional opportunity, family comfort and urban convenience. Chhavi, who is originally from Purkazi in Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh, works as a software engineer at Microsoft. Her husband Ripesh Yadav, who is from Jaspur in Kashipur, Uttarakhand, is also a software engineer at the company.

## Ghaziabad mayor stops Muslim children on bicycle, accuses them of carrying beef

Ghaziabad, 25/5: Ghaziabad Mayor Sunita Dayal stopped two children who were riding a bicycle in the Indrapuram area near Hindon Barrage and accused them of carrying beef in a sack, with no evidence presented to support the claim. She alleged the children were planning to throw the contents into the Hindon River. The mayor then called the police and demanded that the children be taken into custody. In videos that surfaced from the incident on social media, she warned officers that they would face suspension if the children were released. No verification of the sack's contents was shown publicly, and no formal evidence was produced to back the allegation of beef. The incident has drawn sharp criticism, with rights groups and political opponents questioning the use of unverified accusations to justify police action against minors. Critics have raised concerns over the pressure reportedly applied to police officers to ensure the children remained in custody. Sunita Dayal is a BJP leader and has served as mayor of Ghaziabad since her election in 2023.

## 'Psycho' Scooterist Who Terrorized Women with Scissors Arrested in Noida

Noida, 25/5: Police in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, have arrested a maniac who was targeting women walking on the street. The accused, who worked for a private company, would attack women walking below the waist with scissors. This sensational incident has created panic among the locals. The accused has been identified as Ankit Verma (26), a resident of Khoda Colony, Ghaziabad. The scooter and scissors used in the attack have been recovered from the accused's possession. The psycho scooter rider attacked two women in a single day. The accused would arrive on his scooter and attack women walking in deserted areas or at opportune moments. His method of attack was extremely brutal and shocking, using

Both completed their B.Tech in Computer Science from the National Institute of Technology Uttarakhand between 2014 and 2018. "I am a software engineer currently working at Microsoft in Noida. Me and my husband completed B.Tech in Computer Science from National Institute Of Technology Uttarakhand (2014-2018). We started our career at Samsung Noida in 2018, later moved to Goldman Sachs in 2020, and joined Microsoft in 2022. My journey has been a mix of learning, growth, and adapting to different roles across organisations," Chhavi said. Chhavi and Ripesh started their professional journey in Noida in 2018 after completing

## Steps taken by Noida to mitigate air pollution 'insufficient': CPCB

Noida, 25/5: The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has said that measures taken by the Noida authority to mitigate air pollution in the city are "insufficient", according to a reply to a Right to Information (RTI) application filed by a Noida resident. In its 2025 report as well, the CPCB had said the authority was not taking effective steps to contain pollution. However, the Noida authority maintained that its teams were working "day and night" to check the problem. Officials said the CPCB conducts annual inspections in all National Capital Region (NCR) cities, including Noida, to assess the quality of measures taken to curb air pollution. CPCB carried out an inspection in July 2025, and in April 2026, a site inspection and verification of measures were conducted. The CPCB's 18-point report, also seen by HT, flagged gaps in functioning of the Noida authority and revealed that measures continued to be "insufficient and inadequate" for containing air pollution. As per rules, the CPCB's annual site inspection report must be uploaded online and placed in public domain for transparency and

## Man held for stabbing women with sharp objects in Noida

Noida, 25/5: A 26-year-old man was arrested on Saturday for allegedly stabbing women from behind with a sharp-edged weapon in Noida's Sector 58, police said on Sunday. The incident came to light after two separate women complained. During questioning the suspect, who lives with his wife in Khoda, Ghaziabad, revealed that he hated women but did not reveal any reason for it. He used to stab women while returning from office, said Amit Tomar, station house officer, Sector 58. On Friday, the two women, in their mid-20s, approached the Sector 58 police station stating, "On Thursday, when they were

walking towards their home, a man riding a blue scooter attacked them with a sharp-edged weapon." Both the incidents took place between 6 and 6.30 pm on Thursday, said police, adding that both the complainants live at separate places in Noida. Police registered a case under Section 118 (voluntarily causing hurt) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita at Sector 58 police station, and formed teams to nab the suspect. "On Saturday, the suspect was arrested from Sector 55. He works as an accountant at a private firm in Noida, Sector 62," the SHO said.

## 'Psycho' Scooterist Who Terrorized Women with Scissors Arrested in Noida

The accused confessed: During police interrogation, the accused confessed to attacking four or five young women with scissors. Police are working to identify the other victims. Anshi Kumar, a resident of Ferukheda village in Unnao, lives in Lucky PG in Sector 56, Noida. She works for a private company. On Tuesday evening, around 6:21 pm, she was passing by the DAV School in Sector 55. Anshi says that at that moment, a young man wearing a white T-shirt came riding a blue scooter. He suddenly attacked her lower back with a sharp object and fled. As the wound began bleeding, Anshi called passersby for help and had to be treated at a nearby hospital. Anshi later reported the incident to the police. A short distance away, the same man attacked Asha Bhandari,

monthly rent is approximately ₹35,000," Chhavi shared. Apart from rent, housing related expenses form a significant part of their monthly budget. These include maintenance charges, electricity, internet and other utility costs. Chhavi said they spend roughly ₹20,000 a month on such expenses. "Apart from rent, we roughly spend around ₹20,000 per month on maintenance, electricity, internet," she said. In her expense breakup, she estimated utilities and maintenance at around ₹15,000 to ₹20,000 per month. This shows that while rent is the largest fixed housing cost, the additional recurring charges can also become a sizeable monthly expense for couples living in apartment societies.

## Fire broke out in the flat due to the indoor unit of the AC bursting.

Noida, 25/5: Panic broke out on Saturday at Florence Apartment in Sector-121 after an air conditioner's indoor unit exploded inside a flat, triggering a fire. The blast caused smoke to spread throughout the apartment. Residents somehow managed to save themselves safely. Fire department teams reached the spot and brought the blaze under control. This is not the first such incident of an AC catching fire during the summer season. Several similar cases have been reported in recent days. Chief Fire Officer (CFO) Pradeep Kumar Chaubey said that the fire occurred in a flat located in a housing society under the Phase-3 police station area. The fire, which started from the indoor unit of the AC, quickly engulfed the entire room.

## Deepika Nagar was assaulted before her death; her parents demanded a bulldozer action against her in-laws

Noida, 25/5: Greater Noida: Several important details have emerged during the police investigation into the death of Deepika Nagar. According to sources associated with the probe, Deepika was physically assaulted before her death. Injury marks found on her body were inflicted before she died, making the case even more serious. The injuries have also been mentioned in the postmortem report. Police are now investigating the angle of physical abuse before the incident and trying to identify who all were involved. The revelation has sparked anger among the victim's family members and local residents. A senior police officer said that the chargesheet in the case will soon be submitted in court. Injury marks found in postmortem report According to police officials, the postmortem report confirmed injury marks on Deepika's body. Injuries were found on her hands, neck, and other parts of the body, deepening suspicions of murder. Family members alleged that Deepika had been facing continuous mental and physical harassment, but she silently endured it in an attempt to protect her family and social reputation. The family has demanded bulldozer action against the accused persons' houses from the Chief Minister. Mobile phone and Scorpio SUV still missing The family also alleged that even several days after the incident, police have failed to recover Deepika's mobile phone and Scorpio SUV. According to them, the phone contained important chats, call records, and other digital evidence.

## 'Psycho' Scooterist Who Terrorized Women with Scissors Arrested in Noida

a resident of Sector 22, on a scooter, in a similar manner, injuring her and then fleeing. People got Asha treated at a nearby hospital. Asha also filed a police complaint. ADCP Provides Information ADCP Noida Manisha Singh stated that on Friday, two women reported to the Sector-58 police station that while returning home on Sector-55 Road, a man on a scooter approached them from behind and attacked them below the waist with a sharp object, injuring them. The ADCP stated that upon receiving this information, the Sector-58 police immediately registered a case and conducted medical examinations for both women. A police team was formed to search for the unidentified scooter rider. The accused was arrested as

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## Steps taken by Noida to mitigate air pollution 'insufficient': CPCB

to generate significant road dust. Heavy parking and congestion leave several roads dust-laden, the report recommended. The report further suggested deployment of smaller sweeping machines on narrow roads, night-time road sweeping in congested areas, strict action against uncovered transport of construction material, and increased road sweeping and water sprinkling. "While the report records compliance on several NCAP parameters, official field observations acknowledge that dust management and road cleanliness challenges continue at the ground level. According to the official report, authorities have implemented several pollution-control measures, including mechanical road sweeping, water sprinkling for dust suppression, construction and demolition waste management, diversion and signage systems, Miyawaki plantation, and waste management-related control measures," Gupta said, demanding serious and effective steps to mitigate pollution. Noida authority chief executive officer Krishna Karunesh, however, said the Authority is continuously working to reduce air pollution.

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follows: ADCP Manisha Singh stated that on Saturday, with the assistance of local intelligence and electronic surveillance, the Sector-58 police station uncovered the above incident on the road between Sectors 55 and 56. The accused, Ankit Verma, son of Rajesh Verma, was arrested within the police station area. The scooter and scissors used in the incident were recovered from the accused's possession. The ADCP said that upon inquiring about the accused, it was discovered that he had been working as an executive at a private company in Noida Sector 62 since 2020. The accused would ride his scooter and attack women and girls walking on deserted roads from behind with scissors.

# Iran Says Conclusion Reached On Several Issues With US, But Agreement Not Imminent

Tehran,25/5: Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei on Monday said that a conclusion has been reached on a large portion of issues under discussion with the US although no specific timeframe has been set for finalising any understanding, local media reported. Addressing a press conference on Monday, Baqaei said no one can claim that the signing of an agreement is imminent, adding that political behaviour in the US was somewhat inconsistent, Iran's semi-official Tasnim News Agency reported. Baqaei stated that US' contradictory stance within hours complicates any negotiation process. He said that decision making in Washington is disorganised. He spoke about several resignations, congressional opposition, public opinion, and internal contradictions in the US, adding that this situation has created space for the influence of certain actors, including those from the Israeli regime. Regarding reports on timeframe for discussions, Baqaei said that no specific deadline has been set to finalise the understanding. He



expressed Iran's commitment to reaching a result that secures the rights of Tehran, emphasising that what matters most for Iran is protecting its national interests and that any outcome will be announced after it is achieved. On discussions within a 60-day framework, he said that the plan is to discuss certain details regarding the memorandum and other issues within that period, stressing that one of the topics is connected to nuclear matters. He stated that Iran is not discussing

nuclear details at this stage and the 14-article memorandum is focused on ending the war, Tasnim News Agency reported. On Sunday, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said that "significant progress" has been made in diplomatic efforts involving the US and Iran, while indicating that a "good news" regarding the Strait of Hormuz could emerge soon. Addressing a joint press conference with External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar in New Delhi, Rubio had said, "I do think perhaps

there is the possibility that over the next few hours the world will get some good news, at least with regards to the straits and with regards to a process that can ultimately leave us where the President wants us to be and that is a world that no longer has to be in fear or worry about an Iranian nuclear weapon and so, I do think there's some good news on that front, but not final news on that front. But, perhaps a little bit later today, we'll have more to say. But, some progress has been made. I don't want to downplay that. But I also want to caveat it by saying we still have some work to do, we will see." Rubio reiterated US President Donald Trump's stance that Iran can never possess a nuclear weapon. He said, "... The ultimate goal is that Iran can never have a nuclear weapon. Iran can never possess a nuclear weapon. The President has been clear about that they will never possess a nuclear weapon, certainly not as long as Donald Trump is President of the United States." He stressed that the US and its partners in the Gulf region have been working on an outline

that could lead to a completely open Strait of Hormuz without tolls. However, he mentioned that it requires that Iran fully accepts and implements it. "Related to that is this issue of the straits. This is an international waterway. They don't own it. It's an international waterway and what they are doing now is basically they are threatening to destroy commercial vessels using an international waterway, that is illegal under any concept of international law that governs us. But, if we allowed that to become normal, we would be normalising an unacceptable status quo and setting a dangerous precedent that could be replicated here in this region and in multiple places around the world. So, the desire, the President has, his preference is to find a diplomatic way that these problems can be solved that's always the President's preference. He would have much rather have me and the Department of State solve this problem than the Department of War having to solve this problem but the problem is going to be solved one way or the other," he added.

# Nine Dead, 11 Missing After Heavy Rain Lashes China's Chongqing

Beijing,25/5: Nine people were killed and another 11 were unaccounted for as of Monday afternoon after heavy rain, which started on Saturday night, battered Yongchuan District in southwest China's Chongqing Municipality, local authorities stated. Rescue and response efforts are still underway, Xinhua news agency reported. A sudden and extreme catastrophic rainstorm struck Yongchuan, triggering flash floods and geological disasters in multiple areas of this district, from Saturday night to early Sunday morning. Meanwhile, the death toll from heavy rainfall in Shimen County, central China's Hunan Province, rose to seven on Sunday, with 14 others still missing, local authorities said. The severe downpour started at 7 am on Sunday. It is the first round of torrential rain to hit the county this year. A total of 23 townships and districts have been affected, according to the municipal emergency management bureau of Changde City, which administers Shimen. Some areas in Hunan have been hit by severe flooding, resulting

in heavy casualties and property losses. Continuous heavy rainfall has lashed the province's Shimen County, leaving five people dead and 11 others missing, according to local authorities. Also, last week, four people were confirmed dead, and five others remain missing after sudden, extremely heavy rainfall triggered severe flooding and landslides in Guiding County, southwest China's Guizhou Province, local authorities said. Among the missing, five were added following further investigation, according to the county's emergency management and production safety committee. Search and rescue operations are underway. China's national commission for disaster prevention, reduction and relief, on May 19, activated a Level-IV disaster relief emergency response for Guizhou Province following severe flooding and geological disasters, according to the Ministry of Emergency Management. China has a four-tier emergency response system, with Level I being the most severe response. Heavy rainfall and flooding have struck southern and central China in recent days.

# US Iran peace framework signals full return of Strait of Hormuz shipping within thirty days

NEW DELHI,25/5: Diplomatic negotiations between Washington and Tehran appear on the verge of restoring maritime operations across the Strait of Hormuz following months of intense regional conflict. Emerging drafts of a potential settlement suggest shipping operations will finally normalize within thirty days of formal signing. According to updates from the Tasnim news agency, this proposed framework aims to lift existing naval blockades entirely while simultaneously releasing specific frozen overseas assets belonging to Iranian authorities during its critical initial phase. Resolving this standoff represents a major diplomatic priority for numerous allied nations depending on stable trade routes. Conflict escalation earlier this year severely disrupted international supply chains, forcing daily vessel crossings down significantly from pre-war averages of nearly 140 ships. Brent crude prices surged over forty percent directly due to these restrictive maritime conditions, triggering severe

inflationary pressures on fuel and essential food supplies globally. Stabilizing these specific waterways carries profound economic weight for rapidly developing nations. For instance, in India, industrial hubs and coastal states like Odisha depend heavily on uninterrupted crude oil imports to sustain domestic manufacturing and manage everyday energy costs. Reaching a finalized agreement quickly would effectively ease this mounting financial pressure on interconnected global economies, allowing commodity markets to finally stabilize. Recent public statements from high-ranking diplomats indicate genuine forward momentum, even though formal documents currently remain unsigned. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio highlighted notable advancements during his recent diplomatic visit to India, carefully noting that final terms are still under active review and negotiation. United States President Donald Trump echoed these positive sentiments on social media platforms, stating that designated leaders have largely

determined the core framework of the arrangement. Final intricate details are expected shortly. Regional political actors, particularly intermediaries in Pakistan, have reportedly played crucial roles in facilitating these delicate communications between historically adversarial administrations. Despite apparent progress on restoring maritime security, significant diplomatic hurdles remain regarding advanced weapons proliferation. Iranian state media outlets indicate that negotiators have completely separated immediate naval navigation agreements from broader, historically fraught discussions regarding uranium enrichment restrictions. The current working draft establishes a subsequent sixty-day window specifically dedicated to addressing these highly specialized concerns. Separating these complex issues theoretically allows immediate relief for international shipping routes while giving seasoned diplomats additional time to tackle highly sensitive national security parameters without holding global commerce hostage.

# Over 1.5 Million Hajj Pilgrims Arrive In Mecca; Riyadh Increases Air Defence

Mecca,25/5: Over 1.5 million people have arrived in Mecca for the annual Hajj pilgrimage, which this year takes place amid hopes for an end to the war in West Asia. To protect them, the Saudi Ministry of Defence has strengthened its air defences. The white-clad pilgrims, travelling by bus or on foot, arrived at the vast Mina encampment after performing the "tawaf," or walking seven times around the Kaaba, the enormous black cube of Mecca's Great Mosque. The start of the Hajj coincided with US President Donald Trump sending mixed signals regarding a possible agreement to extend the fragile ceasefire with Iran and a deal to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, reports Adnkronos news agency. This year's celebrations, which draw Muslims from around the world, including Iran, follow a series of Iranian attacks against targets in Saudi Arabia and neighbouring Gulf countries. Saudi authorities



have worked to keep the conflict away from the Hajj, with many Muslims travelling long distances to participate in one of the world's largest annual pilgrimages. Despite the uncertainty caused by the conflict, Saudi officials said that more pilgrims from abroad

participated in the Hajj this year than in 2025. The Saudi Ministry of Defence showed a video of advanced air defence batteries positioned on the outskirts of Mecca. "The air defence forces are responsible for protecting the skies above the holy sites and responding to all aerial threats, ensuring the

safety and tranquillity of visitors," the post read. Last week, Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Defence said that it intercepted three drones that entered its airspace from Iraq. The UAE said Tuesday that its air defence systems had detected six drones coming from Iraq over the previous 48 hours.

# Pakistan: At least 24 killed, over 50 injured in targeted blast near Quetta Railway track

Quetta (Pakistan), 25/5: At least 24 people were killed, and over 50 were injured in a devastating explosion that struck near the Chaman Phatak railway area in Quetta, in Pakistan's restive southwestern province of Balochistan on Sunday. The attack, which authorities have described as a targeted operation, occurred as a train carrying military personnel and their families was passing through the city. According to officials, the explosion was caused by an explosive-laden vehicle that struck one of the train's carriages as it passed a signal at Chaman Phatak. The force of the blast caused several coaches to derail and overturn others, reported Geo News. The blast occurred shortly after 8 AM and derailed three coaches, including the locomotive, while two coaches overturned, reported Dawn, citing APP. Reports indicate the train, identified as the Peshawar-bound Jaffar Express, was transporting military personnel and their families travelling for the upcoming Eid holiday. Following the incident, an emergency was declared in government hospitals across Quetta, with doctors and



medical staff summoned to handle the situation. Railway authorities said the Peshawar-bound Jaffar Express was stopped at Quetta Railway Station after the blast as a precautionary measure, reported Geo News. According to the Pakistan Railways, the Federal Minister for Railways has condemned the Quetta blast. In an X post, the Pakistan Railways said that a shuttle train coming from Quetta Cantt was caught in a blast near Chaman Phatak. Rescue and relief operations are underway. "Federal Minister for Railways strongly condemns the

Quetta blast. The incident is cowardly terrorism. Such attacks cannot weaken national resolve. Shuttle train coming from Quetta Cantt caught in blast near Chaman Phatak. Rescue truck and relief train dispatched to the site for relief operations," he said Babar Yousafzai, the spokesperson to the home minister, said that all relevant institutions have been placed on high alert following an explosion in the city, reported Geo News. While the current death toll stands at 24, officials warn that the number may rise as search and

rescue operations continue. Over 50 people have been hospitalised, with several reported to be in critical condition. Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti condemned the horrific incident, saying that the "terrorists of Fitna Al-Hindustan" are proving their savagery by targeting innocent civilians, women, and children. Taking it to X, he stressed that those involved in the attack will not be spared, underlining that Balochistan will hunt down and eradicate the terrorists, their facilitators, and their masterminds. "I strongly condemn the terrorist incident near Chaman Phatak in Quetta. The terrorists of Fitna Al-Hindustan are proving their savagery by targeting innocent civilians, women, and children. Those who shed the blood of innocent people deserve no leniency. Let the enemy hear this: there will be no safe haven left for terrorists in Balochistan. We will hunt down the terrorists, their facilitators, and their masterminds one by one and bring them to justice, and this war will continue until the last terrorist is eliminated," he wrote.

# Over 900 Suspected Cases Identified In Congo Ebola Response: WHO Chief

Geneva,25/5: World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said that as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) scales up surveillance in its Ebola response, more than 900 suspected cases have been identified so far, including 101 confirmed cases. In Ituri province, the epicentre of the outbreak, nearly 5 million people live amid ongoing conflict, with one in four in need of humanitarian assistance and one in five internally displaced, Tedros said in a post on X. "The violence is forcing people to flee, including health and humanitarian workers. This is severely impeding efforts to scale up Ebola contact tracing and identify infections early enough to provide supportive care," he added, noting that ongoing insecurity and fear are also fueling mistrust within communities. The WHO chief said that WHO and humanitarian health partners maintain a presence across Ituri, including in some of the hardest-to-reach and most insecure areas, where communities are facing not only the threat of Ebola but also a wide range of diseases. Tedros emphasised that delivering a comprehensive package of healthcare services is essential —



not only to meet urgent health needs, but also to build the trust that is critical for an effective Ebola response, Xinhua news agency reported. On May 16, Tedros determined that the Ebola disease caused by the Bundibugyo virus in the DRC and Uganda constitutes a public health emergency of international concern. On May 22, the WHO revised its risk assessment to "very high" at the national level, while keeping it as "high" at the regional level and "low" globally. According to the WHO, Ebola disease is a severe, often fatal illness affecting humans and other primates. The virus is transmitted to people from wild animals (such as fruit bats, porcupines and non-human primates) and then spreads in the human population through

direct contact with the blood, secretions, organs or other bodily fluids of infected people, and with surfaces and materials (e.g. bedding, clothing) contaminated with these fluids. The average Ebola disease case fatality rate is around 50%. Case fatality rates have varied from 25–90 per cent in past outbreaks. The first Ebola disease outbreaks occurred in remote villages in Central Africa, near tropical rainforests. The 2014–2016 Ebola virus disease outbreak in West Africa was the largest and most complex Ebola outbreak since the virus was first discovered in 1976. There were more cases and deaths in this outbreak than all others combined. It also spread between countries, starting in Guinea then moving across land borders to Sierra Leone and Liberia.

# India-Canada Ties Back On Track, Says Envoy As Piyush Goyal Kicks Off Significant Visit

Washington,25/5: India and Canada have moved from an “antagonistic” phase to an “extremely friendly” one, with security agencies, political leadership and businesses now working closely together, India’s High Commissioner to Canada, Dinesh K. Patnaik, said in an exclusive interview to IANS. “The relationship really changed in the last few months from being antagonistic to being extremely friendly. Right now things are going well,” Patnaik told IANS in an interview ahead of the visit of Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, which he described as marking “the beginning of a new phase” in bilateral ties. Calling it the “biggest delegation ever”, Patnaik said more than 100 Indian businessmen were expected to arrive alongside Goyal for meetings with Canadian industry groups, pension funds, banks, logistics companies and diaspora leaders. “The very fact that this meeting is taking place is the success of the story,” he said. “Even one year back one wouldn’t have imagined an Indian



minister coming with a hundred plus delegation to Canada.” According to the High Commissioner, Goyal’s visit is aimed at accelerating economic engagement and pushing forward negotiations on the proposed Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). “His main thing in coming in is to first of all say that we are now going to ramp up our economic and commercial relationship very high up,” Patnaik said. He added that the minister’s visit was also intended to “give a political push” to CEPA

negotiations and “signal that relationships are back to normal”. Patnaik said bilateral trade currently stood at about 32 billion Canadian dollars, or nearly 25 billion US dollars, with both countries aiming to double it over the next five years. “We are hoping to reach about 50 billion US by 2030 or 2031,” he said. The envoy said both governments had “put aside the problems of the past” and restored cooperation across sectors, particularly on security. “The national security advisors had come and gone. They have had discussions. The

agencies are talking to each other. The police forces are talking, the investigating agencies are talking,” he said. He said both sides were now focused on ensuring “Canada is safe for India, and India is safe for Canada”. Referring to extremist and criminal networks linked to pro-Khalistan elements, Patnaik said Canada had begun recognising the issue as its own domestic challenge. “What we have managed in the last six months or seven months to do, and thanks to the close assistance of the Canadian side, especially Prime Minister Carney, is to again put them on the fringe, marginalise them,” he said. “They’re (extremists) making money out of it. It became a thing, which is more of an economic activity than an ideological activity,” he added, citing “gun running, drug smuggling, people trafficking, extortion” and organised crime. Patnaik identified energy, critical minerals, fertilisers, AgriFood, AI, quantum research and defence cooperation as major growth sectors. On immigration, he acknowledged that recent Canadian policy changes had

affected many Indians but insisted there was “no negativity about India”. “They allowed the immigration system to be hijacked by people who could misuse it,” he said. “They’re trying to work out a system where they can get the benefit of good immigration without allowing the bad immigration to come in.” “Indians need not worry,” he added. “People here have a good opinion of them.” India-Canada relations deteriorated sharply in 2023 after former Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau alleged potential Indian involvement in the killing of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in British Columbia. India rejected the allegations as “absurd” and accused Canada of giving space to extremist and anti-India elements. In recent months, both countries have moved to stabilise ties through diplomatic engagement and renewed security dialogue. Trade, energy cooperation and people-to-people links remain central pillars of the relationship, with Canada hosting one of the world’s largest Indian diaspora communities.

# Petrol And Diesel Price Hike In India Smallest Among Fuel Importing Economies

New Delhi,25/5: As the Middle East crisis continues to impact retail fuel prices, India had one of the smaller percentage increases, and sits on one of the lower absolute price levels among non-subsidising economies.

Through the 78 days from the closure of the Strait of Hormuz on February 28, to the oil marketing companies’ (OMCs) revisions of May 15, 19, 23, and May 25, India held petrol and diesel prices essentially unchanged, while the rest of the world raised prices by 10, 20, 50, and, in some cases, 90 per cent. The cumulative Indian revision at just over Rs 7 a litre takes the headline movement on the retail price to roughly seven and a half per cent — equivalent to Rs 7.35 per litre on petrol and Rs 7.53 per litre on diesel — taking petrol prices in Delhi from Rs 94.77 to Rs 102.12 and diesel from Rs 87.67 to Rs 95.20. Every major developed economy now retails petrol above Rs 150 a litre and most above Rs 180; the EU 27 weighted average sits at Rs 179 on petrol and Rs 184 on diesel. India’s two large neighbours — Pakistan and Nepal — have moved well past Rs 135 a litre on petrol despite lower nominal incomes. Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and the Philippines have crossed Rs 130 a litre. The only economies retailing petrol consistently below the Indian range are direct subsidisers (the UAE and Malaysia) or the US, which has structurally low fuel taxation. India, therefore, prices petrol and diesel at or below most of the developing world and at roughly half the European pump, while still raising less than any non-subsidising peer through the present disruption. Every other major importing economy has passed on the cost to its consumers and in several cases, doubling pump prices over 48 months. India has not. The Indian revision of just over Rs 7 a litre, equivalent to roughly seven and a half per cent off the Delhi base, is the smallest material upward movement of any major economy outside the directly subsidising Gulf producers — smaller than Japan, smaller than every European economy, smaller even than the South Asian peers that lack India’s buffers.

# Sensex Soars 1,073 Points On Hopes Of US-Iran Deal, Rupee Ends Stronger

Mumbai,25/5: Indian equity benchmarks rallied sharply on Monday, tracking gains in global markets amid hopes of easing geopolitical tensions after US President Donald Trump said negotiations with Iran were progressing constructively. The Sensex surged 1,073.61 points, or 1.42 per cent, to close at 76,488.96, while the Nifty jumped 312.4 points, or 1.32 per cent, to settle at 24,031.7, reclaiming the crucial 24,000 mark. Commenting on Nifty technical outlook, experts said that 24,100 now acts as the immediate resistance level, followed by the 24,300-24,350 zone where significant Open Interest (OI) build-up is visible. “On the downside, the 23,950-24,000 band has now turned into an important immediate support zone after the successful breakout and sustained closing above this range,” an analyst stated. “Sustained strength above this level could support further upside momentum, while failure to hold above the breakout range may lead to renewed consolidation in the near term,” an analyst added. Among the top gainers on the Nifty index were Adani



Enterprises Limited, Eicher Motors Limited, Larsen & Toubro Limited and Bajaj Finance Limited. Market sentiment improved after Trump stated that talks between the United States and Iran were advancing in a positive direction. He also reportedly told negotiators not to rush into a deal, saying that time was on Washington’s side. The comments raised hopes of a possible easing of hostilities in West Asia, supporting global risk appetite. The broader market indices also ended firmly in the green. The Nifty MidCap index rose 0.94 per cent, while the

Nifty SmallCap index gained 1.37 per cent during the session. Sectorally, banking stocks led the rally, with the Nifty PSU Bank, Nifty Private Bank and Nifty Bank indices outperforming the broader market. On the other hand, the Nifty IT, Nifty FMCG and Nifty Healthcare indices lagged behind, though they also ended with gains. Meanwhile, Rupee traded strongly positive near 95.22, gaining around 0.45 per cent, as improving sentiment around the US-Iran conflict supported risk assets and eased pressure on crude oil prices.

# ‘India’s Steel Sector Focuses On Sustainable Growth’

New Delhi,25/5: India’s steel sector is now entering a new phase where growth is no longer measured solely in volume, but also in sustainability, reflecting a deeper evolution in industrial priorities, according to an article in the Kuwaiti media. The country’s proposed National Steel Policy 2025 targets an increase in crude steel capacity to 400 million tons by 2035-36, up from around 168 million tons currently, which firmly outlines the ambitious expansion plans ahead, the report in The Times Kuwait said. This reflects the rapid pace at which the infrastructure development, urban growth and manufacturing base are being strengthened, it added. Meeting these targets will require massive investments, estimated at approximately \$183.41 billion. Such capital inflows are expected to energise the entire value chain, from mining and transportation to processing and exports, driving widespread industrial momentum,



the article pointed out. It also highlighted that the steel industry already contributes about 2.5 per cent to GDP and supports nearly 2.8 million jobs. With expansion plans in motion, employment is projected to grow significantly, potentially creating over 3 million additional jobs by 2035-36 and reinforcing the sector’s socio-economic importance. Parallel to this growth, a structured path toward reducing emissions is

being implemented. The policy aims to bring down emissions intensity to 2 metric tons of carbon dioxide per ton of finished steel by 2035-36, compared to the current level of around 2.65 tons, the article observes. It underscores that this transition is crucial, given that steel production accounts for roughly 10 to 12 per cent of the country’s total carbon emissions. Reducing this footprint aligns

with India’s broader commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2070. To meet these environmental goals, cleaner production methods are gaining traction. Gas-based steelmaking is being promoted as a viable alternative to coal-heavy processes, offering a pathway to significantly lower emissions. At the same time, the industry is increasingly embracing scrap-based production, signalling a shift towards circular economy principles. Recycling and reuse are becoming central strategies, helping to conserve raw materials while reducing environmental impact. Technology and infrastructure development will play a decisive role in this transition. Expanding gas pipeline networks, ensuring energy availability and strengthening industrial systems are essential to support cleaner and more efficient steel production across the country, the article added.

# Indian Oil Firms Still Losing Rs 600 Crore A Day Due To High Crude Prices

New Delhi,25/5: Government-owned oil marketing companies — Indian Oil, Hindustan Petroleum and Bharat Petroleum — are still losing around Rs 600 crore a day despite the increase in petrol and diesel prices announced on May 25, a senior government official said on Monday. This is the fourth increase in the prices of the two fuels over the last 10 days. The oil companies raised the price of petrol by Rs 2.61 a litre and that of diesel by Rs 2.71 per litre. The increase takes the cumulative rise in petrol and diesel prices to nearly Rs 7.50 a litre after daily revisions resumed following a prolonged freeze. “If you look at the global level, the price increase is in the range of 22 per cent for motor spirit (petrol) and 27 per cent for high-speed diesel (HSD),” Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum, Sujata Sharma, said. “But in India, the hike is

much less. For petrol, it is 7.7 per cent and 8.6 per cent for HSD. But before increasing the prices, the government undertook all the possible measures. The government has reduced excise duty on petrol and diesel by Rs 10 per litre, resulting in a revenue impact of Rs 14,000 crore,” she said. Even after taking all these steps, the oil companies were piling up losses of Rs 1,000 crore a day. “After the price rise, it has reduced, but it is still slightly less than Rs 600 crore per day,” she pointed out. Despite the latest hike in retail prices of auto fuels, the under-recoveries of oil marketing companies remain stubbornly high due to increasing losses in domestic LPG sales and high crude prices, ICRA Senior Vice President and co-group head, corporate ratings, Prashant Vasishth, said. The average price at which refiners import oil increased to \$107.84 in May

against \$69.01 in February before the war broke out, data compiled by the Ministry’s Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell showed. The benchmark Brent crude remained volatile in April, as the Iran war raged. It dropped to around \$90 a barrel on April 17 after a temporary ceasefire was announced, but hit \$126.41 a barrel on April 30 on fears of renewed hostilities. The monthly average works out to around \$117 a barrel. Retail petrol and diesel prices in India have remained largely unchanged since early April 2022, which reduced the profit margins of the public sector oil companies. Meeting domestic market requirements remains a priority for the government, and the oil companies will continue to source crude, which is technically and commercially fitting for their refineries, Sharma added.

# Gold, Silver Rise Up To 2 Pc Amid Softer Dollar And Easing Crude Prices

Mumbai,25/5: Gold and silver prices traded higher on Monday, rising up to nearly 2 per cent, supported by a weaker US dollar and softer crude oil prices as investors assessed prospects of progress in US-Iran peace negotiations. On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold futures (June 5) were trading 0.36 per cent or Rs 566 higher at Rs 1,59,245 at 10:48 am. The yellow metal touched an intraday high of Rs 1,59,500, up 0.51 per cent or Rs 821 from the previous close of Rs 1,58,679. It recorded an intraday low of Rs 1,59,014, reflecting a gain of 0.21 per cent or Rs 335. Meanwhile, silver futures (July 3) traded higher, surging nearly 2 per cent or Rs 5,400 to hit an intraday high of Rs 2,77,245 so far. At the last count, the white metal was trading at Rs 2,76,427, up 1.7 per cent or Rs 4,581. It recorded an intraday low of Rs 2,75,428, still higher by 1.31 per cent or Rs 3,582. Silver and gold had earlier opened at Rs 2,76,683 and Rs 1,59,150, respectively, on the commodity exchange. According to commodity market experts, MCX gold continued to trade above the Rs 1,59,000 mark with a cautious-to-mildly



positive bias. “Immediate resistance is seen in the Rs 1,59,500-Rs 1,60,000 range, while a sustained breakout could push prices towards Rs 1,61,000. On the downside, support is placed around the Rs 1,58,000-Rs 1,57,500 levels,” they said. They further said that MCX silver was also holding firm above the Rs 2,76,000 mark amid ongoing volatility, adding

that a sustained move above Rs 2,77,000 may support further recovery towards the Rs 2,79,000-Rs 2,80,000 zone, while support is seen near Rs 2,73,000. “Safe-haven demand and geopolitical developments continue to influence the direction of precious metals,” the experts noted. In the international market too, precious metals traded higher,

with COMEX gold rising 0.75 per cent to \$4,557.30 per ounce. COMEX silver was trading over 2 per cent higher at \$78.015. In addition, global crude oil prices declined sharply, with international benchmark Brent crude falling 6 per cent to \$97.16 a barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude tanked more than 6 per cent to \$90.33.

## "She is not here to please you": Kangana Ranaut shuts down critics of Aishwarya Rai Bachchan's Cannes looks

Actor Kangana Ranaut has come out to show support for Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, who recently turned heads at the Cannes Film Festival 2026. In a strong-worded Instagram story, Kangana showed great admiration for Aishwarya. Calling out the critics, the 'Queen' star wrote, "Fashion and style is a self-expression, it is one's own interpretation of life and their attitude, no woman owes anything to anyone, Ash looks great!! Those of you who want to see her any other way, why don't you show what you got?? She is not here to please you, she is glorious, if you are not used to seeing older women on red carpets, get used to them now. Thanks." Along with her message, Kangana also shared a picture from Aishwarya Rai's Day 1 look, when she opted for Amit Aggarwal's custom sculptural gown. Aishwarya Rai made her much-awaited return to Cannes with a stunning appearance on the red carpet. For the first day, she chose a gorgeous Amit Aggarwal ensemble. For this year's appearance, Amit Aggarwal designed Luminara, a couture creation centred around the idea of light in motion. Structured wing-like extensions emerging from the shoulders evoke movement and propulsion, while contouring the body with architectural sharpness. Rendered in an abyss blue, the couture piece references cosmic depth and the infinite nature of light travelling through space. For L'Oréal Paris' annual "Lights On Women's Worth" gala, Aishwarya chose a romantic blush pink ensemble by Sophie Couture. Appearing on the French Riviera, the Cannes veteran embraced soft glamour in a custom baby pink gown featuring a heart-shaped fitted silk silhouette paired with a flowing chiffon cape and embellished floral detailing.



## Ram Charan apologises after calling Jasprit Bumrah a footballer

Ram Charan has apologised to Indian cricketer Jasprit Bumrah after mistakenly referring to him as a footballer during an event of 'Peddi' in Bhopal. The actor's back-to-back slip-ups at the event have quickly gone viral on social media, triggering widespread reactions online. The Bhopal event for the upcoming film was held on Saturday and featured AR Rahman, Janhvi Kapoor and the rest of the film's cast and crew. During an interactive session, Ram Charan was asked to describe some of India's leading cricket stars in a few words. The actor reportedly described Sachin Tendulkar's journey as a "long, legendary run", called MS Dhoni "calm and cool", referred to Rohit Sharma as "everybody's man", and used the word "Fire" for Virat Kohli. However, when asked about Jasprit Bumrah, Ram Charan said, "Jasprit Bumrah ji, I am your biggest fan. I love football ap football ko itne aage bada rahe ho. Love you," as per online videos on X. Clips of the moment have spread rapidly across social media platforms, with users reacting through memes and jokes. The actor later acknowledged the error and posted an apology on X. Taking to the platform, Ram Charan wrote, "Uff... I'm genuinely so forgetful with names sometimes. Apologies to @Jaspritbumrah93 Ji for the mix-up - it was a genuine human error in the middle of all the excitement and the crowd." He added, "I truly respect you and I am a huge fan of your game. You make every Indian feel proud when you consistently put batsmen on back foot." Meanwhile, the trailer of 'Peddi' has recently been released, showcasing Ram Charan in multiple sporting avatars including cricket, wrestling and sprinting. Directed by Buchi Babu Sana, the Telugu film also stars Janhvi Kapoor, Boman Irani and Divyendu Sharma in key roles. Produced by Vriddhi Cinemas under producer Venkata Satish Kiluru, the film's music has been composed by AR Rahman.

## SPORTS

### Dev Kumar Meena And Kuldeep Kumar Set New Benchmark In Men's Pole Vault

Ranchi, 25/5: Madhya Pradesh's talented athletes—Dev Kumar Meena and Kuldeep Kumar raised the bar to 5.45m to set national record in the men's pole vault on the penultimate day of the 29th National Senior Athletics Federation Competition here in Ranchi. Both the athletes bettered the previous national men's pole vault record of 5.41m, but Dev Kumar Meena walked away with the gold medal while Kuldeep Kumar settled for silver (on countdown). The previous record of 5.41m was set recently by Kuldeep Kumar in Bhubaneswar. The gold and silver medalists have also achieved the Commonwealth Games qualification mark of 5.25m. The meet record was 5.35m set last year by Dev Kumar Meena. Training partners and close friends, Dev Kumar Meena and Kuldeep Kumar next goal is to repeat their performance at the international level. "It was a good day for us and we will continue to push each other to further raise the bar in future," jubilant Dev Kumar Meena said after winning the gold on Sunday. If the



spotlight was on sprinters on Saturday, the main attraction on Sunday was field events. At the long jump pit, Murali Sreeshankar won the gold medal with a jump of 8.08m which was better than the CWG qualification mark of 8.05m. Sarvesh Anil Kushare of Maharashtra dominated the men's high jump. His gold-medal winning performance of 2.28m was better than CWG mark of

2.22m. Kushare also equalled the meet record set by Tejaswin Shankar. He also raised the bar to 2.30m to improve the national record of 2.29m but missed all three attempts. Aadarsh Ram, winner of silver medal, also achieved the qualification mark of CWG (2.22m). The men's 110m hurdles was dominated by Tejas Ashok Shirse representing Reliance. His gold-winning

time was 13.50 seconds. He improved his own meet record of 13.61 secs but missed out to win a CWG berth. The qualification time was 13.39 secs. Earlier in the morning session, Ravina representing Haryana won the gold medal in the women's 10,000m race walk with a time of 44:29.66 seconds which was better than the Commonwealth Games qualification time of 44:44.58 seconds.

### It Wasn't My Decision': Yash Dayal Breaks Silence on IPL 2026 Absence Amid POCSO Case Storm

NEW DELHI, 25/5: Yash Dayal has finally addressed his absence from IPL 2026, saying the decision to stay away from the tournament was "not a personal decision." The Royal Challengers Bengaluru pacer made the remarks while speaking on a YouTube show amid ongoing legal controversies surrounding him. Dayal's comments have sparked fresh discussion after RCB earlier stated that he was unavailable due to a "personal situation." Speaking candidly about the situation, Dayal said he misses being part of the IPL and watching his teammates from home has been emotionally

difficult. "Opting out of this season wasn't my personal decision," Dayal said. "The decision is always made by the authority. I don't know what the reason behind RCB's decision was." The statement appears to contradict the earlier explanation offered by RCB's director of cricket Mo Bobat, who had suggested the break was taken in the best interests of both the player and the franchise. Despite missing the season, Dayal claimed his relationship with the franchise remains intact. He pointed out that RCB retained him and did not sign a replacement, which he believes

reflects the management's trust in him. "I have been in conversations with the management, coach and Dinesh Karthik. The connection hasn't broken," he said. Dayal added that there is "no communication gap" between him and the franchise. According to reports, a case involving allegations of sexual exploitation under the pretext of marriage was registered in Ghaziabad. He reportedly received protection from arrest from the Allahabad High Court in that matter. In another case registered in Jaipur, involving allegations linked to a minor under the

POCSO Act, the Rajasthan High Court reportedly declined to grant him relief from arrest, citing the seriousness of the allegations. The accusations are under legal scrutiny, and investigations remain ongoing. Reports claim the complaint filed in Jaipur alleged that the minor came in contact with Dayal during an IPL match and was subjected to repeated abuse over two years. The complaint also reportedly accused the cricketer of emotional manipulation and making false assurances related to a cricket career. Dayal has not publicly responded in detail to the specific allegations.

### Dharmendra to Receive Posthumous Padma Vibhushan, Hema Malini Calls It an 'Emotional Moment'

Veteran Bollywood icon Dharmendra will be honoured with the prestigious Padma Vibhushan posthumously, months after his passing in November 2025. Actor and wife Hema Malini is currently in New Delhi to receive India's second-highest civilian award on his behalf during the Padma Awards 2026 ceremony hosted by President Droupadi Murmu. The legendary actor, fondly known as the "He-Man" of Hindi cinema, was announced as a Padma Vibhushan awardee earlier this year for his immense contribution to Indian cinema spanning several decades. Speaking from Delhi ahead of the ceremony, Hema Malini described the occasion as deeply emotional for the family. "It's an emotional moment for me. Ahana is with me, Esha wanted to come but could not make it here. The entire family is happy. Sunny, Bobby, everyone is aware of this and it's a big moment for all of us," she shared. Dharmendra passed away



in November 2025 at the age of 89, just weeks before his 90th birthday. His death marked the end of a remarkable era in Indian cinema, leaving fans and film personalities across the country heartbroken. Following his demise, Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tribute to the legendary actor, calling him an "iconic film personality" admired for his versatility, humility and warmth. Dharmendra delivered several unforgettable performances throughout his career and became one of the most

loved stars in Bollywood history. From action-packed blockbusters to emotional family dramas and romantic classics, his work shaped generations of Indian cinema lovers. His legacy also continues through his family, including actors Sunny Deol, Bobby Deol, Esha Deol and Ahana Deol. The Padma Awards 2026 ceremony has already generated massive attention online, with fans celebrating Dharmendra's enduring influence on Indian films and popular culture.

### "It is great honour": Padma Shri awardees Dharmiklal Chunilal Pandya, Sunita Godbole, Tripti Mukherjee express gratitude ahead of Rashtrapati Bhavan ceremony

New Delhi: Ahead of the Padma Awards ceremony scheduled to be held at Rashtrapati Bhavan in the national capital on Monday, several Padma Shri awardees expressed gratitude and pride and disbelief at being recognised with one of the country's highest civilian honours. On being conferred with the Padma Shri 2026 in the field of arts, Dharmiklal Chunilal Pandya told ANI, "I am very happy to receive the Padma Shri award. The Government of India has appreciated the hard work I have done over so many years. I have no words to express my gratitude. I began working at the age of 25 and, even today, at 94, I continue to work." Kantha embroidery artist Tripti Mukherjee also expressed much

delight and added, "... I am delighted to have been honoured with the Padma Shri. This award has brought joy not only to me but also to those around me." Ethnomusicologist Dr Lars-Christian Koch, who is also set to receive the honorary Padma Shri in the field of arts, said, "It is a great honour to receive this award. I have deep love for India. I lived in India for a long time, and I never expected such recognition, so it came as a wonderful surprise. My connection with India began through learning Indian music and engaging in social work in Germany to promote Indian culture. My teacher from West Bengal, introduced me to Indian culture, particularly Bengali traditions, and this profoundly

changed my life and personality." On the other hand, Dr Sunita Godbole, who will be conferred with Padma Shri 2026 in the field of medicine, spoke to ANI and described it as "deeply satisfied." "The award has been given in the field of medicine. Other than health work I have also been involved in women's organisations. I am not just a doctor but a social worker. The work we have done will now be recognised more widely. Dantewada, once infamous for Naxalism, will now be known for healthcare, education, employment, environmental protection, forest development, and forest-based livelihoods.