

Dumani Mail

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Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth Appointed New Army Chief, To Take Charge On June 30

New Delhi: Lieutenant General Dhiraj Seth has been appointed as the next Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), the government said in a statement on Saturday. Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth, presently serving as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff, will assume charge as the next Army chief on June 30, 2026. The present Chief of the Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi, will retire from service on the same day. Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth, an alumnus of National Defence Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla, was commissioned into the Armoured Corps in December 1986. In a career spanning over four decades, he has had a distinguished military career with extensive experience across operational, strategic, capability development and institutional domains, contributing significantly to the Indian Army's combat effectiveness and long-term transformation. He has commanded in diverse operational environments ranging from an Armoured Regiment in the Desert Sector,



an Armoured Brigade in the Western Theatre, and a Counter-Insurgency Force in Jammu & Kashmir. As a Lieutenant General, he commanded the Sudarshan Chakra Corps, one of the Indian Army's premier strike formations. He also served as General Officer Commanding, Delhi zone, overseeing national and international military engagements and ceremonial responsibilities. The decorated officer also earned a rare distinction of commanding two operational Army Commands and providing strategic oversight across critical theatres for over a period of 2.6 years. Over the years, he held several assignments that influenced operational planning, force management and capability development. Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth is widely recognised for his contributions to force modernisation, shaping its modernisation trajectory, capability roadmap and long-term force structuring initiatives. He is an accomplished military professional, having secured top positions in courses of instruction. Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth graduated from the Higher Command Course and the National Defence College, and also went to attend the prestigious Command & Staff Course in Paris, reflecting his broad strategic outlook and understanding of contemporary military affairs.

Trump, PM Modi Set To Hold Bilateral Discussions On June 17: White House

Washington: US President Donald Trump will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other world leaders during next week's G7 Summit in France, with discussions expected to focus on economic growth, supply chains, Artificial Intelligence (AI), investment partnerships and a range of global security challenges, the White House said Saturday. "President Trump will meet with G7 leaders to address key issues of shared importance, including economic growth and development, supply chain resilience, illegal immigration, and Artificial Intelligence," a senior administration official said ahead of the presidential visit to France next week. On Wednesday, June 17, Trump is scheduled to hold a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Modi before joining a working lunch attended by G7 leaders, outreach partners and technology executives, the



senior administration official said. This would be the first bilateral meeting between President Trump and Prime Minister Modi after last year's successful 'Operation Sindoor' against Pakistan. The senior administration official did not provide any other details about the nature of the meeting between the two leaders. Trump is scheduled to depart Washington on Monday and

arrive in France later that day for the summit. His programme includes bilateral meetings with French President Emmanuel Macron, the Emir of Qatar, the President of the United Arab Emirates, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and PM Modi. According to the White House, Trump intends to push an economic agenda centred on investment and development

partnerships. "The President will reframe the conversation around development to focus on investment partnerships that are mutually beneficial for both investor and recipient nation," a senior administration official said. According to the official, the administration plans to focus on critical minerals and supply chain security, issues that have gained prominence amid

growing geopolitical competition and concerns over dependence on a limited number of suppliers. Trump will work with G7 partners "to boost critical mineral supply chain resilience, driving economic security, and strengthen responses to illegal immigration and drug smuggling," the official said. Artificial intelligence is expected to be one of the summit's key themes. The summit schedule includes several working sessions involving G7 leaders, invited outreach partners and business leaders. Trump is expected to participate in discussions with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, meetings involving Middle Eastern leaders and a working lunch with global technology chief executives focused on innovation and AI. The White House said the summit would provide an opportunity to advance US economic and strategic priorities while strengthening cooperation with allies and partners.

Odisha CM Distributes Smartphones To Over 72,000 Anganwadi Workers

Bhubaneswar: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Friday distributed smartphones to more than 72,000 Anganwadi workers as part of a major digital initiative aimed at strengthening grassroots childcare services in the state. The programme was held in Bhubaneswar to mark two years of the state government in office, where the Chief Minister also handed over devices to 2,802 supervisors and 338 block coordinators. The initiative is expected to improve service delivery and enable real-time digital monitoring of childcare and nutrition programmes at the field level. The distribution of smartphones will help streamline data collection, enhance transparency, and improve coordination among frontline workers engaged in the Integrated Child



Development Services (ICDS) scheme. On the occasion, Majhi also laid the foundation stone for a new rest facility named 'Janashraya' at Unit-II in Bhubaneswar. He further launched several infrastructure projects for the capital city as part of the government's second anniversary celebrations. Among the major announcements was the proposed 20-storey Janashraya Bhavan on Janpath, which will provide safe and affordable short-term accommodation for people visiting Bhubaneswar from different parts of the state. The project, estimated to cost Rs 874 crore, will have facilities to accommodate around 2,000 people with modern amenities. The state government also unveiled a series of urban development initiatives aimed at improving public infrastructure and civic services in the capital city as part of the anniversary programme.

IAF AN-32 Bursts Into Flames After Landing In Assam's Jorhat

Guwahati: An Indian Air Force (IAF) AN-32 transport aircraft reportedly caught fire after landing at Assam's Jorhat on Saturday, triggering emergency response measures at the airbase, officials said. Initial reports indicated that the incident occurred immediately after the aircraft touched down, with flames and thick smoke seen billowing from the aircraft. Airport and IAF emergency teams rushed to the spot and launched firefighting operations to contain the blaze. The extent of damage to the aircraft and

information regarding casualties were not immediately available. Authorities are expected to order a detailed inquiry into the incident to ascertain the exact cause of the explosion. The Soviet-origin AN-32 is a twin-engine tactical transport aircraft that has served as a key workhorse of the IAF for decades, particularly in difficult terrains and high-altitude sectors in the Northeast and along the Himalayan frontier. The latest incident has once again drawn attention to the aircraft's operational history. In June

2019, an IAF AN-32 carrying 13 personnel went missing after taking off from Jorhat Air Force Station for Mechuka in Arunachal Pradesh. After an extensive search operation, the wreckage was located in the mountainous terrain of Arunachal Pradesh, and all 13 personnel on board were declared dead. Another AN-32 disappeared over the Bay of Bengal in July 2016 while flying from Chennai to Port Blair with 29 personnel on board. Despite one of India's largest search operations,

the aircraft could not be located for years, and all those on board were presumed dead. Debris linked to the aircraft was eventually identified in 2024. The AN-32 fleet has also witnessed other accidents over the years, including crashes in Arunachal Pradesh and operational incidents at military airfields. Officials are yet to release an official statement on Saturday's Jorhat incident. Further details are awaited as rescue, assessment and investigation efforts continue.



Japan PM Heads To Europe For G7 Summit

Tokyo: Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi on Saturday departed for her first trip to Europe since taking office in October. She is going to visit the UK, Italy and attend the G7 Summit in France. In the UK and Italy, Takaichi will meet the respective Prime Ministers Kier Starmer and Georgia Meloni and discuss issues such as the situation in East Asia, the Middle East, and Ukraine, while also engaging in discussions with the leaders of both countries to strengthen bilateral cooperation in security, AI, quantum technology, space, semiconductors, and offshore wind power, with a view toward advancing cutting-edge technology development and enhancing



the resilience of supply chains. "This will be my first G7 Summit, but at the Evian Summit, in addition to addressing geopolitical crises in the Middle East, Ukraine, and the Indo-Pacific, I intend to engage in frank discussions among leaders on urgent issues—such as cooperation toward energy security and market stabilization premised on free trade and the rule of law, taking into account the situation in the

Middle East, and strengthening the resilience of supply chains for critical minerals and the like—and to demonstrate our stance that the G7 will unite and lead the international community in addressing these global challenges." Takaichi noted on X. On the energy front, she is going to discuss collaborating with G7 partner nations to oppose and counter unjust export restrictions; advancing support for strengthening oil stockpiles in regions such as Asia and coordination with the IEA; and strengthening cooperation between oil-producing and consuming countries to neutralise coercive actions.

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ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ଓ ପରମ୍ପରାର ଅନନ୍ୟ ପ୍ରତୀକ ରଜ ପର୍ବ ଅବସରରେ ରାଜ୍ୟବାସୀ ଭାଇଭଉଣୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା ଓ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ । ଓଡ଼ିଆ ସଂସ୍କୃତିର ଏହି ମହାନ ପର୍ବ ଆମ ମାଟି ମା'ର ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱ, ମାତୃଶକ୍ତିର ସମ୍ମାନ ଏବଂ କୃଷିଭିତ୍ତିକ ସଭ୍ୟତାକୁ ପିଢ଼ି ପରେ ପିଢ଼ି ସମୃଦ୍ଧ କରିଆସିଛି ।

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ଗାନ୍ଧୀନୀ
(ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ମାଝୀ)
ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

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Gundicha Temple Works Reviewed by Chief Administrator Dr. Arvind Padhee Ahead of Rath Yatra



Puri: In view of the upcoming Rath Yatra, Chief Administrator of the Shri Jagannath Temple Administration, Dr. Arvind Padhee, inspected the ongoing repair and beautification works at Gundicha Temple. During his visit, he directed officials to ensure that all projects are completed within the stipulated timeline.

Repair and renovation activities are currently being carried out at an accelerated pace. The administration aims to complete all essential works before Rath Yatra so that devotees can enjoy improved facilities during their visit.

EAST COAST RAILWAY OBSERVES INTERNATIONAL LEVEL CROSSING AWARENESS DAY 2026



"Someone is Waiting for You" – ECoR Reinforces Safety Message at Railway Level Crossings Bhubaneswar, June 10, 2026: East Coast Railway (ECoR) observed International Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD) on 9th June 2026 across its jurisdiction with a series of awareness programmes aimed at promoting safe behaviour at railway level crossings and preventing accidents caused by unsafe road user practices.

sessions, awareness rallies and street plays, road users were educated on the need to obey warning signals and gate barriers, stop before crossing railway tracks, avoid trespassing and refrain from using mobile phones or earphones while approaching railway crossings.

As part of the observance, extensive safety awareness campaigns were conducted at level crossing gates, railway stations, educational institutions and nearby habitations across the zone. Railway officials, safety counsellors, Civil Defence volunteers and field staff interacted with motorists, pedestrians, students and local residents to spread awareness about safe practices while crossing railway tracks and level crossings.

The observance reflects East Coast Railway's unwavering commitment to enhancing railway safety through public awareness, community participation and continuous safety initiatives. It also served as a reminder that safety at level crossings is a collective responsibility and that every responsible action contributes to safer journeys for all.

Paradip, (DMS)11/6 :- In a significant step towards strengthening disaster preparedness and emergency response capabilities, Paradip Port Authority (PPA), in collaboration with the 3rd Battalion of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Mundali, conducted a Multi-Agency Coordination Mock Drill at the Main Fire Station, Paradip Port.

The programme began with a tabletop exercise, during which Ramakanta Dash, Team Commander, NDRF, highlighted the importance of resource mapping, coordinated planning, and timely decision-making during emergencies. The session provided participants with an opportunity to review response procedures and discuss strategies for handling complex disaster scenarios.

Defunct Street Lights Plunge Khordha into Darkness; Accidents and Safety Concerns on the Rise



Khordha - 11/6 - The malfunctioning of street lights across several major roads, intersections, and market areas in Khordha town has become a matter of growing concern for residents, roads that are expected to remain illuminated at night are now shrouded in darkness due to the prolonged failure of numerous street lights, causing inconvenience and raising serious safety concerns for commuters.

According to local residents, many street lights in key parts of the town have remained non-functional for several months. As a result, large stretches of roads are left in darkness after sunset, forcing pedestrians as well as two-wheeler and four-wheeler drivers to travel under risky conditions.

and other obstructions become difficult to spot in the dark, often causing motorists to lose control of their vehicles. Residents claim that several accidents have occurred in recent weeks due to poor visibility on the roads. Senior citizens are among the worst affected. A local resident stated that travelling at night was much safer when the street lights were functioning properly. However, with many roads now remaining

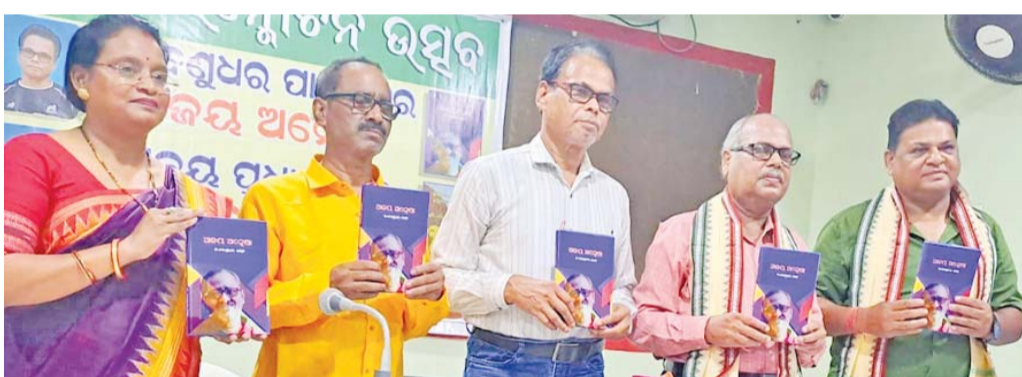
dark, elderly people feel hesitant to step out after sunset, particularly when they need to visit hospitals or pharmacies during emergencies.

Women and students have also expressed concerns over their safety. Those returning home from workplaces, coaching centres, or tuition classes after dark often feel insecure while travelling through poorly lit roads. Residents fear that the prevailing darkness may encourage anti-social activities and compromise public safety. Locals further alleged that despite repeated complaints to the municipal authorities, the issue has not been resolved. In some places, the light poles remain intact but the bulbs are not functioning, while in other areas electrical faults have reportedly caused entire stretches of street lighting systems to remain out of service.

essential services such as street lighting are being neglected. The dark and poorly maintained roads, they say, create a negative impression among visitors entering the town. With the onset of the monsoon season, the problem is expected to worsen. Waterlogging on roads combined with poor visibility increases the risk of accidents significantly. The lack of lighting may also hamper the movement of emergency vehicles, including ambulances and fire services, during night hours. In view of the growing concerns, residents have urged the Khordha municipal council authority to immediately repair the non-functional street lights and establish a regular maintenance mechanism to ensure uninterrupted lighting across the town. Citizens and members of the intelligentsia have stressed that prompt action is essential to ensure public safety, improve urban infrastructure, and maintain the town's overall image. They have warned that continued negligence may lead to stronger public resentment in the days ahead.

'Ajaya Anwasha' and 'Kabitara Mahabhasha' Released in Puri

Balasure, June 11 (Krushna Kumar Mohanty): Two books, Kabitara Mahabhasha: Asmitara Ithasa, a critical work by senior writer Ajaya Pradhan, and Ajaya Anwasha, a study of Ajaya Pradhan's complete literary oeuvre authored by Dr. Benudhar Padhi, were released at a literary function held in two sessions at the Youth Hostel Auditorium, Puri.



In the first session, chaired by Dr. Baijayanti Nayak, Ajaya Anwasha was formally released.

Prof. Dr. Mathuranath Hota attended as the chief guest, while Dr. Benudhar Padhi delivered the keynote address and Dr. Dillip Kumar Swain participated as the

guest speaker. The speakers highlighted the background of Ajaya Pradhan's literary journey and discussed the distinctive features of his writings.

The second session was

presided over by Chinmaya Bibek. Dr. Benudhar Padhi attended as the chief guest, Dr. Bhagaban Jaisingh as the keynote speaker, and Dr. Pabitra Mohan Das as the guest

speaker. On this occasion, Ajaya Pradhan's critical volume 'Kabitara Mahabhasha: Asmitara Ithasa' was released, and the speakers shared their observations on the book and

its significance. The programme commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp before the idol of Lord Jagannath. Poet Ajaya Pradhan welcomed the guests to the dais, while Kamadeva Maharana proposed the vote of thanks.

Among those present were Dr. Kailash Chandra Tikayat Ray, Sharat Mishra, Minati Mishra, Dr. Sasmita Mishra, Dr. Ashok Mohanty, Krushnachandra Rath, Dr. Suchitra Rath, Bichitra Das, Jogeswar Paraharaj, Bipin Bihari Dalai, Shatrughna Sahu, and several friends, well-wishers, and family members of Ajaya Pradhan.

SBI, The Bell Organise Blood Donation Camp in Puri; 80 Units Collected

Puri: Marking the 71st Foundation Day of the State Bank and in view of the upcoming Rath Yatra, the State Bank's Regional Business Office, Puri, in association with voluntary organisation The Bell, organised a blood donation camp at the SBI Holiday Home here on Thursday.

The camp was inaugurated by Additional District Magistrate (Administration), Puri, Sarat Chandra Mohapatra, who attended as the chief guest. Addressing the gathering, he emphasised the importance of voluntary blood donation, stating that "a single drop of blood can save a precious life" and urged people to overcome their apprehensions and come forward to donate blood.

Regional Manager of SBI, Bharat Charan Sahu, attended as the guest of honour. Speaking on the occasion, Siddhartha Ray, president of The Bell, said that SBI has not only excelled



in customer service but has also set significant milestones in social responsibility initiatives over the past 71 years.

Among those present were SBI Puri Branch Chief Manager Hemanta Kumar Pradhan, Human Resources Manager of the Regional Office Jitendra Nayak, Additional Branch Manager Rajesh Kumar Sahu, and Additional Regional Human Resources Officer

Pratap Kumar Jena. The dignitaries distributed gifts and certificates to the blood donors in recognition of their contribution.

Senior SBI officials and volunteers of The Bell jointly coordinated the camp. The organisation's vice-president, Sukanta Kumar Panda, proposed the vote of thanks.

A total of 80 units of blood were collected during the camp.

Two arrested illegal human trafficking

Keonjhar : Keonjhar police arrested two persons allegedly have allured innocent adivasi adolescent boys and girls including 2 minor children of our area and trafficked & engaged them in Tamilnadu. This has confirmed by the police in a press release today.

Police arrested them after a complaint received from Herbal Nayak, state co ordinator, Bharatiya Human Right Council (BHRC), Odisha on June 1, 2026 in Anandpur police station of Keonjhar district. Police arrested them under different section including child labour act and juvenile justice act.

The accused are identified as Akhya Das (48) of Bhadrak and Sritam Jena (24) of Biridia village of Anandpur, Keonjhar.

According to the police it was alleged that both the acdd have allured innocent adivasi adolescent boys and girls including 2 minor children of our area and trafficked & engaged them in Tamilnadu, where neither they got healthy environment nor received promised salary amount. They were also harassed ,confined,and threatened. Instead of getting Rs 30,000 salary as they promised to pay they got only Rs3000 to 5000/-. The acdd persons also engaged a adivasi girl kuni Ho of Raipal in illegal ganja trading without her knowledge resulted her in Nayagah jail, police said. "As the offence is serious in nature, as per direction of SP ,Keonjhar, Anandpur Police has pro actively acted upon and able to arrest the accused successfully today" said Kamal Kumar Panda, SDPO Anandpur in a press release.

Chairperdon BHRC Purna Chandra Sahu said " after received information our team at tamilnadu track and rescue them. If police investigate the incident properly their involvement in many other similar cases will be come to know.

Paradip Port Conducts Multi-Agency Mock Drill with NDRF to Strengthen Disaster Response Preparedness



The exercise brought together emergency response teams from various government agencies, industrial units, and mutual aid partners operating in and around Paradip. The objective was to test preparedness levels, improve

coordination among stakeholders, and ensure a swift and effective response during emergencies such as cyclones, industrial accidents, fires, and other disaster situations. The programme began with a

tabletop exercise, during which Ramakanta Dash, Team Commander, NDRF, highlighted the importance of resource mapping, coordinated planning, and timely decision-making during

emergencies. The session provided participants with an opportunity to review response procedures and discuss strategies for handling complex disaster scenarios. The practical drill that followed simulated a range of emergency situations, including structural collapse and search-and-rescue operations, rope rescue techniques, road clearance following cyclone-related obstructions, industrial firefighting involving tank fire scenarios, and casualty management with medical evacuation. The exercise demonstrated how different agencies can work together

seamlessly to save lives, protect critical infrastructure, and restore normalcy during a crisis. Speaking on the occasion, Sanat Kumar Patel, Commandant, CISF, appreciated the efforts of all participating agencies and stressed the importance of regular drills in identifying gaps and enhancing preparedness. He noted that such exercises help build confidence and ensure that response teams remain ready to act effectively when real emergencies occur. thanked all stakeholders for their active participation and emphasized that disaster management is most effective when institutions work together as a coordinated network. He

observed that for a major industrial and maritime hub like Paradip, strong partnerships and continuous preparedness are essential for minimizing risks and ensuring public safety. The drill witnessed active participation from NDRF, CISF Fire Wing, Odisha State Fire Services, Odisha State Police, Indian Coast Guard, Intelligence Bureau, Dock Safety Department, and emergency response teams from key industrial establishments including IOCL, IFFCO, Paradeep Phosphates Limited, JSW Steel, Adani Wilmar, BPCL, HPCL, KICT, and PICT. The exercise was coordinated on-site by Akash Jaiswal,

Assistant Commandant, CISF Fire Wing. The programme was aty Security Officer (DC & PFSO), Assistant Director (Dock Safety), senior officials of Paradip Port Authority, representatives of participating industries, and members of various emergency response agencies. The successful conduct of the mock drill reflects Paradip Port Authority's continued commitment to safety, preparedness, and resilience. By regularly conducting such collaborative exercises, PPA aims to systems and ensure the safety of port personnel, industrial workers, and the surrounding community.

Anchalik Bikash Mancha Submits Five-Point Charter of Demands, Seeks Priority Employment for Local Youth

Khordha-12/6-A public hearing camp organized by M/s Shri Bajrang Power and Metalics Limited for obtaining environmental clearance for its proposed industrial project in Sahaspur under Bolgarh Tahasil, Khordha turned controversial on Thursday, as members of the Anchalik Bikash Mancha alleged that the hearing was reduced to a mere formality and failed to reflect the genuine opinions of the local people. The public hearing was held at the premises of the Gediapalli Revenue Inspector's Office in the presence of government officials, including the Sub-Collector of Khordha, Tahasildar Bolgarh, local elected representatives and officials from various departments. The company is proposing to establish a large industrial complex comprising 40,000 TPA Titanium Dioxide Pigment Plant, 120,000 TPA Sulphuric Acid Plant, 16,000 NM³/hr Producer Gas Plant, a 40,000 bricks-per-day Bricks Plant, and a 12.75 MW Co-generation Power Plant at Sahaspur village. However, even before the hearing commenced, concerns and opposition from sections of local

residents began surfacing. Members of the Anchalik Bikash Mancha alleged that the company had failed to adequately publicize the public hearing among affected villages. According to them, the notice was published only in a limited number of newspapers, preventing many residents from becoming aware of the event and its significance. Forum leaders claimed that a genuine public hearing should have involved extensive awareness campaigns, public announcements and consultations in all villages likely to be affected by the proposed project. Instead, they alleged, the company merely fulfilled procedural requirements without ensuring meaningful participation from the local community. The situation became more contentious when the forum accused the company of mobilizing people to the venue through local middlemen and brokers. According to the allegations, certain individuals were reportedly tasked with bringing people from different villages by offering various inducements and assurances. Some villagers



were allegedly told that their grievances relating to housing pattas, social security pensions, ration cards and other welfare-related issues would be addressed during the gathering. As a result, many people reportedly attended the meeting without fully understanding that it was an environmental public hearing related to the proposed industrial project. Forum representatives alleged that several attendees were transported to the venue in vehicles arranged by the company. The public hearing witnessed visible dissatisfaction among a section of participants. Members of the Anchalik

Bikash Mancha alleged that ordinary villagers were not given adequate opportunities to express their concerns and opinions, while individuals perceived to be supportive of the project were allowed to dominate the proceedings. This, they said, created resentment among residents who had come hoping to voice their views on the potential environmental and social impact of the proposed industries. Following the hearing, the Forum submitted a detailed five-point memorandum through the Sub-Collector, Khordha highlighting what it described as the genuine concerns and aspirations of the local population. The

foremost demand of the Forum was that local youth should be given priority in employment opportunities arising from the proposed industrial project. They argued that industries established on local land must directly benefit the people of the area by creating sustainable jobs for qualified local candidates. According to the Forum, employment generation remains one of the biggest expectations among villagers, and the company must provide a clear roadmap regarding recruitment policies. The second demand called for giving preference to local residents in transportation contracts, supply chains and other

business activities linked to the project. The Forum maintained that local entrepreneurs, vehicle owners and service providers should be allowed to participate in the economic activities generated by the industry instead of opportunities being monopolized by outside agencies. Another major demand was the formation of village-level committees in every affected village. These committees, the Forum suggested, should work as a bridge between the company and local communities, ensuring that development proposals are discussed transparently and implemented according to the needs and priorities of residents. The memorandum also demanded an impartial inquiry into what the Forum described as attempts by the company to influence public opinion before the hearing. It alleged that several activities undertaken in recent months—including road works, temple-related projects and other development initiatives—were strategically carried out to create favourable public sentiment ahead of the environmental clearance

process. The Forum further alleged that in some villages roads had been dug up and development works had remained incomplete for months, causing inconvenience to residents. It claimed that such activities were projected as welfare measures but ultimately failed to address the real concerns of the people. In another serious allegation, Forum members claimed that certain anti-social elements were being used to create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation in the region. They demanded immediate intervention by the administration to ensure that villagers could express their views freely without pressure or influence from any quarter. Speaking to media persons that after the submission of the memorandum, Anchalik Bikash Mancha Convener Biranchi Narayan Samal said that development should not come at the cost of the rights and interests of local communities. He emphasized that while industrialization can contribute to economic growth, it must be accompanied by transparency, environmental safeguards, employment


opportunities for local youth and respect for public opinion. Samal, warned that if the administration and company authorities fail to address the five-point charter of demands and take appropriate corrective measures, the people of the region would be compelled to intensify their movement in the coming days. He asserted that the Forum would continue to mobilize public support to protect the interests of affected villages. The public hearing and the subsequent memorandum have now become a major talking point across the Bolgarh region. While supporters of industrial development argue that the project could bring investment and employment to the area, opponents insist that public concerns must be addressed before any final approvals are granted. With emotions running high and local expectations growing, all eyes are now on the district administration and the company management to see how they respond to the demands raised by the Forum and whether a consensus can be reached between development goals and community interests.

Family Seeks Security for Rakesh Pattnaik Following Allegations Against Bapi Sarkhel



Paradip :- Amid the ongoing controversy surrounding the bomb attack on the residence of Paradip Municipality Chairman Basant Biswal, the family of businessman and labour leader Rakesh Kumar Pattnaik has sought police protection, citing concerns over his safety. Earlier, leaders and supporters from various political parties, along with local residents, had met the Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP), Paradip, demanding that Arindam Sarkhel alias Bapi Sarkhel be brought under the ambit of investigation in connection with the alleged conspiracy behind the attack. The following day, Bapi Sarkhel reportedly addressed the media and claimed that the campaign against him was a conspiracy. He also alleged that Rakesh Pattnaik had played a vital role in mobilising people against him and described him as a criminal. Responding to these allegations, Rakesh Pattnayak

held a press conference in which he rejected the accusations and made several counter-allegations against Bapi Sarkhel. He claimed that Sarkhel had, in the past, falsely implicated him in criminal cases and attempted to tarnish his reputation. Pattnaik further alleged that due to business rivalry and personal animosity, Bapi Sarkhel and Bapu Parida had subjected him to repeated harassment, including conspiracies and attempts to physically harm him. Pattnaik also referred to previous criminal cases in which, according to him, both individuals had been arrested and jailed in connection with various incidents in Paradip. Expressing apprehension over her husband's safety, Advocate Bandita Subhadarshini Pattnaik met Paradip Additional Superintendent of Police Jagatsinghpur, seeking adequate security for Pattnaik. R known in the region as a businessman, labour leader, a comes amid escalating tensions following the exchange


 E-Mail I.D. - eepwdcuttack@gmail.com
 Tel./ Fax No. (0671)-2304128
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
CUTTACK (R&B) DIVISION NO. I: CUTTACK
 GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
 (e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE)
Bid Identification No. S.E. CTC(R&B)-11 of 2026-27
TENDER CALL NOTICE
 1 The Superintending Engineer, Cuttack (R&B) Division No. I, Cuttack on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites on Percentage rate basis bid in **Single cover system** in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractor for Building works as mentioned below.
 2. No. of Work :- **01 No.**
 3. Nature of work :- **Building work**
 4. Class of Contractor :- **"D" & "C" Class**
 5. Tender Paper Cost :- **Rs.6000/- (Online)**
 6. Available of bid documents in the :- **From 18/06/2026 to 5PM of 24/06/2026 website**
 7. Date of Opening of Bid :- **11AM of 25/06/2026**
 8. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum/ corrigendum/ cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.
 (Er. Md. Shahbaz)
 Superintending Engineer,
 Cuttack (R&B) Division No. I
34001/341/2627

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, RANPUR
 NAYAGARH (ODISHA), PIN-752026
 e-Mail : eoranpumac.ranpur@gmail.com
 Tender Call Notice No. 1636 dt. 11.06.2026
 E- Procurement Notice No. : **RNP NAC - 03/2026-27**

1	Name of the Work	: Individual Civil Construction as per DTCN
2	No. of Works	: 09 Nos.
3	Value of Work	: As per DTCN
4	Class of Contractor	: As per DTCN
5	Period of Completion	: As per DTCN
6	Date of Publication	: 19.06.2026
7	Date and Time of availability of document in the portal	: From Dt. 19.06.2026 at 11 AM to Dt. 29.06.2026 up to 5 PM
8	Last Date/Time for receipt of bids in portal	: Dt. 29.06.2026 up to 5 PM
9	Date and Time of opening Bid	: Dt. 30.06.2026 at 11.00 AM
10	Name and address of the officer inviting bid	: Sd/- Executive officer, NAC Ranpur

Further details can be seen from e-Procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>

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 Executive Officer
 NAC, Ranpur

Excise department seizes 52 Kg Ganja in Major Anti-Drug Crackdown

Khordha :- In a significant breakthrough against the illegal narcotics trade, the excise department successfully busted two separate ganja smuggling operations in Khordha, seizing a total of 52 kilograms of contraband cannabis and arresting 6 persons allegedly involved in the interstate drug trafficking network. Two vehicles used for transporting the narcotics and 4 mobile phones were also seized during the operation. The team raids, carried out by teams from the Khordha and Begunia excise stations, are being viewed as one of the major successes of the district administration's ongoing campaign against illegal drug trafficking. Officials estimate the market value of the seized ganja at approximately ₹5.20 lakh. According to official sources, the excise department had recently received reliable



intelligence inputs regarding the transportation of large quantities of ganja from Kandhamal district towards Bhubaneswar through Khordha. Acting on the information, senior officers formulated a detailed strategy and deployed special surveillance teams at key points along national highways and major transit routes. Vehicles passing through the suspected corridors were subjected to rigorous checking in an effort to intercept the illegal consignment. The first breakthrough came near Pitapalli on National

Highway-57. During a routine surveillance operation, excise officials intercepted a suspicious Maruti car bearing registration number OD-02-CC-7356. On conducting a thorough search of the vehicle, officials discovered 30 kilograms of ganja cleverly concealed inside the car. Three mobile phones suspected to have been used for coordinating the transportation and delivery of the narcotics were also seized. The accused identified as Subhen Baghar (20) Salim Hati (25) and Surendra Kanhar (35),

were immediately taken into custody. During preliminary interrogation, investigators reportedly learned that the accused had procured the ganja from Kandhamal and were transporting it to Bhubaneswar for distribution among various dealers and consumers. The seizure provided investigators with crucial leads regarding the movement of narcotics through the district. While the investigation into the first case was underway, the excise department received another tip-off indicating that a second

consignment of ganja was being transported through Daltola Chhak under Khordha Sadar Police Station limits. Without wasting any time, a team from the Begunia excise station rushed to the location and established a checking point to monitor incoming vehicles. After a brief wait, officials intercepted a Maruti Suzuki Alto bearing registration number OD-07-BA-0621. A detailed search of the vehicle led to the recovery of 22 kilograms of ganja hidden inside the car. One mobile phone was also seized from the accused persons. Three individuals, identified as Subrat Digal (30) Sudhir Digal (36) and Sridhar Digal (40) were arrested on the spot. Investigators suspect that the accused were part of a larger supply chain engaged in transporting narcotics from interior districts to urban markets. The manner

in which the contraband was being moved has raised concerns about the existence of an organized trafficking network operating across district boundaries. With the two seizures combined, the excise department confiscated 52 kilograms of ganja, 2 vehicles, and 4 mobile phones. Cases have been registered against all six accused under the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. The accused have been produced before the court, and further investigation is continuing. Officials are now examining whether the arrested individuals were acting independently or were part of a larger interstate or inter-district drug syndicate. The seized mobile phones are being analyzed to identify possible links with suppliers, transporters, financiers, and buyers connected to the

illegal trade. Investigators believe the digital evidence could help uncover a wider network involved in narcotics trafficking. Addressing a press conference at the District Excise Office in Khordha on Friday, Superintendent of Excise, Khordha, Ms. Sumati Tripathy described the operation as a major achievement in the department's ongoing drive against narcotic substances. She stated that the excise department remains committed to eliminating illegal drug trafficking from the district and will continue conducting intensive raids and surveillance operations. "The department has adopted a zero-tolerance approach towards narcotics-related crimes. Strict legal action will be taken against anyone found involved in the transportation, storage, or sale of illegal drugs. Our efforts will continue with

greater intensity to protect the younger generation from the harmful effects of addiction," she said. The successful operation has been widely appreciated by local residents and social organizations, who have long expressed concern over the increasing circulation of narcotic substances in various parts of the state. The seizure is being viewed as a strong message to drug traffickers that law enforcement agencies are closely monitoring their activities and are prepared to take decisive action against those involved in the illegal trade. The latest crackdown once again highlights the district administration's determination to combat drug abuse and dismantle trafficking networks, reinforcing its commitment to safeguarding public health, maintaining law and order, and ensuring a drug-free future for the youth of the region.

Icons that we look to for Inspiration

Dr. Kanak Hota

Veteran journalist, writer, and critic Bhaskar Parichha's new book, *Icons of Odisha: Lives that Shaped a State* (B K Publications, Bhubaneswar, 2026), historicizes a hundred year, from 1843 to 1943 and looks dispassionately at the lives and achievements of thirty-five extraordinary personalities of Odisha who have contributed immensely in shaping what he calls in the introduction, "the state's distinctive moral and cultural character" in modern times. It records the lives of these men and women, their determination to overcome odds, transform the status quo, and bring about lasting changes in the state's cultural fabric.

Parichha's narrative traces the emergence of statesmanship and nation-building and also records new directions in literature, art, dance, music, cinema, and journalism. It doesn't repeat the glory of Odisha's distant past, but captures the era of awakening and the role these statesmen, reformers, educators, and creatives played as "icons." It chronicles their birth, growth, and flowering into trailblazing personalities instrumental in changing the face of Odisha.

Aptly called the 'icons,' these illustrious men and women, born during the British colonial era, understood subjugation and fought for India's independence. They led the struggle to secure Odisha's formation as a separate state. Though it may sound redundant, one can briefly state that Odisha gained its statehood and political identity in 1936, based on evidence of the use of the Odia language for speaking and writing by a people who were kept separate for political expediency. The fear of losing their identity as Odias brought together thought leaders from various walks of life.

A humble schoolteacher like Fakiramohan Senapati, who stirred the movement, was joined by a maverick, lawyer, and entrepreneur Madhusudan Das, a social reformer and volunteer Gopabandhu Dash, two aristocrats, the king of Paralakhemundi, Maharaja Krishnachandra Gajapati, and the king of Mayurbhanja, Sri Ramchandra Bhanjadeo, a great poet Gangadhar Meher, and many others to realize the dream of having a separate state called Odisha. This watershed moment brought together the Odia-speaking people's land, deliberately dismembered and arbitrarily distributed among three British Presidencies - Calcutta, Madras, and Central.

Parichha says that as a relentless fighter against propaganda that sought to render the Odia language irrelevant, Fakir Mohan worked alongside the British official and linguist John Beams to establish Odia's antiquity and originality and to secure its use in schools, courts, and official documents. A prolific writer, he left behind numerous novels, short stories, and poems that remain timeless classics of Odia literature. His *Cha Mana Atha Guntha* (1902) is a novel depicting the exploitation of a vulnerable peasant by the corrupt local zamindar. It exposes social inequality and the uneven power play between the victim and the victimizer.

Fakiramohan, the father of Odia fiction, opposed feudalism and urged social reform in his writings. His art combines political acumen, wit, sarcasm, subversive parody, and a regard for the morally correct as a prototype for future writers. King Krushna Chandra Gajapati and King Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo were rulers of independent kingdoms who risked their positions by taking an oppositional stance against British rule and prioritizing India's independence and the formation of Odisha as a separate state. Parichha revisits these lives and gently reminds readers of the seminal role these great men played in fighting for a cause that seemed difficult but morally correct and rewarding.

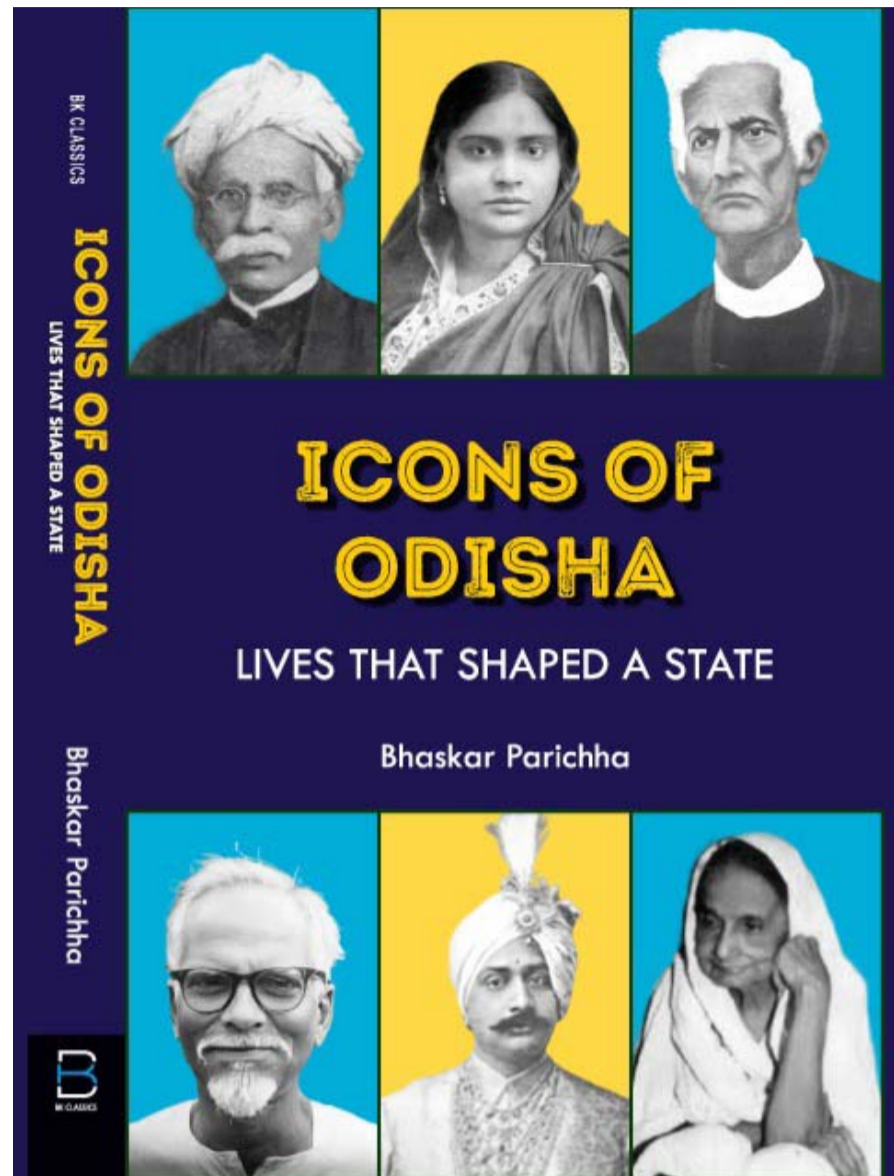
Odisha's identity is inalienable from the sixty-two distinct indigenous tribal communities native to the state. The book celebrates the role of Raghunath Murmu, who created the Santali script, thereby preserving the language of the indigenous Santali people for posterity. The language of a people is not just a tool of communication; it's their identity and voice, without which their culture faces the threat of extinction.

The Icon records the lives and contributions of other Odia leaders, who, following Mahatma Gandhi's call, joined the pan-Indian, non-violent freedom movement against the British. The reader meets Hare Krushna Mahatab, Rama Devi, Nabakrishna Chaudhury, Sarala Devi, and Sarangadhar Das, all of whom joined the National Congress Party with great enthusiasm. But some of them expected the Party to do more to advance social equality and justice for the marginalized and underserved. They questioned the elitist ideals of the National Congress Party and sought alternative routes to socialism through mass movements at the local level. Notable among these iconoclasts were Rama Devi, Sarala Devi, and Sarangadhar Das.

Similarly, going through the lives and times of leaders like Nabakrushna Chaudhury, Hare Krushna Mahatab, Biju Patnaik, Nandini Satpathy, and Janaki Ballav Patnaik, the reader learns more about the distinctive attributes of these change-makers who shaped the course of a nascent democracy, held popular elections, and were committed to serving the masses. As chief ministers of Odisha, they wrestled with the challenges of governance and struggled to maintain their majority in the assembly by their passions discreetly.

Janaki Ballabh Patnaik was a Journalist, editor, and also a renowned scholar of Sanskrit. Nandini Satpathy, called the Iron Lady of Odisha in the book, was the state's only female chief minister. She was also a writer committed to social equality and women's rights. Her creativity was shaped by the ideals she inherited from her father, Kalindi Charan Panigrahi, a distinguished writer, and her uncle, Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi, a staunch believer in Communist ideology.

Biju Patnaik, besides being the state's chief minister, was a multifaceted



personality. He was a fighter pilot during the Second World War, an entrepreneur and industrialist, and one of the architects of modern Odisha. These icons were not just great political leaders but were fascinating, multidimensional personalities. The book highlights their versatility, without being anecdotal or resorting to platitudes.

However, *Icons* is not a book about political leaders alone. It documents the life and works of outstanding personalities across diverse creative fields, shaping the identity of a people. Odisha has been a land of poets, painters, sculptors, weavers, musicians, dancers, and singers from ancient times. Parichha records an unprecedented surge in creativity over the century he examines. The influx of new ideas, the struggle to end colonialism and feudalism, the fervor of patriotism, and optimism in freedom set the tone of this period.

The new directions of Odia literature were shaped by Gopinath Mohanty (fiction), Sachi Routray (Poetry), Surendra Mohanty (fiction), Manoj Das (short story), and Ramakanta Rath (poetry). Gopinath Mohanty delineated the threadbare, uncorrupted lives of the tribal people. His novel *Paraja* (1945), for example, depicts the collapse of the pristine world of the paraja people, a tribe living in a remote corner of Odisha, as the so-called modern

world clashes with the fundamental values of trust, loyalty, honesty, and love governing their lives.

Surendra Mohanty drew inspiration from the history of the Odia race and carefully traces its gradual descent from a successful, warring people into mediocrity in his famous trilogy *Nilashaila*, *Niladri Bijaya*, and *Krishnabenire Sandhya*. He created an inimitable style of storytelling. Manoj Das writes with the insight of a mystic, delving deep into the supernatural and the subconscious. Sachi Routray's poetry laid the foundation for modern poetry in Odia literature through the use of naturalism, symbolism, and free verse. Ramakanta Rath brought the reflective tone and used the associative power of metaphors in his poetry. He contemplated time and reiterated life's transience repeatedly.

The icon doesn't differentiate or categorize the remarkable creative personalities by gender. It calls poets Kuntal Kumari Sabat the nightingale of Odisha and Bidyut Prabha Devi the pioneer of feminist poetry. All these storytellers and poets have stirred the souls of Odia readers with a taste of the new. They have inspired the younger generation to emulate their writing styles without forgetting Odisha's rich poetic and storytelling tradition.

The essay on scientist and educationist

Pranakrushna Parija highlights his role as a pioneer in instilling the scientific spirit of research and exploration in the countless students he guided and inspired. The one on Prof. Chittaranjan Das assesses his philosophical insight and scholarship in the numerous discursive writings he produced. It acknowledges Das's immense contribution towards enriching the Odia intellectual tradition.

Parichha examines the role of inspirational figures in dance, music, cinema, and journalism to complete the essays on the icons. He says that Odissi, the classical dance, originating from the Jagannath temple, gained world recognition through the pioneering work of Guru Kelucharan Mahapatra. The legendary Odissi dancer Sanjukta Panigrahi, with her husband, classical music maestro Raghunath Panigrahi, perfected the dance form, widely celebrated for its lilting grace and postural grandeur. He says Balakrushna Das, the musical genius, was instrumental in keeping up the distinction of Odia classical music, namely, Odissi Chhanda and Chaupadi.

The book celebrates the great Odia pop icon, singer, composer, and lyricist, Akshya Mohanty, for his rendition of soul-stirring songs with inimitable tones of longing and loss. He places actors Sarat Pujari and Jharana Das as icons of Odia cinema, whose careers inspired many artists to enter the world of cinema. It is heartening to see Dinanath Pathy, the muralist, painter, writer, and exponent of classic Odia art, among the great personalities chosen for the book. Pathy had authored more than sixty books and had worked in India and in Germany.

The book reminds readers not to forget the media's role as a watchdog for democracy and individual freedom. It positions Radhanath Rath, the editor of the newspaper *Samaj*, a name synonymous with Odia newspapers to many, as an icon for journalistic integrity. In the age of the internet and social media, *Samaj*, founded by Gopabandhu Dash, still continues to serve as an interface between the masses and the government and as a window to national and international news for rural and urban readers alike. Parichha recounts Radhanath Rath's role in maintaining *Samaj's* standing as an unbiased, apolitical, and fearless newspaper, avoiding unnecessary sensationalism and fearmongering.

Bhaskar Parichha's *Icons of Odisha: Lives that Shaped a State* chronicles the lives and contributions of thirty-five outstanding Odia personalities from different walks of life. The book is non-judgmental. It dispassionately documents the lives and achievements of the chosen personalities and puts their work into perspective, helping the reader understand a bygone era and its challenges. Icons are the personalities we look to for inspiration. The book also gently reminds readers that, as a collective, people must remember their history and the remarkable people who could change and rewrite it.

(Chicago)

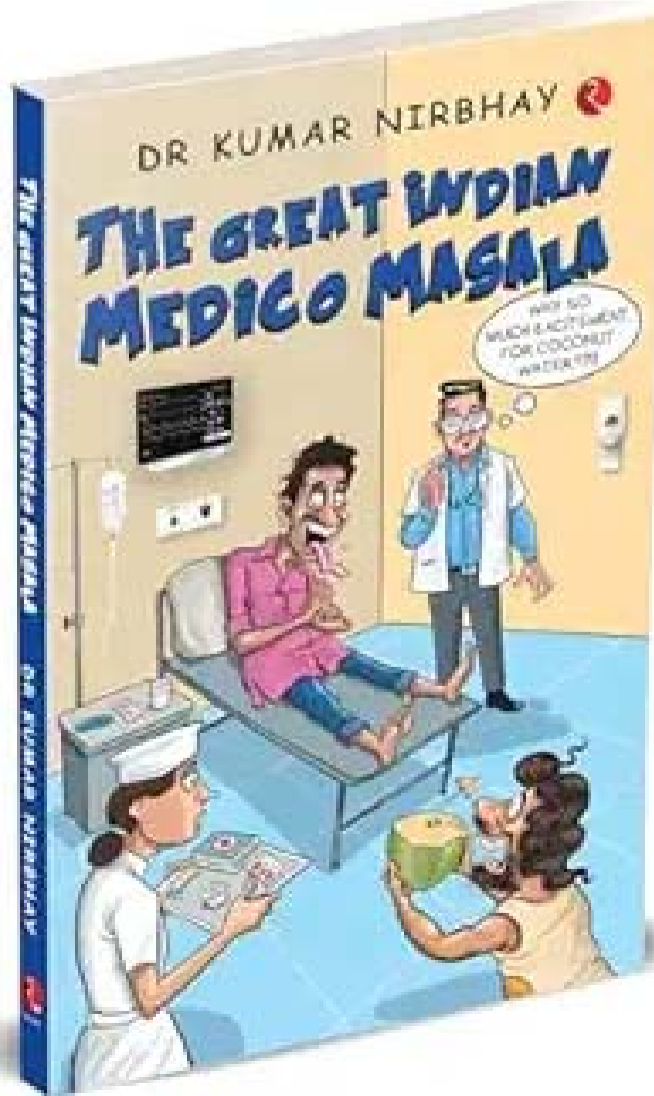
Collection of Medical Anecdotes

Dharma Raj

The Great Indian Medico Masala (Rupa Publications, New Delhi, 2026) is a delightful and refreshingly original collection of stories that peels back the curtain on the often-misunderstood world of Indian healthcare. Written by doctor-turned-writer and social activist Dr Kumar Nirbhay, the book combines humour, humanity, and sharp observation to create a reading experience that is both entertaining and insightful.

At the heart of the book is Dr Arun, a physician whose daily encounters reveal that medicine is as much about understanding people as it is about diagnosing diseases. Through a series of anecdotes inspired by real-life incidents, readers are introduced to a cast of unforgettable characters—patients, families, and colleagues whose actions frequently challenge logic, science, and common sense. Yet it is precisely these eccentricities that make the stories so engaging.

What sets this collection apart is its ability to find laughter in situations that might otherwise seem stressful or overwhelming. Whether it is a miraculous cure hidden inside a green coconut, a mysterious virus that appears only on certain days of the week, or the whimsical invention of a



"chakkarometre" to measure dizziness, the stories celebrate the absurdities that doctors encounter behind hospital walls. The humour is never cruel or dismissive; instead, it emerges from a deep understanding of human nature.

Beyond the comedy, the book offers touching glimpses into the emotional side of medical practice. Dr Nirbhay reminds readers that hospitals are places where hope, fear, resilience, and compassion coexist. The stories capture the unique bond between doctors and patients, highlighting moments of kindness, vulnerability, and unexpected wisdom.

The author's conversational style makes the book accessible to both medical professionals and general readers. His ability to blend satire with empathy ensures that the narrative remains engaging while conveying deeper truths about society and healthcare.

Warm, witty, and deeply human, the book is more than a collection of medical anecdotes—it is a celebration of the extraordinary stories hidden within ordinary hospital corridors. Readers will finish the book with a smile, a renewed appreciation for healthcare workers, and the comforting realization that laughter truly can be the best medicine.

Thoughtful, Inspiring, and Well-researched

Bhaskar Parichha

Historical fiction succeeds when it illuminates the past while speaking to contemporary concerns, and *The Mapmaker* (Niyoghi Books, New Delhi, 2026) accomplishes this with remarkable skill. Based on the life of William Smith, the pioneering geologist who created the world's first geological map, the novel transforms a significant chapter of scientific history into a compelling human drama.

At its core, the book is the story of an outsider challenging established authority. William Smith emerges not merely as a scientist but as a determined individual whose curiosity and perseverance enable him to see what others overlook. As he painstakingly maps England's geological formations, readers witness the birth of a revolutionary way of understanding the Earth. The novel captures both the excitement of discovery and the immense personal sacrifices that often accompany groundbreaking work.

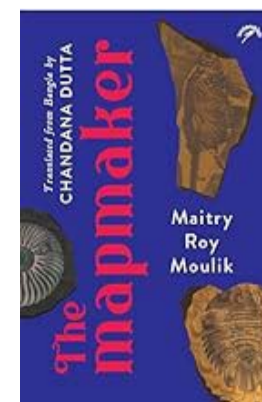
One of the book's greatest strengths is its portrayal of the tension between scientific inquiry and entrenched belief systems. Set during a period when new ideas frequently collided with religious orthodoxy and social hierarchy, the narrative vividly depicts the obstacles faced by those who dared to question accepted truths.

Smith's struggles are not only intellectual but also social, as a man of modest origins confronting institutions dominated by privilege and power.

The author skillfully blends historical detail with engaging storytelling. Geological concepts and scientific developments are woven naturally into the narrative, ensuring that readers remain absorbed in the characters and conflicts rather than overwhelmed by technical information. The period setting is rendered with authenticity, bringing to life the landscapes, social customs, and intellectual atmosphere of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England. Equally impressive is the novel's exploration of themes that remain relevant today: recognition and ownership of knowledge, the value of independent thinking, and the often-unseen costs of innovation.

These broader questions elevate the story beyond a conventional historical biography. The English translation by Chandana Dutta deserves special mention for preserving the richness and emotional depth of the original Bengali work. The prose flows smoothly, allowing the narrative's power and historical significance to shine through.

Thoughtful, inspiring, and meticulously researched, *The Mapmaker* is a rewarding read that celebrates the triumph of curiosity, perseverance, and intellectual courage against formidable odds.



Startups Hail Global Platform As PM Modi To Inaugurate Bharat Innovates In France

New Delhi: As Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to inaugurate 'Bharat Innovates 2026' in France, Indian startups and innovators on Saturday expressed strong enthusiasm and optimism over the global platform showcasing India's deep-tech, clean energy and healthcare innovation ecosystem, alongside his participation in the G7 Summit at Evian and the VivaTech event in Paris. The initiative provides a major global stage for Indian innovation to connect with investors, industry leaders, policymakers and technology partners. Speaking to IANS, Gudlyf Mobility co-founder and CEO Dr Ajeet Babu PK said the platform is a matter of pride, especially for entrepreneurs from smaller cities. "Coming from a Tier-2 city like Madurai and being selected for this platform is a matter of pride. We are extremely excited," he said. Dr KC Vora, co-founder of Gudlyf Mobility, said the initiative offers strong global exposure for Indian startups. "We want to export this cylinder. There is a strong sense of excitement that our product can become globally recognised



and exported worldwide," he said. Highlighting the scale of selection, he noted that 120 startups were shortlisted from nearly 3,000 applicants. "We are developing a hydrogen cylinder that is 50 per cent lighter and 50 per cent cheaper than conventional metal cylinders," he added, expressing hope of engaging with the Prime Minister during the event. Tricog Health Chief Growth Officer Prateek Golecha said the platform provides global

visibility for Indian-made technology. "Our product and algorithm are built in India and are now being showcased on a global stage. We are hopeful of entering multiple international markets," he told IANS. He added that the company's AI-driven healthcare solutions aim to improve access to affordable diagnostics, particularly in emerging markets where delayed testing worsens outcomes in diseases such as heart conditions. Prof. Arnab Dutta of

UrjanovaC highlighted carbon capture innovation, saying: "We discovered a way to capture and convert carbon dioxide using water," noting that the process is inspired by natural biological and geological mechanisms. Bharat Innovates 2026 is a three-day national initiative featuring 120 startups and participation from more than 15 premier institutions, aimed at showcasing India's technology capabilities to global investors, policymakers and research organisations.

Delhi Police Constables Felicitated, Given Out-Of-Turn Promotion For Saving Lives During Hotel Fire, Building Collapse

New Delhi: Two Delhi Police constables were given out-of-turn promotion and several others honoured with Asadharan Karya Puraskar by Police Commissioner Satish Golchha on Saturday, for their act of bravery and daring rescue during twin incidents of hotel fire in Malviya Nagar and building collapse in Saket, last month. Both incidents resulted in significant loss of lives; however, the damage was contained to some extent due to the bravery of locals and rescuers, including Delhi police personnel. The two constables, namely Angad Singh Meena and Manish Kumar, were given out-of-turn promotion for putting their lives at risk to save people trapped in the debris. Both policemen, presently stationed at Mehrauli police station, have been promoted to their next rank of Head Constable. The felicitation ceremony was held at Police Headquarters in the capital, where Police Commissioner Satish Golchha honoured the constables for their exemplary and commendable service in the line of duty. At least six people lost their lives during a building collapse in South Delhi's Saiduilajab (Saket) on May 30. The building, housing a coaching centre, a café, and several offices, collapsed, killing six people and



injuring several others. Construction work was reportedly in progress on the upper floors at the time of the incident. The police personnel entered deep into the debris and successfully rescued trapped persons, besides assisting in rescue and evacuation efforts, thereby helping save several lives, despite severe risk to their own safety. The Commissioner of Police also conferred the prestigious Asadharan Karya Puraskar, along with a cash reward of ₹50,000/- each, upon police personnel of South District for their exceptional courage, dedication, and outstanding service during the major fire incident that engulfed the Flourish Stay hotel in Malviya Nagar on June 6. The deadly inferno left many charred to death and left many trapped inside the building.

It was due to some prompt and courageous response of Delhi Police personnel, in close coordination with the Fire Brigade and other emergency services, that multiple persons, including foreign nationals, were rescued. Those who received the honour included SI (Exe.) Ram Kishan, HC (Exe.) Kartar, HC (Exe.) Hargyan, HC (Exe.) Dinesh Kumar, HC (Exe.) Sampat, Ct. (Exe.) Surender, Ct. (Exe.) Ravi Kant and Ct. (Exe.) Sanjay. A day ago, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta also felicitated rescuers and local people who saved lives in the recent Malviya Nagar fire tragedy and the Saiduilajab building collapse. At a special programme held at the Delhi Secretariat, she met and honoured citizens, police personnel, administrative officials and rescue workers who risked their own lives to save others.

Kharge, Priyanka Condole Death Of 5 IAF Personnel In Assam IAF Plane Crash

New Delhi: Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge and Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Saturday expressed grief over the tragic loss of five bravehearts in the Indian Air Force aircraft crash in Assam and said that we salute their service and selfless sacrifice, and will forever remain indebted to them and their families. Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge took to social media 'X' and said, "Deeply saddened by the tragic loss of five bravehearts in the Indian Air Force aircraft crash in Assam. My heartfelt condolences to their families and loved ones in this moment of grief. We salute their service and selfless sacrifice, and will forever remain indebted to them and their families." Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also expressed grief over the martyrdom of five brave soldiers in an Air Force plane crash in Assam, describing the incident as deeply saddening. Taking to social media platform X, Priyanka Gandhi said, "The news of the martyrdom of five brave soldiers in an Air Force plane crash in Assam is deeply saddening. May



God grant peace to the departed souls. My deepest condolences to the bereaved families." She further said, "The nation will forever remain indebted to our brave soldiers and their families." At least five IAF personnel were killed after an AN-32 transport aircraft met with an accident while landing at the Jorhat airbase in Assam and burst into flames on Saturday, defence officials said. According to the IAF, the incident occurred at approximately 10 a.m. after the aircraft landed at the Jorhat Air Force Station. The aircraft

reportedly burst into flames shortly after touchdown, triggering an immediate emergency response from Air Force and airport firefighting teams. "An IAF AN-32 aircraft met with an accident during a routine sortie today at approximately 1000h at Jorhat, Assam. Crash site management and initial enquiries are on at this time. IAF requests everyone to refrain from speculation till preliminary results are in," the IAFZ said in a statement. Defence officials later said that five people lost their lives in the incident.

IAF Aircraft Crash: ATC Must Come Clean On Reasons Behind Mishap, Says Defence Expert Praful Bakshi

New Delhi: Defence expert Praful Bakshi on Saturday called for the accountability of the Air Traffic Control (ATC) in the initial phase of plane crash cases. According to Bakshi, the ATC's stand always comes later on during the investigation but it never issues an initial statement. Praful Bakshi's response came after an AN-32 transport aircraft reportedly burst into flames shortly after touchdown at the Jorhat airbase in Assam earlier on Saturday, claiming the lives of at least five Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel. Speaking to IANS, Bakshi said: "When an aircraft crashes during landing, there can be many causes." Using a small aircraft model to explain the accident, he referred to the Ahmedabad plane crash, saying "An AI-171 may suddenly sink due to fuel cutoff, but here the aircraft had touched down the runway. When an aircraft touches a runway, we do not know what has happened." "Did it land and touch down very heavily due to



sudden loss of power, in such a case there is a possibility that the aircraft had gone off the runway, broke up into two pieces and caught fire," Bakshi noted. Speaking of another reason for the accident, the defence expert said: "After landing, either there was a tyre burst and the aircraft veered off the runway, though it should not have broken up into so many pieces. But we do not know whether it went into a ditch or whether there was a sudden explosion of fuel or cargo." "We do not know what cargo it was carrying. Was it

inflammable cargo or ammunition? Or fuel has caught fire. Though it has broken up very seriously," he added. About the possible reasons behind the A-32 crash, Bakshi said that it could be heavy landing which the pilot could not control due to sudden loss of power, or it caused tyre burst, or it was bird hit which blinded the pilot and shattered the windscreen. "But at the moment, the pilot had touched down and then crashed on the airfield," he emphasised. The defence expert mentioned that flight data recorder and cockpit voice recorder could be used to

know the exact reason. "The former will let us know the aircraft's speed while approaching the runway and whether it touched down heavily. The gravitational impact would have been recorded in the flight data recorder," Bakshi said. He added that it can be known from the cockpit voice recorder if the pilot had conveyed any emergency to the ATC. Regarding the ATC's accountability, Bakshi said: "Air Traffic Control can be asked what the last conversation with the aircraft was. I think that should be the first question put to them. There is a tendency all over the world for ATC not to speak immediately because it does not know the direction the investigation will take. They may not want to disclose everything at that stage. I mean, this is a current practice." According to defence expert Bakshi, the ATC's statement always comes later on in crash cases and never during the initial point.

CRPF Foils Major Naxal Plot In Chhattisgarh, Recovers Arms And Explosives

Raipur: The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has unearthed eight Naxal munition dumps in Chhattisgarh during a coordinated anti-insurgency operation, leading to the recovery of arms and explosives, officials said on Saturday. Acting on precise intelligence inputs, a joint team led by Commandant Anand Kumar carried out the operation in the dense forests of Adri, Harra, and Madumpara villages under the Pidia and Kuppaguda areas of Bijapur. Security personnel cordoned off the region and conducted a phased sweep, ensuring no escape routes remained open. Their efforts led to the recovery of a substantial cache of arms and explosives that could have been deployed in future attacks against security forces. Among the seized items were a Barrel Grenade Launcher (BGL) rifle, an 8 mm rifle, a 12-bore rifle, and 21 Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

Cultural Links, Human Connections Underpin India-Nigeria Ties: Report

Abuja/New Delhi: The India-Nigeria relationship is not a story of one country projecting power over another but one rooted in mutual recognition and shared aspirations. As two large, youthful democracies of the Global South, India and Nigeria are navigating common challenges ranging from pressures of development and inequality to migration and global competition. This is why the people-to-people dimension of the relationship assumes particular significance, providing a social foundation that can endure beyond political cycles and economic fluctuations, a report has stated. "When Nigerians think of India, many do not think first of diplomacy, trade figures, or official communiqués. They think of the Indian teachers who shaped their classrooms, the doctors who treated their families, the Indian shops in their neighborhoods, the Bollywood films that found a loyal audience in northern Nigeria, and the Indians who have lived, worked,



and raised families in cities across the country," Osaze Efe, a senior policy fellow at Tanzania-based Amani Research Initiative, wrote

in 'India Narrative.' "That is the real foundation of India-Nigeria relations: people-to-people contact that has grown steadily

over decades and remains one of the strongest links between both countries," he added. According to the expert, the relationship

between the two nations is often viewed through the prism of oil, defence, and business, but that overlooks a large story. "The India-Nigeria connection is also a cultural one, and in many ways that is the more durable tie. It lives in shared meals, shared screens, shared schools, and shared city spaces. It is visible in the everyday interactions between Nigerians and Indians and in the growing number of students, entrepreneurs, professionals, and artists moving between both countries," Efe stated. Highlighting the Indian community's significant contribution to social and economic life in Nigeria, he said that Indians are active in several sectors, including retail, manufacturing, education, healthcare, and hospitality. In many cases, Efe said, the Indian diaspora employs local workers, supports local economies, and engages closely in community life. "Their presence is most visible in Lagos, Abuja, and other major commercial centers, where Indian

schools, temples, cultural associations, and businesses form part of the urban landscape," he noted. Efe further noted a growing number of Nigerians are travelling to India in pursuit of education, business, and professional opportunities. "For many young Nigerians, India offers a combination of affordable tuition, English-language instruction, and access to medical, technical, and management training. Thousands of Nigerians have studied in Indian universities over the years, and many have returned home to contribute in medicine, engineering, business, and public service," he mentioned. Emphasising that the India-Nigeria relationship is about much more than trade, he said the two peoples have been connected for decades, "often quietly and without fanfare." Those ties, he noted, have been nurtured by teachers, students, traders, doctors, filmmakers, worshippers, and migrants who have forged bonds far deeper than official language sometimes suggests.

PM Modi's Slovakia Trip Will Strengthen Political Relations, Economic Security: Indian Ambassador

Bratislava: India's Ambassador to Slovakia on Saturday stated that PM Modi's trip to Slovakia will not only strengthen political relations, but also economic security and people-to-people contacts. "This is a historic and important trip. This is the first trip by an Indian Prime Minister since the country's independence in 1993. This is very important in itself. This trip will not only strengthen our political relations, but also economic security and people-to-people contacts," Ambassador Apoorva Srivastava told IANS in an interview. "If you look at the last two-three years, the economic relations between India and Slovakia have increased a lot and very rapidly. In 2024, for the first time, we crossed the threshold of 1 billion Euros. And in 2025, we reached 1.6 billion Euros. So you can see how fast it is moving forward," she added. The Indian diplomat noted that Slovakia is like a gateway to Europe for the Indian companies and the talent and technology of the country remains very important for India. Citing the recent India-European Union Free Trade



Agreement (FTA), the Ambassador said the possibilities are limitless in several sectors. According to the Ambassador, Prime Minister Modi is going to meet the CEOs of several important companies in Slovakia. She noted that many Slovak companies have already invested in India. In the last three years, five major business groups have gone to India with

the aim of increasing relations with India in the business sector. "Slovakia has just launched its Indo-Pacific strategy in December 2025. They have given a lot of importance to the Indo-Pacific region, not only trade and technology, but also to increasing the political relationship," the Ambassador highlighted. Earlier in the day, Slovak President Peter Pellegrini

stated that PM Modi's "historic" visit will open new opportunities for Slovakia-India cooperation. "Dear Prime Minister Narendra Modi, I look forward to welcoming you in Bratislava on Monday. Your historic visit will build on our good dialogue from New Delhi and open new opportunities for Slovakia-India cooperation." President Pellegrini wrote on X.

Using Terrorist Proxies For Cross-Border Terrorism Goes Against Principles Of Humanity: MoS Singh At SCO

Dushanbe: Minister of State (MoS) for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh, on Friday at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) International Conference, reiterated that providing a haven and using terrorist proxies for cross-border terrorism go against the basic principles of humanity and international relations. "We reiterate that providing safe haven, using terrorist proxies for cross-border terrorism, terror financing, arms and drugs trafficking, dissemination of a radical ideology and abuse of cyberspace to spread disinformation and incite violence go against the basic principles of humanity and international relations," MoS Singh noted at the conference in Tajikistan. During his remarks, the minister said that together with friends from Central Asia, India is firmly committed to fighting against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Marking the 25th anniversary of SCO, Singh said it is an opportune moment for reflection on achievements and recalibration, keeping in mind the ongoing disruptions in the world order. According to Singh, for India, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is not merely a regional grouping; it is



a vital link connecting the country with its historical and civilisational partners across Eurasia. "Our vision for cooperation within the SCO is guided by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's framework of Security, Connectivity, and Opportunity," he highlighted. "Central Asia occupies a significant place in this vision. At the strategic crossroads of Eurasia, it serves as a key node for enhancing regional connectivity and fostering greater economic integration among our nations," he added. He said Central Asia is a region of immense promise, largely free from active conflicts, rich in natural resources and characterised by traditions of secularism and social

harmony. He also mentioned the SCO Leaders' Summit in Tianjin, which mandated the establishment of two important institutions in Central Asia, the Universal Centre in Tashkent and the Anti-Drug Centre in Dushanbe. "India is the first country to complete the ratification process for both Centres. Their establishment will significantly strengthen our collective efforts to combat narcotics trafficking, transnational organised crime, terrorism and terror financing, extremist ideologies, safe havens and the networks that support them. At the same time, these institutions will further enhance the role and leadership of Central Asia in advancing the SCO's security agenda," he highlighted.

Elon Musk Becomes World's First Trillionaire After Record-Breaking SpaceX Market Debut

Washington: Elon Musk became the world's first trillionaire after SpaceX completed the largest initial public offering in history, with investors pushing the rocket and satellite company's market value to about \$2.1 trillion on its first day of trading. Shares of SpaceX closed at \$160.95, up more than 19 per cent from their IPO price of \$135, capping one of the strongest major market debuts in recent years. The surge lifted the value of Musk's stake in the company and cemented his position as the wealthiest person in history. SpaceX shares gained 19 per cent on their first trading day following Wall Street's biggest-ever IPO, valuing the company at more than \$2 trillion. CNN reported that Musk, who owns nearly half the company, became the world's first trillionaire as a result of the listing. The Wall Street Journal reported that SpaceX sold \$75 billion worth of shares in the offering, giving the company an initial valuation of \$1.77 trillion. By the close of trading, that figure had climbed to \$2.1 trillion, placing SpaceX among the most valuable publicly traded companies in the United States. The blockbuster debut marks a milestone not only for Musk but also for the commercial space industry, which SpaceX helped transform over the past

two decades. Founded in 2002, SpaceX started as a high-risk venture focused on developing reusable rockets. The company survived multiple launch failures and periods of financial uncertainty before securing NASA contracts that helped establish it as a major force in the global space sector. The New York Times reported that SpaceX's early years were marked by repeated setbacks and near-collapse before the company's Falcon rocket programme succeeded. The newspaper quoted Musk as saying on Friday: "I told people this: 'It's probably going to fail. But we should give it a try.'" Today, SpaceX dominates the global commercial launch market and operates Starlink, the world's largest satellite internet network. The company also plays a central role in NASA missions and US national security space programmes. The Wall Street Journal reported that the US government is SpaceX's largest single customer, generating about \$4 billion in revenue for the company in 2025. Starlink, meanwhile, produced \$11.4 billion in revenue and turned a profit, helping offset losses in other parts of the business. The Wall Street Journal and The Washington Post said SpaceX filings outline plans to expand into artificial



intelligence infrastructure, including satellite networks and orbital computing systems designed to support future AI applications. SpaceX estimates its total addressable market at \$28.5 trillion, with the overwhelming majority linked to artificial intelligence opportunities. The Washington Post reported that SpaceX's future plans include large satellite constellations that could support space-based data centres, while its Starshield network is expected to serve government and national security customers. Those ambitions have also raised concerns among

analysts and policy experts about the growing concentration of economic and strategic influence around Musk and his companies. The Washington Post quoted Clayton Swope of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies as saying: "U.S. space power is built on the back of SpaceX. Period. Full stop." He added: "It means SpaceX has incredible leverage over the government right now." The IPO also underscored how deeply SpaceX has become embedded in the broader US technology and strategic landscape.

Trump Marks 250 Years Of Virginia Rights Charter

Washington: US President Donald Trump marked the 250th anniversary of the Virginia Declaration of Rights, calling it a foundational document that helped shape the United States' Declaration of Independence, Constitution and Bill of Rights. In a message issued by the White House, Trump said on Friday that the June 12, 1776 declaration was the first official statement of individual liberties in the American colonies and played a central role in the development of American democracy. "On June 12, 1776, Virginia unanimously proclaimed the Virginia Declaration of Rights—the first official declaration of individual liberties in the American Colonies and one of the most consequential documents in the history of human freedom," Trump said. The statement comes as the United States

continues commemorations linked to America 250, a nationwide programme marking the 250th anniversary of American independence in 2026. Trump said the Virginia Declaration emerged as colonial leaders sought to establish a new system of self-government while breaking away from British rule. "Determined to cast off the chains of British tyranny, they fought to secure what no king could take away: the right to govern themselves, to speak freely, to worship as they chose, and to be judged by their fellow citizens rather than the decrees of a distant crown," he said. The President credited George Mason, one of Virginia's leading statesmen, with crafting a document whose influence extended far beyond the colony. According to the White House message, the declaration was inspired by Enlightenment thinkers



including John Locke and asserted that "all men are by nature equally free and

independent" and possess rights that are "endowed by our Creator and beyond the reach

of any earthly power." Trump said the document established the principle that political

power resides with the people and affirmed protections including freedom of the press, trial by jury, religious liberty and the separation of powers. "The Declaration also affirmed the time-honored principles of separation of powers, checks and balances, freedom of the press, trial by jury, and the free exercise of religion—enduring pillars of liberty that remain the bedrock of our Republic today," he said. The President also linked the declaration to two of America's most influential founding figures. He said Thomas Jefferson drew upon its language and ideals while drafting the Declaration of Independence weeks later, while James Madison later relied on its principles in developing the Bill of Rights. "As we celebrate the 250th anniversary of its adoption, we renew our solemn pledge to preserve and

defend the sacred principles enshrined in the Virginia Declaration of Rights," Trump said. He added that the United States would continue "protecting these liberties bestowed upon us by Almighty God, upholding equal justice under the law, and carrying forward this glorious inheritance of freedom for generations to come." Adopted in Williamsburg on June 12, 1776, the Virginia Declaration of Rights is widely regarded as one of the earliest constitutional statements of individual freedoms and representative government. Drafted primarily by George Mason, it became a model for later rights-based constitutional frameworks in the United States. Historians have long viewed the document as an important influence on democratic governance beyond America.

Inflation In Telangana Continues To Be Highest Among All States: Report

New Delhi: Inflation in Telangana continues to be the highest among all states since January 2026 and now is at 6.15 per cent in May, which may be due to higher taxes on fuel, rise in rural wages and reliance on imported fresh produce, according to an SBI Research report. State-level consumer inflation statistics highlight a broad regional disparity across the country. Out of the 36 states/UTs, there are 12-14 states/UTs where inflation is higher than all India level. Inflation in many of the major states, like, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, MP and Rajasthan etc., continues to be higher than all India level of inflation, the report mentioned. Among the major states, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, and Odisha have registered more than 2 per cent increase in inflation during January-May 2026, while All-India level inflation increased only by 1.19 per cent. "However, the distribution of inflation among states/UTs highlights that majority of the state's inflation fall between 2-4 per cent during January-May 2026," said the report. India's Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation rose to 3.93



per cent in May, up from 3.48 per cent in April. The impact of an increase in petrol/diesel prices and slight LPG shortage is clearly visible in May data. Transport inflation increased by 176 bps to 1.8 per cent in May as compared to April. Similarly, inflation in Restaurants and accommodation services (which largely depend

on LPG) increased by 154 bps to 5.7 per cent in May as compared to 4.2 per cent in April. The moderate rise in gold and silver prices led to almost 80 bps increase in inflation rate in the personal care division. At the item level, silver jewellery contributed 56 bps to headline inflation, followed by gold with a contribution of 30 bps,

unchanged from the previous month. Global commodity prices, as reflected in the World Bank Pink Sheet, also showed stronger inflation in silver relative to gold. The contribution of petrol increased to 14 bps, while LPG shortages contributed to higher prices of cooked meat and cooked snacks, said the report.

JP Morgan sees gold touching \$6,000/oz by end-2026 despite recent price cooling

New Delhi, : Gold prices could climb to fresh record highs by the end of 2026 despite recent weakness in investor interest and a period of sideways trading, according to a latest commodities research report by JP Morgan Global Research. The report said gold is expected to average USD 6,000 per ounce in the final quarter of 2026, with prices potentially rising further to USD 6,300 per ounce by the end of 2027. "The 2026 and 2027 outlook for gold prices remains ahead of current levels, with JP Morgan Global Research analysts expecting gold to push \$6,000/oz by year end, and \$6,300/oz a possibility for 2027," the report said. The outlook comes even as gold prices have lost momentum in recent months. According to the report, spot gold prices rallied strongly at the start of 2026 before cooling in March and recently touching an intra-year low of USD 4,170 per ounce. JP Morgan said uncertainty surrounding geopolitical developments and monetary policy continues to shape the outlook for the precious metal. "Future demand

and price stability seem to depend on the resolution of ongoing geopolitical conflicts and on Fed policy - neither of which are certain at this time," the report noted. Greg Shearer, Head of Base and Precious Metals at JP Morgan, said investor enthusiasm for gold has moderated for now. "Gold is stuck in a bit of a technical no-man's land, trudging above the 200-day moving average around \$4,340/oz and capped for now below the 50-day moving average at \$4,730/oz," Shearer said. "Amid this sideways plod, and with growing worries that the Fed might have to respond to energy-driven inflation with hikes, gold is on the back burner for most investors at the moment," he added. Despite that, the report said the factors that have driven strong gold demand over the past few years remain largely intact. According to JP Morgan, concerns over higher inflation, erosion of purchasing power, US fiscal pressures, geopolitical fragmentation and policy uncertainty continue to support demand for gold as a safe-haven

asset. The report also highlighted the role of central banks, which have been a key driver of gold's rally in recent years. While official data showed central banks sold 129 tonnes of gold in the first quarter of 2026 and reported net purchases of only 16 tonnes, JP Morgan said alternative estimates suggest actual buying activity remained much stronger. Citing World Gold Council estimates based on over-the-counter market data and Swiss refinery flows, the report said gold purchases in the first quarter of 2026 may have reached 244 tonnes, up from 208 tonnes in the previous quarter. China appears to be one of the major sources of demand, according to the report. "Chinese net imports of gold have inflected higher, coming in at 317 tons in the first quarter of 2026, up by nearly three times compared to the previous quarter," Shearer said. "Furthermore, the People's Bank of China has ramped up its reported purchases, from around a one-ton-per-month pace for the six months through February to five tons in March and eight tons in April," he added.

RBI Compounds FEMA Violations In Ripe Accountancy Services Case

New Delhi: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued a compounding order under Section 15 of Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), in the case of Ripe Accountancy Services Private Limited, which has resulted in the termination of proceedings against the company for contravention of provisions under FEMA, according to a statement issued by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday. The order has been passed by the RBI with a one-time payment of Rs 1.77 lakh to be paid by the company, after the ED issued the required "no objection" in the case. Section 15 provides a mechanism for individuals or companies to voluntarily admit to a violation of FEMA regulations, pay a penalty, and regularise the contravention without undergoing lengthy litigation or legal proceedings. Investigation was earlier taken up by ED in this case, based on credible information received, under the provisions of FEMA. After completion of

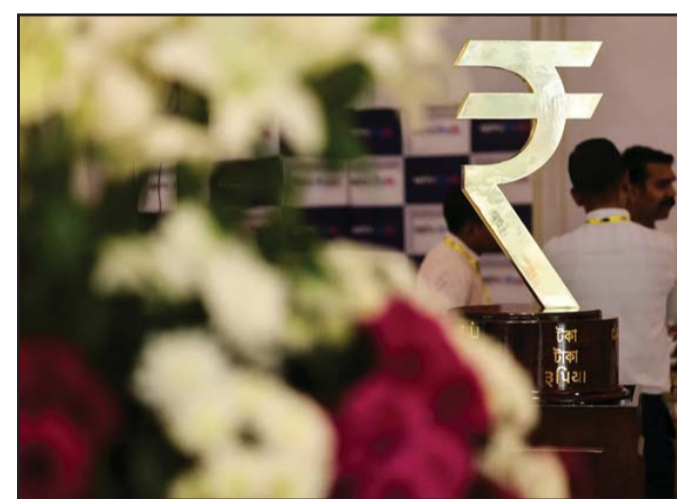


investigation, the ED filed a complaint before the Adjudicating Authority pointing out the failure of the company to report the receipt of foreign inward remittance to the tune of Rs 10.39 lakh within the prescribed time period. There was also a delay in filing form Foreign Currency-Gross Provisional Return (FC-GPR) by the firm pertaining to an amount of Rs 99,000. Besides, the company failed to refund excess share application within the stipulated period which involved a sum of Rs 9,40,451. The company also failed to Foreign

Liabilities and Assets (FLA) returns in the mandatory annual reporting form required by the RBI under the Foreign Exchange Management Act. The company, later on, filed an application before the RBI for compounding of these contraventions under FEMA as per the provisions of Section 15 of the Act. On reference from RBI, the ED issued no objection for such compounding in line with the true spirit of the Act. Accordingly, the RBI, on the basis of no objection issued by ED, has compounded these contraventions vide compounding order dated January 30, 2026.

Rupee to depreciate more if the conflict continues to linger: Report

New Delhi, 14/5: The Indian rupee could face further depreciation if the West Asia conflict continues for a prolonged period, with higher crude oil prices likely to keep pressure on India's economy and external balances, according to an ICICI Bank research report. The report said that while the temporary truce between Iran and the US has brought some stability to currency markets, uncertainty over a final resolution remains high. "We reiterate that until a resolution to the conflict is reached, risk aversion flows supporting the global USD will likely remain in place," the ICICI Bank report said. The report added that rising crude oil prices are a major concern for India because the country imports most of its oil requirements. Higher oil prices increase import costs, widen the trade deficit and put pressure on the rupee. According to the report, the USD/INR pair is expected to trade in the 93.50-95.50 range in the near term, with "upside risks to these projections" if geopolitical tensions intensify



further. The report noted that the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz has kept energy prices elevated, which has strengthened the US dollar globally while weakening the currencies of oil-importing countries such as India. "In the case of India, the risks associated with the conflict on growth-inflation dynamics and external sector have remained in place, which has kept the local currency under pressure," the report said. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had taken several

measures to reduce speculative trading in the foreign exchange market, including capping net open positions of banks and restricting certain forward contract activities. The report said these steps helped the rupee recover from its record low levels. However, the report warned that the impact of those measures has started fading as geopolitical tensions continue. The report also flagged risks to India's economic growth and inflation outlook if oil prices remain high for a prolonged

period. "If the war continues for a prolonged period and oil prices remain higher, there is a downside bias for GDP growth projections and an upside bias to inflation estimates," it said. On the external sector, the report said higher oil imports and weaker exports to Gulf countries could widen India's current account deficit, which refers to the gap between the country's imports and exports of goods and services. "As per our estimates, for every ~USD 10/bbl. increase in global oil prices, the CAD widens by ~USD 12bn or 0.3% of GDP," the report said. The report added that foreign investor outflows have also remained elevated, putting additional pressure on India's balance of payments and the rupee. "Overall, we believe that the BoP (Balance of Payments) outlook could continue to remain subdued for a third consecutive year, which implies that the domestic currency is likely to remain under pressure," the report said. At the time of filing this report, rupee stood at 95.8 against the dollar, which is at an all-time high.

ISRO Working On Tech To Extend Lunar Lander Life Up To 200 Days: Chairman Narayanan

New Delhi: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is working on developing technologies that could significantly extend the operational life of future lunar landers to as much as 100-200 days, a major advancement over the current 14-day lifespan achieved by Chandrayaan-3, ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan said on Saturday. The initiative — undertaken in collaboration with the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) — aims to address one of the most challenging aspects of lunar exploration, surviving the extreme conditions of the Moon's night, when temperatures drop sharply and solar power becomes unavailable. Explaining the challenge, Narayanan noted that while India successfully achieved a historic soft landing near the Moon's south pole with Chandrayaan-3 in August 2023, the Vikram lander remained operational only for the duration of the lunar day. Once the lunar night set in, the absence of sunlight led to a loss of power, limiting operations. To overcome this



limitation, ISRO and DAE are now developing artificial heating systems that could protect spacecraft electronics and instruments during the prolonged lunar night. These systems are expected to ensure continuous functionality even in extremely low-temperature conditions. "We are going to develop artificial heaters. If we succeed, such

landers can survive for 100 to 200 days instead of only 14 days," Narayanan said. India made history on August 23, 2023, by becoming the first country to land near the Moon's south pole, a region considered crucial for future exploration due to the possible presence of water ice. Earlier in June, the government's Indian National

Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACE) has selected three Indian space startups — Astrobases Space Technologies, SatSure Analytics India and TM2SPACE Technologies — as the first set of Non-Governmental Entities (NGEs) for funding under its Technology Adoption Fund (TAF) scheme.

SpaceX Settles 19 PC Higher On Debut Day With Market Cap At Record \$2.2 Trillion

New Delhi: Elon Musk-run SpaceX's initial public offering delivered a blockbuster debut in the US, handing early buyers a 31 per cent gain, before settling up 19 per cent above the offering price of \$135. The shares ended the day at \$160.95, giving SpaceX a market capitalisation of about \$2.2 trillion after its first day of trading, turning the rocket maker's founder Elon Musk the world's first trillionaire. On the stock market debut day, SpaceX became the sixth-highest valued public company in the world. SpaceX's debut became an avenue of growth for an entire stock market that has been relying this year on optimism about the growth potential for artificial intelligence. The offering raised roughly \$75 billion, one of the largest IPOs in history. The listing drew intense demand from institutions and retail investors, with people familiar with the matter saying orders topped \$350 billion, and still one-third of them not receiving any stock. Retail interest alone



accounted for over \$100 billion of demand, a report said. SpaceX's acquisition of Musk's xAI earlier in 2026 and the company's push into artificial intelligence helped portray the IPO as a test of market enthusiasm for AI driven business models, analysts said. However, some analysts warned that stock's high valuation may outpace fundamentals as SpaceX reported a \$4.28 billion net loss in the first quarter of 2026. For

US IPOs raising at least \$1 billion, the biggest day-one gain belongs to design software maker Figma, which rose 250 per cent in its 2025 debut, according to data. But it gave up the gains and is now trading about 45 per cent below its IPO price. Meanwhile, after Musk reached the trillionaire status, Democratic lawmakers such as Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren and California Representative Ro Khanna demanded a wealth tax on the richest Americans.

Women have always been a lot more courageous: Bhumi Pednekkar on how OTT gives stronger roles



Actor Bhumi Pednekkar shared how OTT platforms are creating stronger opportunities for women in Indian cinema, allowing them to explore more diverse and courageous roles. Speaking at the ongoing International Film Festival Delhi (IFFD) 2026, she said, "I feel with OTT, especially for women, the narrative has become a lot stronger, because a lot of those shows, a lot of those films are led by women... Absolutely, women have always been a lot more courageous and brave while choosing their scripts. OTT just gives them the right platform." Pednekkar, who attended the festival alongside filmmakers and actors, praised Delhi for hosting the event. "Delhi, of all the places, really deserved an International Film Festival... The scale at which it's happening, the number of people attending, the talks, seminars, and films... everything is operating at such a high level. And this is only the first year," she said. On staying relevant in the industry, she added, "I think the biggest thing is that you should not stay relevant, you should just stay true to your craft, because relevance is very short lived. And it's exhausting. How long will you keep staying relevant? What's important is finding what your true talent is, understanding the artist in you. And constantly doing riyaz so that that never goes." Bhumi also spoke about the importance of health and self-care for women in the film industry, especially as they age. She explains that the physical demands of acting, like gaining or losing weight for a role, become more challenging over time because the body's ability to handle these changes decreases. She emphasised that at a certain stage, it's more important to prioritize overall health and well-being over strictly altering one's body for a role. "I was doing this for many years, where I was increasing my weight, reducing it. Now I have reduced it a little, because as a woman, as your age increases, your body's ability to take that weight gain and weight loss reduces. So now I prioritise my health and my body over the parts, because at some age, women have to start doing that," she added. Sharing advice for aspiring women actors, Pednekkar said, "Even now in India, we think the world of films is very dangerous, but it's not. Many women have become very capable in this world. If you have a dream, there will be many people who tell you 'no,' but you have to listen to that 'yes.' Always stay safe and know which people are right and which are wrong. Experience will teach you that." The IFFD is a week-long festival which began on March 25. It is taking place at Bharat Mandapam. It presents screenings, conversations, and industry engagements across venues in New Delhi, bringing

together filmmakers, industry leaders, and audiences from around the world.

Huma Qureshi receives a shout out from American filmmaker Zack Snyder



Tuesday morning became extra special for actor Huma Qureshi as she woke up to a surprise shout-out from acclaimed global filmmaker Zack Snyder. In an Instagram post, Zack recalled working with Huma in 2021 Netflix zombie heist film 'Army of the Dead'. Calling Huma an "amazing" actor, Zack wrote, "@iamhumaq -- one of the most amazing actors I've had the pleasure of working with on Army of the Dead. Talent, presence, and pure brilliance on screen." "Have a look at his post here. In response, Huma dropped a comment filled with gratitude." "You the best.. boss man," she wrote. She also penned a thank you message for Zack on her Instagram story. "Such a sweet surprise getting this shout out from Zack Snyder. Miss you and my AOTD family (Red heart emoji)," Huma posted. With Dave Bautista leading the cast, the film follows a group of men and women who come together to stage a heist at a casino in Vegas. Ella Purnell, Omari Hardwick, Ana de la Reguera, Theo Rossi, Matthias Schweighöfer, Nora Arnezeder, Hiroyuki

Bhumi Pednekkar Explores The Odia Cuisine: Layered Flavours, Thoughtful Ingredients

Mumbai: Actress Bhumi Pednekkar got a chance to explore the Odia cuisine during her recent visit to Rourkela. On Monday, 'The Royal' actress revealed that she came to the city for work, but ended up exploring the highly underrated food in the country. Bhumi published a video compilation of all the fun she had while trying out the various delicacies Rourkela has to offer. She wrote on the photo-sharing app, "Bhooki Bhumi has reached Rourkela! I came here for work, but as usual, my stomach had other plans. Between meetings and madness, I went on a full-blown food adventure and discovered that Odisha has been quietly serving some of the most underrated food in the country. Seriously, why is nobody talking about this enough?! (sic)" One of the dishes Bhumi talked about was, Pakhala Bhata, a traditional Odia dish made by soaking cooked rice in water and fermenting it overnight. "Pakhala Bhata, Refreshing, packed with gut-friendly bacteria, and basically the original probiotic before probiotics became cool," she added. Putting her experience in her own words, Bhumi further penned, "Every meal had me going, 'Wait... what is this and why is it so good?' The flavours are layered, the ingredients are thoughtful, and everything feels like it was created with purpose,



not just taste, but wellness too." "Needless to say, I arrived in Rourkela for work and left with a new personality trait: talking about Odia food," she went on to conclude. Talking about her professional commitments, Bhumi recently garnered a lot of praise for her performance in the Prime Video series "Daldal." Based on Vish Dhamija's bestselling novel Bheni Bazaar, the show reached the OTT platform on 30 January this year. Now, Bhumi is also gearing up for season two of "Daldal". Her lineup further includes a romantic comedy in which she will be sharing screen space with Imran Khan, marking their primary on-screen collaboration.

SPORTS

Women's T20 WC: Australia Win Toss And Elect To Bat Against South Africa In Campaign Opener

Manchester, 13/6: Australia have won the toss and elected to bat against South Africa in their first match of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 at the Emirates Old Trafford on Saturday. The six-time champions enter the tournament as the world's top-ranked T20 side and will be aiming to make a strong start under the leadership of new captain Sophie Molineux. Meanwhile, South Africa, currently ranked fifth in the format, arrive with growing confidence as they continue to establish themselves among the elite teams in women's cricket. The Proteas will once again be led by Laura Wolvaardt, who captains the side in her second consecutive T20 World Cup. South Africa will hope to carry forward the momentum they have built over recent years and challenge one of the most dominant teams in the history of the competition. Historically, Australia have enjoyed overwhelming success against South Africa in T20



internationals. The Australians have won nine of the 11 meetings between the two teams, while South Africa have managed just two victories. After winning the toss, Australia skipper Sophie Molineux said, "We are going to have a bat. It would be good to get out there and put a score on the board. Really well. We have covered our warm-up matches and everything. It was probably just how our bowling is going to shape up. The pitch might suit her as well. It is, with it comes enormous responsibility." While after losing the toss, South Africa skipper Laura Wolvaardt said, "Don't mind having a bowl first. We have a good record chasing, so we don't mind. We have played a lot of good cricket, and hopefully it counts for something."

Women's T20 World Cup: Arch-Rivals India, Pakistan Set For High-Voltage Opener

Birmingham, 13/6: India and Pakistan will launch their ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 campaigns with a blockbuster Group 1 clash at Edgbaston on Sunday, adding another chapter to one of cricket's most compelling rivalries. Matches between the two neighbours rarely follow conventional expectations, with pressure and emotion often outweighing rankings and recent form. The atmosphere is expected to be

electric at Edgbaston, where Birmingham's sizeable South Asian community has traditionally turned India-Pakistan contests into special occasions. India enter the tournament carrying the weight of expectation as they continue their pursuit of a maiden Women's T20 World Cup title. Led by Harmanpreet Kaur, the side boasts a blend of experience and firepower, particularly at the top of the order where Smriti

Mandhana and Shafali Verma can dictate the tempo from the outset. Pakistan, captained by Fatima Sana, arrive with a youthful squad keen to make an immediate statement. Although India enjoy a superior head-to-head record in T20Is, Pakistan will take confidence from the fact that major tournaments often produce unexpected outcomes. The contest could hinge on how Pakistan's bowlers fare against India's batting

strength. Spin stalwarts Sadia Iqbal and Nida Dar will have a crucial role in restricting a batting lineup capable of scoring quickly. India also possess a balanced bowling attack, with Renuka Singh's swing and Deepti Sharma's consistency likely to be important in English conditions. While India start as favourites, Pakistan will be determined to upset the odds and begin their campaign on a winning note.

Tamil Nadu To Accord Full State Honours To Bharathiraja; Final Rites Today

Chennai: Legendary Tamil filmmaker Bharathiraja, whose pioneering work reshaped the landscape of Tamil cinema and brought rural life to the forefront of storytelling, will be laid to rest with full state honours at his farmhouse near Vathalagundu in Theni district on Thursday. The acclaimed director passed away in Chennai on Wednesday due to age-related health complications, triggering an outpouring of grief from the film fraternity, political leaders and admirers across the country. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay visited Bharathiraja's residence in Chennai on Wednesday and paid

his last respects by placing a wreath on the filmmaker's mortal remains. He also met members of the bereaved family and conveyed his condolences. Recognising Bharathiraja's immense contribution to Tamil cinema and culture, the Chief Minister announced that the director's final rites would be conducted with full state honours. Throughout the day, a steady stream of political leaders, actors, filmmakers, and members of the public gathered at the residence to pay homage to the veteran director. Among those who paid their respects were DMK leader M.K. Stalin, Leader of the

Opposition Udhayanidhi Stalin, Ministers N. Anand, R. Nirmal Kumar and Rajmohan, actors Rajinikanth, Kamal Haasan, Sivakumar, Vijayakumar and Radha Ravi, music maestro Ilaiyaraaja, poet-lyricist Vairamuthu and directors S.A. Chandrasekhar and K. Bhagyaraj. Speaking to reporters, Vairamuthu said Bharathiraja's mortal remains would be buried on Thursday at his farmhouse near Vathalagundu, where the filmmaker had spent much of his time in recent years. He also expressed gratitude to the Tamil Nadu government for deciding to accord state honours to the late director.