

Dumani Mail

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PM Narendra Modi holds high-level meetings with French business leaders in Paris



New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is holding a series of high-level meetings with leading French business leaders in Paris as part of efforts to deepen India-France economic and industrial cooperation. Prime Minister Modi will attend VivaTech 2026, alongside French President Emmanuel Macron in the evening.

Prime Minister Modi will lead a series of high-level engagements at the summit, culminating in a highly anticipated keynote address that highlights India's skyrocketing global digital footprint. The VivaTech

Summit is Europe's largest technology and startup event, where Mr modi is expected to highlight India's growing innovation ecosystem and technological advancements. India will have the largest national pavilion at this edition of VivaTech Summit, a fitting symbol of the enormous potential for partnership between the Indian and European innovation ecosystems.

The Prime Minister is also scheduled to address members of the Indian community during a special diaspora event.

Kiren Rijiju chairs Haj review meeting 2027 in New Delhi



New Delhi: Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju today chaired the Haj review meeting 2027 in New Delhi. Briefing the Media after the review meeting, Mr Rijiju described the Haj 2026 as the most successful Haj in the history of India.

The Minister said that India received

two Labbaytum Awards from the Ministry of Haj and Umrah of Saudi Arabia for Haj 2026. He noted that the government will announce the new Haj Policy soon for Haj 2027. The Minister emphasised that the Haj 2027 will be better than this year.

'Proud' of Indian diaspora's efforts in bringing India-France ties closer: PM Modi

New Delhi: PM Modi is bringing India and France closer together and emphasized the growing importance of the strategic partnership between the two nations.

In a post on X, the Prime Minister said, "Reached Paris a short while ago to a warm welcome by the Indian diaspora. I am proud of their efforts in bringing India and France closer. The India-France partnership is vital for the progress of our planet."

The Prime Minister's arrival in Paris follows a busy schedule at the G7 Summit in Evian, where he participated in discussions on major global challenges and held a series of bilateral meetings with world leaders.

Reflecting on his engagements at the summit, PM Modi described the discussions as productive and said they provided an important platform to present India's perspectives on governance, policymaking and global development.

He noted that India highlighted its efforts in several key areas and stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation with countries of the Global South to ensure inclusive and sustainable global prosperity.


"I had a series of productive meetings and exchanges during the G7 Summit in Évia. I had the opportunity to present India's positions and efforts on key areas of

governance and policymaking. I also emphasized the need to work closely with the Global South for global prosperity," the Prime Minister said.

India has increasingly positioned itself as a leading voice of the Global South, advocating for inclusive economic growth, equitable access to technology, climate justice and reforms in global governance institutions. PM Modi's interventions at the G7 Summit are viewed as part of India's broader diplomatic outreach aimed at ensuring that the concerns and aspirations of developing nations receive greater attention on international platforms.


During his Paris visit, the Prime Minister is scheduled to participate in VivaTech 2026, one of Europe's largest technology and innovation events. His address at the summit is expected to showcase India's rapidly growing digital economy, thriving startup ecosystem and advancements in emerging technologies.

France remains one of India's closest strategic partners in Europe, with both countries sharing strong cooperation on regional and global issues. Recent years have witnessed growing collaboration in areas such as defence manufacturing, maritime security, renewable energy, artificial intelligence and innovation.




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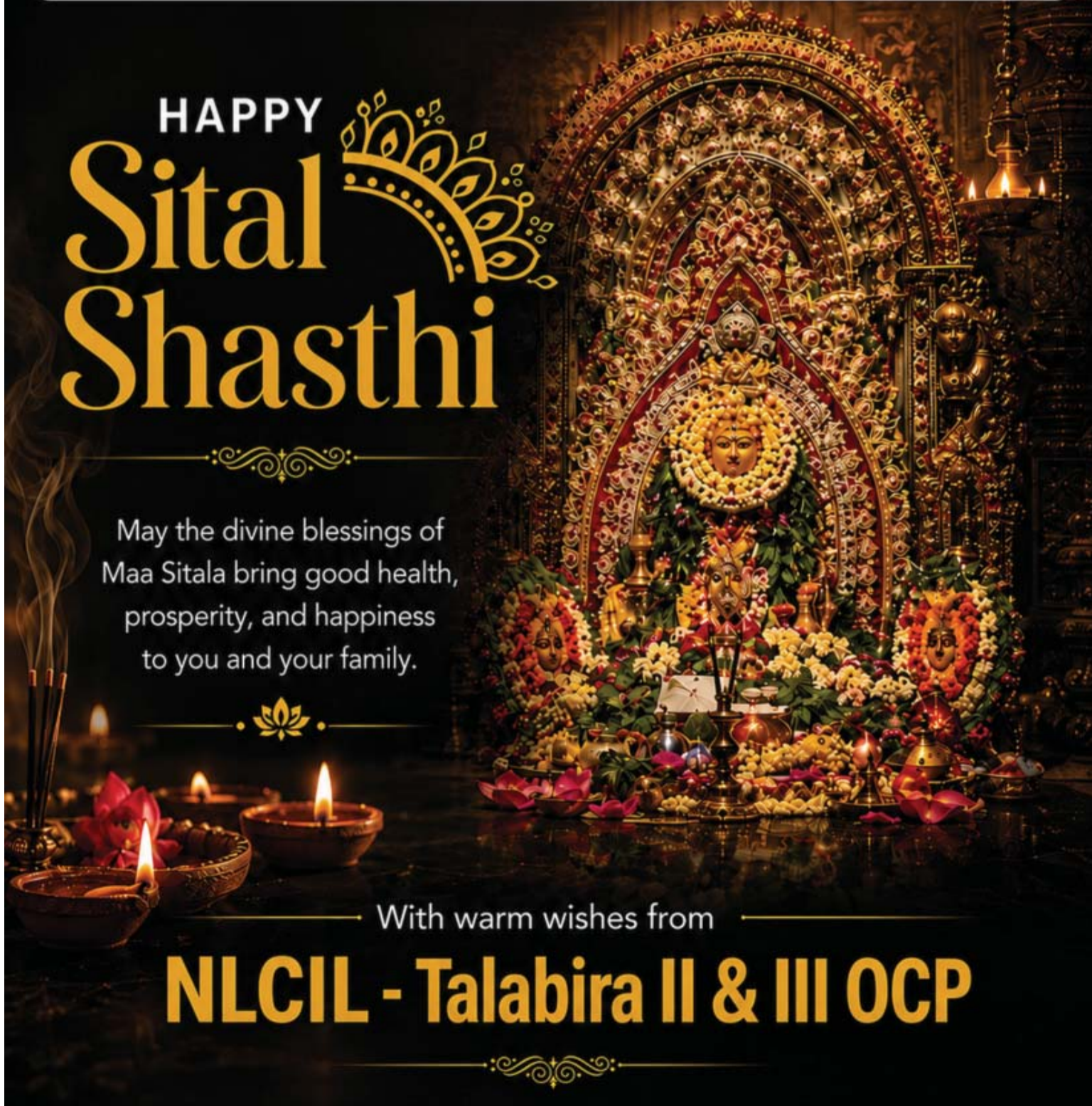
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HAPPY Sital Shasthi

May the divine blessings of Maa Sitala bring good health, prosperity, and happiness to you and your family.

With warm wishes from

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Vedanta Aluminium Provides Learning Kits to 2,300+ Children in Jharsuguda

Distributed across 175 Vedanta Nand Ghars in the district, supporting early childhood learning and development

Jharsuguda, Odisha, 17th June 2026: Reinforcing its commitment to advancing early childhood education and development, Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest producer of aluminium, undertook a large-scale distribution drive of school bags and water bottles across 175 Vedanta Nand Ghars in Jharsuguda district. As part of the initiative, company leadership visited villages across the district to distribute learning kits to more than 2,300 children, aged between two to six years old, equipping them with essential resources to

support their educational journey while also encouraging greater school participation.

Deployed under the aegis of the Anil Agarwal Foundation and undertaken in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Nand Ghar is the flagship community development project of the Vedanta Group. It reimagines anganwadis as modernized hubs of women and child development equipped with smart learning tools and sustainable infrastructure.

Vedanta Aluminium has established 250 Nand Ghars in



Jharsuguda district, supporting over 4,000 children with enhanced access to early learning, nutrition and basic care. Powered by solar

energy, they are equipped with smart TVs, interactive learning modules and BaLA (Building as Learning Aid) features where

walls, floors and spaces are designed to support activity-based learning. Regular interventions such as immunization support, health awareness sessions and caregiver engagement help strengthen early childhood development.

Speaking on the initiative, C Chandru, CEO - Vedanta Aluminium, Jharsuguda, said, "At Vedanta Aluminium, we believe that meaningful progress begins with investing in our communities. Through Vedanta's Nand Ghar project, we are strengthening the foundations of learning and

development for young children to facilitate their long-term success."

Vedanta Aluminium continues to support these centers through school readiness initiatives, and periodic health and nutrition campaigns, along with regular outreach efforts to maximize community participation. These efforts help build strong learning foundations, while also supporting women's direct participation in the development of their families and communities.

In FY26, Vedanta Aluminium's community

development efforts in Jharsuguda positively impacted the lives of more than 7 lakh people across 61 villages, ensuring sustainable, inclusive growth. Through targeted interventions in education, healthcare, livelihoods, women's empowerment, rural infrastructure, and grassroots arts and sports, the company is working to improve the quality of life of local communities. These initiatives are guided by a commitment to shared value creation, ensuring that development is both meaningful and enduring.

Health Minister recovers from accident

Keonjhar : Health Minister Mukesh Mahaling's official vehicle met with an accident near Jagmohanpur today while going to Mayurbhanj district via Keonjhar. He was going to Mayurbhanj district on NH 49, at about 5.45 pm an accident occurred at Jagmohanpur under Telkoi police station.

After receiving the information, the police reached and rescued him and sent him safely in another vehicle. According to the sources, when they are proceeding the pilot vehicle moving ahead suddenly stopped due to sudden braking at a humps. As a result, the minister's vehicle is coming from behind the pilot vehicle.

The police are taking steps to move the accident vehicle aside. As a result, traffic problems were reported on the road for some time, but it has been resolved. The minister and others got out of the car after the safety balloon of the vehicle was released. A crowd of people gathered to watch. As a result, traffic on the road was stopped.

Anjan Kumar Patra, Telkoi police station officer said that it was a minor accident. Everyone is safe. Traffic is cleared after minister went. Although the construction of humps on NH-49 is illegal, people blocked the road to build humps after an accident at the same place a few months ago in which three people lost their lives. Such accidents have occurred due to the said humps. Due to the construction of humps in various places, many accidents have occurred and traffic has become unsafe.

Parking Chaos Grips Khordha City:-Traffic Congestion, Safety Risks and Public Outcry on the Rise.

Khordha- 18/6-As khordha steadily transforms into one of odisha's rapidly growing urban centres, the city is simultaneously grappling with a serious civic challenge that is affecting the daily lives of thousands of residents—an increasingly chaotic and unregulated parking system. What should have been a symbol of urban growth and economic activity is now emerging as a major obstacle to smooth transportation, public safety and emergency services.

From the bustling Marwari Patti market area to the Old Bus Stand, New Bus Stand, Hospital Square, Court Square and several key commercial hubs, indiscriminate roadside parking has become a common sight. Vehicles parked haphazardly on both sides of the roads have significantly narrowed traffic corridors, leading to frequent congestion, delays and growing frustration among commuters. Every morning, as office-goers rush to work and students head to schools and colleges, the city's major roads witness a sharp rise in traffic volume. Instead of facilitating smooth movement, many stretches of road become bottlenecks due to rows of parked motorcycles, cars and commercial vehicles occupying valuable road space. Commuters often find themselves trapped in traffic snarls, while public transport vehicles struggle to navigate through congested streets.

Residents say the problem has become particularly severe in the New Bus Stand area, where shopping complexes, retail stores, restaurants and food outlets and juice shop attract large numbers of customers throughout the day. In the absence of designated parking facilities, many visitors leave their vehicles directly on the roadside while they shop or dine. According to local residents, several commercial establishments have failed to provide adequate parking spaces for customers, forcing public roads to serve as unofficial parking lots. The

consequences of this growing disorder are visible everywhere. Bus drivers, auto-rickshaw operators, motorcyclists and cyclists are finding it increasingly difficult to move safely through crowded streets. During peak hours, even a minor obstruction can quickly escalate into a major traffic



jam, disrupting movement across large sections of the city. For pedestrians, the situation is even more alarming. In many areas, footpaths are either absent or encroached upon by parked vehicles. As a result, pedestrians are often compelled to walk on busy roads alongside moving traffic. Elderly citizens, women, children and school students are among the worst affected. Parents have expressed concern over the safety of children who are forced to navigate through traffic due to the lack of pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. The growing parking crisis has also raised serious concerns about road safety. Residents report several near-miss incidents and minor accidents caused by sudden vehicle movements and reduced road visibility. Traffic experts warn that unless corrective measures are taken soon, the city could witness a significant increase in road accidents. Perhaps

the most worrying aspect of the situation is its impact on emergency services. There have been instances where ambulances transporting critically ill patients and fire service vehicles responding to emergencies have been delayed due to severe traffic congestion caused by indiscriminate parking. Such delays can have life-threatening consequences, especially during medical emergencies when every minute matters. Hospital visitors and patient

attendants have repeatedly voiced concerns about traffic congestion near healthcare facilities. Many believe that blocked access roads and poorly managed parking arrangements could jeopardize emergency medical response times, placing lives at risk. Adding

to the city's woes is another civic issue that has increasingly drawn public attention—the malfunctioning street lights in several parts of Khordha. As darkness falls, numerous roads remain poorly illuminated, making it difficult for drivers to spot parked vehicles along road shoulders. The combination of inadequate lighting and unauthorised parking creates a dangerous environment for motorists and pedestrians alike.

The risk becomes even greater during the monsoon season. Heavy rainfall, waterlogged roads and poor visibility make driving challenging, while parked vehicles become unexpected hazards that can lead to accidents. Residents fear that without immediate intervention, the city could witness a rise in nighttime road mishaps. Despite

repeated complaints and appeals from citizens, many residents allege that authorities have yet to implement a long-term solution to the problem. While traffic enforcement drives

and fines are occasionally imposed, people argue that these measures only provide temporary relief and fail to address the root causes of the crisis. Citizens believe that Khordha's parking and traffic problems require comprehensive urban planning rather than periodic enforcement campaigns. They have urged the district administration, municipal authorities and traffic police to work together in developing a sustainable traffic management strategy that reflects the city's growing population and vehicle density. Urban planners and members of civil society have suggested several measures, including the creation of multi-level parking facilities, establishment of designated parking zones, installation of digital traffic monitoring systems, strict penalties for illegal parking and regular public awareness campaigns promoting responsible road usage. They also emphasize the urgent need to repair all non-functional street lights to ensure safer nighttime travel. Many experts point out that Khordha is currently at a crucial stage of its urban development. The city is witnessing expansion in commerce, infrastructure and residential growth. However, without addressing fundamental civic issues such as parking management, traffic regulation and pedestrian safety, the benefits of development could be overshadowed by growing urban challenges. For many residents, the parking crisis is no longer merely an inconvenience—it has become a daily struggle affecting productivity, public safety and quality of life. As Khordha aspires to evolve into a modern and smart city, citizens believe that solving the parking and traffic management problem must become an immediate priority. Unless swift and decisive action is taken by the concerned authorities, residents warn that the issue may spiral into a far more complex urban challenge in the coming years, threatening not only public safety but also the city's overall growth and development. The people of Khordha now await concrete action, hoping that their concerns will finally translate into meaningful reforms before the situation reaches a critical point.

District-Level Disaster Management Tabletop Exercise Held in Khordha.

Khordha-18/6- With the monsoon season approaching and the possibility of natural calamities such as cyclones, floods, and heavy rainfall looming over the state, the Khordha district administration has intensified its preparedness efforts by conducting a comprehensive district-level disaster management tabletop exercise. The exercise, aimed at enhancing coordination among various government departments and emergency response agencies, underscored the administration's commitment to achieving a "Zero Casualty" target during any future disaster situation. The important preparedness meeting was held at the conference hall of the Panchayat Samiti Khordha and brought together senior officials from multiple departments, emergency response agencies, and public utility service providers. The exercise focused on reviewing preparedness measures, identifying possible challenges during emergencies, and ensuring seamless coordination among all stakeholders responsible for disaster response and relief operations.

Presiding over the meeting, Additional District Magistrate (Revenue) Safalya Mandit Pradhan emphasized the importance of proactive planning

and coordinated action before, during, and after disasters. He reviewed the preparedness status of various departments and stressed that every agency must remain fully equipped to respond swiftly to any emergency. Highlighting the district administration's commitment to safeguarding human lives, he reiterated that the primary objective of all disaster management activities should be the prevention of loss of life. The meeting was attended by Additional Superintendent of Police, Srinivas Mohanty, Bhubaneswar Sub-Collector Dr. Manoranjan Sahu, General Manager (Planning and Administration) of the Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) Dr. Sarita Jena, Khordha Block Development Officer Siddhartha Pattnaik, Executive Officer of Khordha Municipality Kaberi Muduli, and representatives from several line departments and emergency response agencies. During the deliberations, officials discussed various disaster scenarios, including cyclones, floods, urban waterlogging, power disruptions, communication failures, and damage to critical infrastructure. Special emphasis was placed on preparedness measures that could minimize risks and ensure rapid response in



the event of a natural calamity.

Addressing the gathering, Additional Superintendent of Police Srinivas Mohanty highlighted the critical role of law enforcement agencies during disasters. He stated that maintaining law and order becomes a major challenge during emergency situations, particularly when relief and rescue operations are underway. The police department, he said, plays a vital role in ensuring the safe transportation and distribution of relief materials, regulating traffic, preventing panic among citizens, and maintaining public order. He further noted that uninterrupted supply and fair distribution of essential commodities such as kerosene, fuel, food items,

medicines, and drinking water are crucial during disaster situations. The police department, he assured, remains fully prepared to assist all concerned agencies in carrying out their responsibilities efficiently.

Bhubaneswar Sub-Collector Dr. Manoranjan Sahu stressed the need for timely evacuation of residents living in vulnerable and disaster-prone areas. He pointed out that early evacuation has repeatedly proven to be one of the most effective measures in reducing casualties during cyclones and floods in Odisha.

Dr. Sahu also highlighted the importance of protecting livestock and domestic animals during disasters. He stated that ensuring proper shelter and safety

arrangements for animals is equally important, as many rural families depend on livestock for their livelihood. He urged officials to maintain close coordination and work with dedication to provide timely assistance to affected communities.

Providing technical guidance during the exercise, OSDMA General Manager Dr. Sarita Jena explained the responsibilities and duties of different departments during disaster management operations. She emphasized that disaster preparedness is not the responsibility of a single department but requires collective effort and coordination among all stakeholders.

She pointed out that proper planning, efficient communication systems, and timely execution of

response measures can significantly reduce the impact of disasters. According to her, every department must clearly understand its assigned role and be ready to act immediately when a disaster warning is issued.

Representatives from local administration and municipal authorities also shared details about their preparedness measures. Block Development Officer Siddhartha Pattnaik and Municipal Executive Officer Kaveri Muduli informed the meeting about the arrangements being made at the grassroots level, including the readiness of cyclone and flood shelters, maintenance of drinking water facilities, sanitation services, and emergency support systems. Officials reported that efforts are underway to ensure that shelter homes remain equipped with essential facilities such as clean drinking water, electricity, toilets, medical support, and emergency food supplies. Special attention is also being given to sanitation management in order to prevent disease outbreaks in the aftermath of disasters.

A major part of the exercise focused on reviewing the preparedness of critical service providers and emergency response agencies. Officials from TPCODL, ODRAF, NDRF, Fire Services, Health Department, Social Welfare

Department, Child Protection Unit, Education Department, WATCO, Rural Water Supply and Sanitation, Rural Development, Agriculture and Horticulture, Veterinary Services, Irrigation Department, Drainage Department, and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) presented their action plans and preparedness strategies. Power utility officials briefed the administration about contingency plans for restoring electricity supply after storms and cyclones, while communication service providers discussed measures to maintain connectivity during emergencies. Health department officials highlighted arrangements for emergency medical teams, stockpiling of medicines, ambulance services, and disease surveillance mechanisms. Agricultural and veterinary departments shared plans for protecting crops and livestock, while irrigation and drainage authorities outlined flood mitigation measures and strategies for clearing waterlogged areas.

The tabletop exercise also served as a platform to identify potential gaps in preparedness and to strengthen inter-departmental coordination. Officials engaged in detailed discussions on emergency communication protocols, resource mobilization, rescue operations, relief distribution mechanisms, and post-disaster rehabilitation measures.

Former Law Minister appeal the CM to challenge HC's order on Sarada Mines case

Narsh Chandra Pattanayak Keonjhar : Former Minister of Law and leader of Opposition Narasingh Mishra wrote letter to the Chief Minister of Odisha Mohan Charan Majhi on Tuesday to challenge the order of High Court before Supreme Court to quash the order where the HC allowed the extension of lease period to Sarada Mines Pvt. Ltd for 5 years and 10 months.

"In my opinion the judgment is not correct. Under the law once the lease period has expired, it should be put auction and can't extend", he mentioned in the letter.

Citing the writ petition(C) No. 17676/2024 i.e. Sarada Mines Pvt Ltd and others vs State of Odisha and others has held the lease period should be extended the above period, the former Law Minister wrote the letter.

According to the judgment after hearing the

Sarada Mines Private Limited vs State of Odisha (writ petition(C) No. 17676/2024) the HC on 20 May 2026 ordered, the state government (OP) to permit the petitioner to operate the Mining Lease for an added period of 5 years and 10 months reckoned from the resumption order dated 31-01-2020 without interference, subject to unusual compliances.

Sources said that the state government has stopped the mining operation on the ground of Apex court's interim order dated 16-05-2014 in the case a writ petition no 114 of 2014 filed by the Common Cause.

Further the government vide letter number 15-01-2015, had categorically stated that the environment clearance dated 22-09-2004 was valid and subsisting. Subsequently the petitioner had filed IA No. 42 of 2014

According to the sources the company was got mining on lease of 947.046 hectares of land in Block B of Thakurani iron ore mine near Soyabali village in Joda mining mandal of Keonjhar district in the year 2001 for the period of 20 years. The lease expired on 18-08-2021.

and IA No 186810 of 2019 seeking resumption of Mining Operation and the Apex court allowed the same vide order dated 15-01-2020.

Deputy Director of Mines, Joda Biswaranjan Sethy said "So far we have not received any order regarding it and the

mines yet not started. Government will take decision and accordingly steps will be taken". (EOM)

According to the sources the company was got mining on lease of 947.046 hectares of land in Block B of Thakurani iron ore mine near Soyabali village in Joda mining mandal of Keonjhar district in the year 2001 for the period of 20 years. The lease expired on 18-08-2021.

Due to lack of environmental and forest clearance, the mining department stopped the work for 5 years and 10 months from 01-04-2014 to 31-01-2020. Later, mining work was resumed on the orders of the court. The lease period of the said company had expired in 2021. However, it had applied to the mining

department for permission to continue the work for 5 years and 10 months, which was stopped without any reason. After failing, it approached the High Court. The High Court (W.P. (C) 17676/2024) heard this and allowed the mining work to continue for 5 years and 10 months, which was stopped. As a result, a dispute has arisen regarding this. It is being claimed that the lease period of the said mine should not be extended again rather auction it immediately. Due to legal process the state government could not auctioned for which the state government will lose huge revenue. Beside that earlier in a case of JSPL minerals transportation, the state government moved to supreme court to challenge the high court order, then in this case why not the state government will go" said a social activist Mukhtar Ahmed Rayen of Keonjhar .

Paradip College organized extramural lecture

Paradip, (DMS) :- Paradip College and ICG ,Paradip organized extramural lecture as well as Quiz Competition on 18.06.2026 on the eve of International Yoga Day Celebrations -2026. Dr Sasmita Satapathy, Principal of Paradip College delivered welcome address with succinct note on the significance of yoga in human life. The officials from Indian Coast Guard (ICG) ,Paradip demonstrated postures of yoga highlighting the impact of different types of Yoga on life. A quiz



competition was also conducted among the students on the theme of yoga. The NCC Cadets, NSS & YRC Volunteers along with other

students attended the programme. A few members of staff were also present on the occasion. Ltcd. Akshaya Chandra Mishra, Ex-NCC officer and

Abhisekh Biswal, Lect. in Botany & In-charge of NCC Wing, Paradip College extended their active cooperation for the

smooth arrangement of the programme. At the end Ganeswar Patra, IQAC Coordinator extended vote of thanks.

Senior Deputy Election Commissioner Reviews SIR Exercise in Puri, Conducts Field Visit

Puri: Senior Deputy Election Commissioner of India, Gyanesh Bharati, on Wednesday reviewed the progress of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) programme in Puri district and assessed the ongoing electoral roll verification exercise.

The review was held at the Circuit House, where Puri Collector Divya Jyoti Parida welcomed the Election Commission team upon their arrival. During the meeting, the Collector presented a detailed overview of the SIR exercise being carried out across the district.

According to officials, Puri district comprises six Assembly constituencies, with six senior officers designated as Electoral Registration Officers (EROs). The district has a



total of 1,609 polling booths, for which 1,609 trained Booth Level Officers (BLOs) have been deployed. To support and monitor their work, 161 BLO supervisors have also been appointed.

The district has a voter base of 13.88 lakh electors. Officials informed the review

team that BLOs have so far distributed forms to 99.43% of voters. While one copy of the form is retained by the voter, the duly filled and signed copy is being collected by the BLOs. Election officials are also assisting voters in filling up the forms wherever required. The digitisation of voter

forms is progressing simultaneously, with 40.67% of the records already digitised, the Collector said through a PowerPoint presentation.

During the review, Bharati sought clarifications on various aspects of the SIR process. The queries were addressed by Odisha Chief Electoral Officer R. S. Gopalan and Collector Parida.

The meeting was attended by several senior officials, including Principal Secretary to the Election Commission S. B. Joshi, Deputy Secretary Abhinav Agrawal, Chief Development Officer of the Zilla Parishad Sneha Arugula, Additional CEO Sushanta Kumar Mishra and other district-level

officers.

Following the review meeting, Bharati and members of the delegation visited the revered Shri Jagannath Temple and offered prayers. On the occasion, the Collector presented traditional Pattachitra paintings depicting Lord Jagannath as a token of felicitation. Earlier in the day, the Election Commission team undertook field visits and inspected several polling booths in the Pipili and Satyabadi Assembly constituencies. The officials interacted with BLOs and BLO supervisors to obtain first-hand feedback on the implementation of the SIR exercise and the challenges being faced at the ground level.

Opposition to Unauthorised Dance Performances Before Chariots During Rath Yatra; 6-Point Memorandum Submitted to Administration

PURI: Raising concerns over alleged unauthorised dance performances in front of the chariots during Lord Jagannath's annual Rath Yatra and the need to safeguard traditional rituals, several social and religious organisations on Thursday submitted a six-point memorandum to the district administration.

A seven-member delegation led by Roma Dasmahapatra, convenor of the Puri Parampara Suraksha Manch, along with representatives of Achyutananda Trust and eight other organisations, submitted the memorandum to the Chief Administrator of the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA), the



district collector and the superintendent of police.

The organisations urged the authorities to formulate and publicly announce a clear policy regarding dance

performances conducted in front of the chariots during the Rath Yatra. They sought transparency on which individuals or groups would be permitted to perform and the

criteria governing such permissions.

According to the memorandum, eligibility for performances should be determined in accordance with the temple's age-old traditions, religious customs and the views of senior servitors. The groups also called for a public disclosure of the guidelines governing such performances.

The memorandum further demanded an independent inquiry into alleged unauthorised access, breaches of security cordons and other irregularities reported during the festival. It also sought action against any

servitor or official found guilty of misusing their position or violating established norms.

The delegation also expressed concern over the public presentation of Mahari (devadasi) dance, describing it as a sacred ritual tradition intrinsically linked to the service of Lord Jagannath. Members of the forum alleged that the commercialisation and public staging of the tradition were inappropriate and warranted review.

Among those present during the submission of the memorandum were Prasanna Lenka, Lalatendu Mishra and Suryakanti Pradhan, along with several other prominent citizens.



ODISHA STATE SEEDS CORPORATION LIMITED
(A GOVERNMENT UNDERTAKING)
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TENDER CALL NOTICE No- OSSC/ Engg- 144/ 2026

The Managing Director, Odisha State Seeds Corporation Ltd invites the following tenders through ONLINE through e-procurement site of Govt of Odisha www.tenderodisha.gov.in.

Percentage Rate Tenders from eligible Civil works contractors registered under Competent authority of Govt of Odisha

Amount in Rs.

Sl	Name of the work	Estimated Amt	EMD	Cost of tender document	Completion period	Eligibility class of Contractors
1	Construction of Road and Repair of Office Building at Nimakana	16,46,862.00	16,469.00	6720/-	120	D or above

The details of location of work, estimated amount regarding construction work along-with cost of Tender Document, EMD and other criteria along with critical dates for the above Tenders can be seen in the *Detailed Tender Call Notice* posted in Website of Govt of Odisha www.tenderodisha.gov.in.

The last date for uploading of tender to tender portal is dt. 29.06.2026.

1001/86/2627

Sd/-
Managing Director
OSSC Ltd. BBSR

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
MINORIRRIGATION DIVISION, GANJAM-II, BERHAMPUR.
GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

1ST CORRIGENDUM BID IDENTIFICATION No: GMID-II/02/2026-27

Tender Id : 2026_CEMIB_131959_1 and 2026_CEMIB_131959_2

Ltr No 2410

Date: 11.06.2026

It is hereby informed to all the prospective bidders that the last date and time for bid submission and bid opening for the above mentioned e-tender has been corrected & extended as per details given below.

- Last date of availability of bid document may be read as 22.06.2026 up to 5.00 PM. instead of 21.06.2026 at 5.00 PM
- Date of opening of bid document may be read as 23.06.2026 up to 11.30 AM. instead of 22.06.2026 up to 11.30 AM.

All other terms conditions and conditions in Bid will remain unchanged.

32001/403/2627

Superintending Engineer
I, Division, Ganjam-II Berhampur



GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, KENDRAPARA
INVITATION FOR BIDS (SHORT NOTICE)

cerw_kpd@yahoo.com

'E' PROCUREMENT NOTICE NO. RWD / KPD-01 / 2026-27 DT. 11.06.2026

- Name of work : Road works in the District of Kendrapara for the year 2026-27
 - Total No of work : 37 Numbers of Road work
 - Estimated Cost : Rs.5.08 Lakhs to 42.37 lakhs approximately
 - Period of Completion : As Specified in the Annexure
 - Class of contractors : As Specified in the Annexure
 - Cost of tender paper : Cost of tender paper is to be remitted ONLINE as specified in column-5 of the Annexure.
 - Detail projects : As Specified in the Annexure
- Other details as follows:
- Procurement officer : Superintending Engineer Rural Works Division, Kendrapara
 - Availability of tender online : 20.06.2026 at 11:00 AM to 08.07.2026 up to 5:00 PM
 - Last date & time of seeking of tender clarification : 07.07.2026 up to 5:00 PM
 - Opening of Tender : 09.07.2026 at 11:00 AM

Further details can be seen from the Govt. website www.tendersorissa.gov.in

25001/432/2627

Superintending Engineer
Rural Works Division
Kendrapara



GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

e-Procurement Notice No. e-CHID-04/2026-27

1.	Name of work	: Improvement Works
2.	Total No. of work	: 03 (Three) Nos of work
3.	Estimated cost	: 46.76 lakhs to 49.31 Lakhs
4.	Period of completion	: 6 Calendar Months
5.	Date & time of availability of Bid Document in the portal	: 10.00 hours of 22.06.2026 to 17.00 hours of 06.07.2026
6.	Last date/ Time for receipt of Bids in the Portal	: 06.07.2026 up to 17.00 hours
7.	Date and place of opening of Bid	: Dt. 07.07.2026 at 11.00 Hours in the office of the Superintending Engineer, Chikiti Irrigation Division, Berhampur.
8.	Name and address of the O.I.T (Officer Inviting Tender)	: Superintending Engineer, Chikiti Irrigation Division, Berhampur

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

32001/411/2627

Superintending Engineer
Chikiti Irrigation Division

Defection Time

Days after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi astonishingly declared that the INDIA bloc had already won the 2029 Lok Sabha polls, Opposition parties such as the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena are struggling to keep their flock together. The Congress and its allies have alleged that inducements and pressure tactics are being used rampantly by the BJP to make legislators switch sides. Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut has claimed that Maharashtra MPs are being offered Rs 50 crore each to defect. On Sunday, 20 rebel TMC MPs announced their merger with the Nationalist Citizens' Party of India, a Tripura-based "registered unrecognised" political outfit. The Aam Aadmi Party is already smarting from the loss of seven Rajya Sabha MPs, who joined the BJP in April, while the Samajwadi Party is also facing a poaching threat.

The political turmoil involving defections, mergers and splits raises troubling questions about the health of India's parliamentary democracy. What makes the situation extremely serious is the weakening of the anti-defection framework. The Tenth Schedule of the Constitution was introduced to curb political opportunism and instability. Yet, legal loopholes have turned defections into a recurring feature. Voters elect their representatives not merely as individuals, but as members of political parties with specific ideologies. When elected MPs jump ship without seeking a fresh mandate, public trust in the electoral process suffers. Democracy becomes vulnerable to transactional politics. These controversies put the onus on the Lok Sabha Speaker and the Rajya Sabha Chairperson to exercise impartiality and adhere to constitutional principles. Their decisions have a huge bearing on public confidence in parliamentary institutions.

Defections are not new to Indian politics, but their scale and frequency are increasing alarmingly. India risks normalising a culture where personal gain outweighs principles and electoral accountability doesn't count.

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Close Encounters of the Third Kind

Suresh Chandra Sarangi

The 19077 film, "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," an Academy Award-winning film, suddenly became an eye-catcher and grossed in theatres like anything, making it one of the nerve-chilling movies where an Indiana electrical blue-collar worker is suddenly confronted with a lens and the world suddenly changes for everyone, as an attack on the planet Earth is expected. This, though, was based on science fiction; it spoke of a coming reality that may not be too far off. The Debate between two groups visualising a utopian or dystopian future has come into sharper focus with the metamorphic transformation of Technology. Previously, many books such as Aldi's Huxley's "The Brave New World" and Isaac Asimov's fiction were believed to be a stretch of extended imagination, which has come true in today's world. The future, as the futurologists claim, is full of promise, but not without risk. Whatever may be the fact, at present, we are having a close brush with Artificial Intelligence, and that is certainly more transformational than a close encounter of the third kind.

Humanity, in the 21st century, is walking on a razor's edge, and some even feel the impending doom due to the advancement of technology. It's not only climate, competition or adverse effects of consumerism, things like cybercrime, but hacking is the most used word in the English lexicon. Whether technology can be used to repair a bruised planet or whether it will have far-reaching consequences is anybody's guess. The optimist even speaks that technology can steer clear of two extremes and possibly present a bright future for the hominids, making life comfortable for the netizens. Whatever may be the course of action, it is needless to say that the journey ahead would be breathtaking, and thrilling outcomes of technology can help address human society's most vexing problems. The perils and prospects notwithstanding, a glimmer of hope always floats, and with the bona fide of Artificial Intelligence, it is believed

that a cautious approach would lead us to understand the future clinically and take on the adversities in a redoubled spirit.

The faster changes, due to advancements in technology, have been mesmerising. Technology was there when man learnt the use of fire or invented the wheel, but the invention of the printing press, steam engine, telephone, teleprinter, fax, photography, and medical instruments has happened with normally high speed and resolution and with unprecedented change, that captivates one and all. So fears, hopes

and conjectures affect the powerful technology odyssey and it is final that the inevitable is going to happen with the forces unleashed by technology is going to keep human beings captive, if at least, not a slave, in times to come. When the protagonist of technology are realising the overwhelming response of the technology, the naysayers and doomsayer predict an uncertain future, truly devastating, preparing planet Earth for the sixth extinction.

Let us take an example. Our predecessors were the worst sufferers of floods and pestilence. The super cyclone of 1999 that engulfed Dissa was cataclysmic. But now, with the help of technology, the weather can be predicted, disaster management can work much before cyclone hurts is, and so many and so forth, with the objective of zero casualty and saving of lives of millions of people. The way technology is advancing, it is believed, going ahead, it will affect our work pattern, disrupt our work processes, and streamline all human requirements through AI-controlled machines.

Walter Isaacson's The Code Breaker unravels the area of gene editing and transforms the future of the human race. The DNA can be edited through CRISPR technology, starting a process of new miracles in medical science. The CRISPR

technology is already in use to cure deadly diseases and has been fruitfully employed in finding a vaccine of corona virus. Mostly, gene editing is going to change the human basics, and now the creators are wrestling with greater challenges like its bad effects. So whether a CRISPR experiment would create a man or a demon or the sickest child is a matter of time.

Technology has cracked almost everything, and the world's biggest problems and challenges, in a world of endless outrage due to technology. It is the

pathfinder and has tried to solve them in a convincing manner. Technology has solved the planet's most pressing problems, and the results have been so uplifting in charting an optimistic course for humanity. Let us hope that there are jobs which human can do, but robots do them in a more refined manner, including surgical intervention. There are many jobs that humans can not do that robots are doing; the drone is a bright example, from Agriculture to defence, from spreading pesticides to transportation. The

immutological problems have been solved in treating immunity, which is an elegant defence.

Today, a tumor can be removed through robotic surgery and a bionic eye. It is technology that has created automobiles, air conditioning, wide-screen video displays, and fintechs. Let us think of the possibilities of fintech products like phone pay, Google Pay, and observe for ourselves how. It has changed banking and the problem of immediacy has been solved to a large extent that saves time, distance, petrol and many other things. The smartphone is a saviour for mankind in delivery of many things, knowledge and information sharing at a speed hitherto not thought of is accelerating the process of change. It goes without saying that the space

odyssey and the spectacular search for the aliens in outer space is a reality today.

Technology has compressed history. What was achieved in the 20th century surpasses the entire 900 years of history because of technology. Maybe the 25 years of progress in the new millennium can be equal to the history of the previous two millennia. Science is advancing faster than ever, driven by technological pace, with biotech, nanotechnology, and CRISPR technologies being the moments of joy for the hominids, but the unintended effects of new sciences can not be ignored as they may induce the wrong man who can perpetrate acts of terror, causing a permanent scar in the space-time continuum. Even the robots are coming in a grand way in the next few years, changing life, society, and leisure forever. The risks are unknown. The threat of Bombs and nuclear weapons grips in a significant way, and some scientists even profess our final hour has come.

But the dark side of technology is very aggressive and intimidating. The vulnerabilities are many. Sustainability is an issue. The book "The American Prometheus," which was later filmed as Oppenheimer, is a sad reminder about the devastating power of the atomic bombs, and it is a matter of our sustainability; climate change has changed everything. One feels bewildered and helpless if one atom bomb or the nuclear options by a mad leader can see what Einstein said: "If a Third World War were to be fought, it would be fought with bows and arrows. Despite the progress of Technology, the fate of the bottom billions hangs in the balance. This is a humanitarian imperative and needs urgent attention.

No doubt, the smart phones the internet that connect the world are the best thing that has happened to mankind because of technology. Technology has been a game-changer. But it should be seen as a bad master rather than a good servant. Whether it is Utopia or a dystopian future, it all depends on the human being, the creator. Moreover, surveillance monitors the prospect of Technology. Martin Rees, the space scientist, writes, "Our planet, this pale blue dot, in the cosmos, is a special place. It may be a unique place. And we are its stewards in a crucial era." We must be conscious of the fact that we must work as its preserver.

(Former banker)

RTI Misuse

The Supreme Court's sharp observation that "RTI activism has become a new business" has turned the spotlight on public accountability and misuse of the law. The Court has denied anticipatory bail to an activist accused of obstructing a public servant involved in road construction work and hurling casteist abuse at labourers. Considering the gravity of the charges, the denial of pre-arrest bail appears legally justified. However, the general comments about RTI applicants deserve cautious reflection.

There is little doubt that some individuals misuse the Right to Information Act for the sake of personal gain. Frivolous complaints, pressure tactics and self-styled "activism" can disrupt governance and delay public projects. Yet, it would be dangerous to paint all RTI activists with the same brush. The Act, enacted in 2005, remains one of India's most transformative democratic tools. Over the past two decades, it has exposed corruption, unearthed irregularities and empowered citizens to question authority. Many whistleblowers have faced threats, violence and social isolation.

Ironically, concerns over misuse are being raised at a time when the RTI framework itself is weakening. Several information commissions across the country suffer from vacancies and mounting backlogs, making citizens wait indefinitely for a response. Delays, administrative hurdles and attempts to dilute the law have steadily eroded its effectiveness. There is a dire need to distinguish genuine efforts initiated in public interest from coercive or unlawful conduct. Accountability mechanisms must function within the boundaries of law and civility. India's democracy cannot afford reckless activism or opaque governance. The challenge lies in protecting both public order and the citizen's right to know.

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Mukti mandap



Alekha Chandrda Samal

The Mukti mandap is the highest Pundit's body in Sri Jagannatha temple, Puri. Learned Brahmans from the 18 sashana villages (previously 16) around Puri have their permanent seats on the Mukti mandap and the Shankaracharya of Puri Govardhana Pitha is the head of this august assembly of learned Brahmans. Sasans are the then autonomous villages during the Gajapati Kingdom. Even during the Gangas, Sashan Villages established by the then kings in Cuttack. Only designated families from these sashan Brahmans have rights to sit on Mukti mandap.

This highest priest's assembly or Mukti mandap is located opposite to the Beharanadvara or the southern door way of the porch or mukhasala of the Sri Jagannatha temple beyond the passage under the Jhulana Mandapa. As per descriptions of the Madalapanji, present structure of Mukti mandap was built by Rani Gauri, wife of General Mansingh, who came to Odisha at the behest of

In Puri Jagannatha temple, Mukti Mandap has a raised platform. You can see this as an open pillared mandapa covered by pidha designed flat roof. The mandap height is about 20 feet and it has 16 numbers of pillars which support the stone beams under the corbelled roof, found in sections. The pillars have raised bases, shafts and square capitals, while the raised platform or pavilion is built in Khandolite stones along with the superstructure the pillars are found in dolerite stones.

the Mughal emperor Akabar to decide on the fate of Odisha and to choose the real Gajapati king of Puri during 1572 AD. So the date of the structure is thus assignable to the last part of the 16th century A.D

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The steps leading to the pavilion are found on the west side of the Mukti mandap, in front of the Mukta Narasingha temple. The flooring of the pavilion top is found in stone masonry. Few sculptural reliefs are found at ceiling portion of the mandap. Important among these are the Yajna Narasingha figure, opposite of the Mukta Narasingha temple.

Mukti mandap is blended with two Odia words Mukti and mandap, where Mukti means moksh or salvation and Mandap means the platform.

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Four peace mantras

Utalananda Ajaya Kumar Behera

A question that is often asked is whether we can make this world a more peaceful place. Yes, it is a possibility and all it requires is a little intention, attention and commitment to manifest it. Each one of us has the potential to create an oasis of assurance and security around. When people exercise this power to be beacons of peace, then it can create waves of positivity, joy and celebration across the planet. We need to shake off our despondency and look at life with renewed energy, zeal and enthusiasm. We need to have the right tools to be happier and spread it to people around us. Here are four simple and easy to follow mantras that can help us:

Inner peace is the key to outer peace: Only a wealthy person can share wealth with others. Similarly, we need to recognise that a wealth of deep peace is within our own being. Usually, we expect the outer world – boss, spouse or anyone else – to behave in a certain way so that we feel peace inside. However, it is the other way around: the more we are connected to the peaceful core within, the more peace will manifest around. Our vibrations are more powerful than we think them to be and can even help influence others.

Success is the by-product of inner peace: Peace is neither the mere absence of conflict nor is it about being passive and inactive. It is a bubbling positivity which brings about unending enthusiasm. It forms the foundation for being effective in the world around us. When the mind is quiet the intellect becomes sharp, emotions become light, behaviour becomes endearing and our life becomes a celebration. These are the manifestations of deep peace and are key ingredients for success. It is a state serene dynamism – calm on the inside, energetic on the outside!

Take charge of your peace of mind: Peace is our true nature, but we still have to make the choice to access it. We need to spend just a few minutes a day to practise some breathing exercises and be with ourselves in silence and meditation. This can bring about a beautiful depth to our personality and give us the strength to gain over situations. Only one person can make this happen in our life and that is YOU.

Be cool, it's all going to pass: To sustain inner peace, knowledge about life is very important. We may find meditation very peaceful, but when we open our eyes and mix with people, we come back to the same old pattern. A question that often arises is, 'Should we never get upset, should we always be smiling?' No! We do get upset, fight and argue but we can also snap out of it in an instant. We can do it like it's all a play and see that it doesn't stick to our minds. Every state of mind is temporary and changes with time and space. Remembering this aspect can help us relax and calm down.

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NEET-UG: Dharmendra Pradhan Reviews Preparedness For Fair, Error-Free Retest On June 21

New Delhi, 18/6: Reviewing preparedness, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Thursday emphasised maintaining the highest standards of integrity, transparency and efficiency in the NEET-UG re-examination scheduled for June 21. Addressing a review meeting, Pradhan directed all authorities to remain vigilant and asked officials to ensure that necessary measures were in place for the free and fair conduct of the re-examination. Stressing the importance of coordination at all levels, the Minister said that officers designated by the Union Ministry will reach all states to coordinate activities pertaining to the re-examination process and will report to the Command Centre headed by the Director General, National Testing Agency (NTA). The Minister asked the designated nodal officers of the state governments to ensure that



students were provided all necessary facilities to enable them to appear for the re-examination in a stress-free environment. Senior officials and functionaries of the Ministry of Education; state governments; NTA and Higher Education Institutions; Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, Sanjay Kumar; Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Vineet Joshi; and Director General, NTA, Abhishek Singh, attended the meeting, said a

statement. Department of School Education and Literacy Secretary Sanjay Kumar said the students must be put at absolute ease to appear for the examination by giving them all necessary facilities, including provision of seating arrangements before the exam and drinking water. He requested the nodal officers of the state governments to ensure that adequate steps were taken for student convenience. Higher Education Secretary Vineet Joshi

said that the time between now and the date of the re-examination was crucial, and stressed the need for proactive coordination, timely dissemination of instructions and strict compliance with all prescribed protocols. NTA DG Abhishek Singh said the Agency was working with all concerned stakeholders, including the district-level coordination committees headed by the District Magistrates, state police departments and intelligence agencies, to ensure that the re-examination was conducted smoothly. Detailed deliberations were held on the examination preparedness, coordination mechanisms, security protocols, logistical arrangements, grievance redressal mechanisms and adherence to examination guidelines. States/UTs were advised to maintain close coordination with all stakeholders to ensure the smooth, transparent and seamless conduct of the re-examination.

Telegram Restrictions Imposed After Less Restrictive Measures Failed: Centre Tells Delhi HC

New Delhi, 18/6: The Centre has defended its decision to temporarily suspend Telegram's services across India ahead of the NEET (UG) 2026 re-examination, telling the Delhi High Court that the messaging platform's architecture and repeated misuse for examination-related frauds left the Union government with "no other option" but to invoke emergency blocking powers under the Information Technology Act. In a short affidavit filed before the Delhi High Court in response to Telegram's writ petition challenging the suspension, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) said the decision was taken only after "exhausting alternatives" and resorting to less restrictive measures, including repeated requests for targeted takedowns of unlawful content. "I state and submit that the impugned decision was taken after exhausting alternatives, which were less

restrictive and included targeted takedown of unlawful content, but these would have been woefully inadequate," the affidavit filed by Mayank, Scientist-E with the Government of India, MeitY, stated. The Centre argued that Telegram had become a key platform for the circulation of alleged NEET paper leaks, fake examination material, cyber frauds and other unlawful activities, posing a serious threat to public order and the integrity of the national examination system. "This issue is both sensitive and extremely sentimental for the entire student community, and any further dilutions/compromise as regards the integrity of the examination process to be taken by as many as 22 lakh students pan India is potentially fraught with unrest and disruption with public order issues," the affidavit said. According to the reply document, MeitY received a

complaint from the National Testing Agency (NTA) on May 21 detailing a coordinated fraud network operating on Telegram under banners such as "Re-NEET 2026", "Paper Leaked NEET" and similar names. The NTA claimed that the identified channels, groups and bots had a combined reach of nearly 1.46 lakh accounts and were openly advertising purported access to examination papers in exchange for money. The affidavit said a meeting was held with Telegram officials on June 3, during which the platform acknowledged difficulties in proactively identifying channels involved in selling leaked papers and admitted that bad actors were misusing its "anonymity" features. The government maintained that Telegram failed to take adequate proactive measures despite repeated concerns raised over several years.

PM Modi Meets Top CEOs, Highlights Tremendous Opportunities In India

Paris, 18/6: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday met several top CEOs and business leaders here, highlighting tremendous opportunities in India's growing innovation and manufacturing ecosystem. After concluding a successful round of meetings at the G7 Summit in France's Evian, PM Modi arrived in Paris where he received a 'warm welcome' by the Indian diaspora. "PM Modi met Arthur Mensch, Co-founder and CEO of Mistral AI. PM highlighted the opportunities in India's growing AI ecosystem. Mr @arthurmensch expressed Mistral AI's strong interest in collaborating with India and partnering with Indian companies to drive innovation and expand AI capabilities," Randhir Jaiswal, spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), wrote on X. PM Modi also met Martin Sion, CEO of Alstom, and discussions focused on opportunities in mobility and railway modernisation. "PM Modi noted Alstom's significant investments and manufacturing



presence in India, which are contributing to job creation and the growth of India's rail sector. Mr Sion shared Alstom's plans for further expansion and investments in India," according to Jaiswal. Prime Minister met Benoit Bazin, Chairman and CEO of Saint-Gobain, and discussions focused on opportunities in the materials and construction sector, with a particular emphasis on sustainability. "PM Modi noted Saint-Gobain's strong presence and investments in India, which are creating opportunities for

Indian youth. Mr Bazin shared Saint-Gobain's plans for further investments and expansion in India," the MEA spokesperson said. Earlier in the day, PM Modi said the "India-France partnership is vital for the progress of the planet Earth". Taking to his official social media platform X, Prime Minister Modi wrote: "Reached Paris a short while ago to a warm welcome by the Indian diaspora. I am proud of their efforts in bringing India and France closer. The India-France partnership is vital for the progress of our planet."

ICAI Dismisses Social Media Claims On Security Breach In CA Exam Portal

New Delhi, 18/6: The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) on Thursday rubbished social media messages claiming a security breach in its examination-related portal, assuring students that the integrity of the examination has not been violated. Advising students to ignore false, baseless and mischievous campaign on social media, the Institute, in a statement, said, "The ICAI has come across certain posts and reports circulating in social media alleging a security breach in an ICAI examination-related portal and claimed unauthorised access to ICAI examination records. These unverified claims have caused concern and confusion among students, members and other stakeholders." "In this regard, ICAI clarifies that the portal being referred to, namely examiners.icaexam.icaai.org, is a training portal used exclusively for examiner orientation and has nothing to do with exam-related records as claimed in these social media posts," it added. The Institute said, "The ICAI assure

all stakeholders that there has been no compromise of candidates' examination records, answer books, marks data, or any sensitive information related to the examination process." "The ICAI urges the stakeholders not to give any credence to such a false, baseless and mischievous campaign," the statement said. The statement said the ICAI has viewed the matter seriously and assures that stringent action in accordance with law will be taken against persons spreading such rumours and false claims. "The ICAI further reiterates that its examination processes are robust, totally secure and supported by a strong information technology infrastructure with multiple layers of safeguards to protect the integrity and confidentiality of examination-related data," it added. "Students, members and all stakeholders are, therefore, advised not to believe such rumours and false campaigns in social media and requested to refer only to official communications issued by ICAI for authentic updates," the



statement said. The advisory from ICAI comes close to similar alert issued by the National Testing Agency (NTA) Director General Abhishek Singh cautioning National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG) 2026 aspirants and their parents against social media rackets that lure aspiring doctors by offering to sell 'leaked paper' in exchange

for hefty amounts of money. He said the temporary suspension of the Telegram application till June 22 is a conscious step to check misleading claims and fake news. He also advised students to focus on their preparations for the NEET-UG 2026 on June 21 without being distracted by scammers' offers to sell 'leaked paper'.

India Hosting BRICS Meet On Friday To Discuss Future-Ready MSME Ecosystem

New Delhi, 18/6: The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises will host the first BRICS MSME forum and the third SME working group meeting on Friday (June 19) at Uttar Pradesh's Agra under the overarching theme of "building for resilience, innovation, cooperation, and sustainability", according to an official statement issued on Thursday. The MSME forum will bring together policymakers, industry leaders, entrepreneurs and other key stakeholders from BRICS member and BRICS partner countries, including Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, the UAE, Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, and India, to deliberate

on strengthening global MSME ecosystems, fostering sustainability and enhancing international cooperation, the statement said. India's MSME sector, comprising over 8.6 crore enterprises, has emerged as a cornerstone of the country's economic growth and development. The sector contributes more than 31.1 per cent to the national GDP, accounts for 35.4 per cent of the manufacturing output, and contributes over 48.58 per cent of India's exports, while generating large-scale employment opportunities for millions of people across the country. "From traditional artisans and rural enterprises to advanced manufacturing units and technology-driven businesses, India's MSME sector represents

the true diversity and strength of the country's economy," the statement said. The day-long programme will commence with the inauguration of an exhibition, showcasing MSME excellence, followed by the third SME working group meeting of BRICS members on the theme "Building MSME Ecosystem - Sustainable Roots to Global Routes". Alongside, private sector stakeholders (Industry Associations) of BRICS members will deliberate on "Access to Finance for MSME", "Technology access for MSME", and "Growth of sustainability-oriented MSME". The Forum will witness participation of senior government officials and delegates from BRICS nations, sharing best practices, policy experiences and successful case studies to foster resilient and

future-ready MSME ecosystems. The BRICS SME Forum is expected to strengthen cooperation among BRICS nations while fostering a collaborative environment to support the growth and global competitiveness of MSMEs. It will also provide an opportunity for participating countries to exchange knowledge, identify emerging opportunities and build partnerships which will contribute to inclusive and sustainable economic development. The event reflects the collective commitment of BRICS nations to empowering MSMEs and positioning them as key drivers of economic resilience, innovation and sustainable growth in an increasingly interconnected global economy, the statement added.

Electronics Manufacturing Becomes 3rd-Largest Goods Export Category From India: Minister

New Delhi, 18/6: Electronics manufacturing has surged forward to become the third-largest category among goods exported from India, according to Union Minister for Electronics and IT, Ashwini Vaishnav. The minister lauded the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in transforming electronics manufacturing into a premier pillar of the national economy. India's electronics manufacturing industry has surged to an unprecedented value of Rs 13 lakh crore. From initially targeting a place in the top 10 export categories, electronics consecutively climbed from the 9th rank up through 7th, 5th, and 4th positions. Vaishnav, along with Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, inaugurated the high-tech advanced manufacturing facility of Jabil at Ranjangaon, Pune. The minister highlighted how artificial intelligence (AI) has evolved into a powerhouse for global progress, stressing the strategic necessity of anchoring its infrastructure within the country. He emphasised that AI data centres have become a very large growth engine across the world today, making it a crucial priority under the Prime Minister's 'Make in India' plan to ensure that the major electronic components powering

these data centres are manufactured domestically. The minister stated that while electronics manufacturing and exports from India were considered unthinkable just a few years ago, the clear vision of PM Modi has transformed India into a trusted global manufacturing partner. Jabil will manufacture these crucial data centre components in Pune through their modern, advanced, and high-tech facility. Boasting an exceptional operational capacity, the plant is fully equipped to meet India's domestic tech requirements while simultaneously driving exports to global markets across the world, according to an official statement. This newly integrated ecosystem - encompassing electronic components, finished electronic goods, and local supply chains - is poised to unlock significant socio-economic benefits. The Jabil facility is a state-of-the-art advanced electronics manufacturing setup specializing in cutting-edge technology infrastructure. Its operational capabilities include the complex manufacturing of AI Systems (AI-enabled Data Centre gears), 5G technology, high-end networking gears, industrial power system electronics, and consumer electronics.

have set up heavy bandobast (security deployments) outside several properties, including Mumbai North East MP Sanjay Dina Patil's residence, to prevent any untoward incidents. Sources indicate that Sanjay Jadhav is slated to take up the leadership mantle of this newly formed parliamentary breakaway group.

'Operation Tiger' Succeeds: Six Shiv Sena(UBT) MPs Defy Party Whip, Move To Join Shinde Faction

New Delhi, 18/6: In a major political upheaval rocking Maharashtra politics, the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) has suffered a crippling blow as six of its nine Lok Sabha Members rebelled to bypass a crucial party whip on Thursday. The high-stakes defection marks the definitive success of the Eknath Shinde faction's meticulously

executed plan, code-named "Operation Tiger". The internal fracture came to light during a parliamentary party meeting convened by Shiv Sena(UBT) at its office in Parliament House at 11:00 a.m. Despite a strict whip issued a day prior compelling mandatory attendance, only three Lok Sabha members and one Rajya Sabha member showed up. Those

who attended the meeting included Sanjay Raut (Rajya Sabha), Anil Desai, Arvind Sawant, and Rajabhau Waje, while Sanjay Dina Patil, Sanjay Deshmukh, Sanjay (Bandu) Jadhav, Omraje Nimbalkar, Bhausaheb Wakchaure, and Nagesh Patil Ashtikar staged a complete boycott of the meeting. According to sources, the rebel faction has already filed an application before

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to be recognised as a separate bloc, paving a clear legal path for their formal merger with the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena. Sources said the dissenting lawmakers passed an internal resolution detailing ideological differences as the driving force behind their exit. It says the leadership has drifted significantly from the original Hindutva ideology

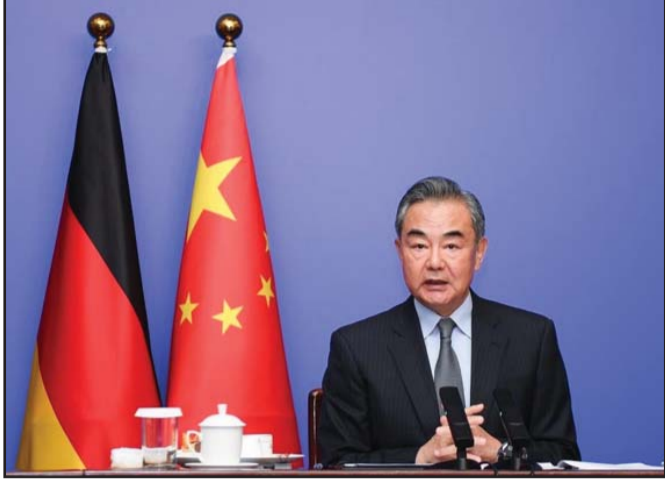
established by party founder Balasaheb Thackeray. The resolution explicitly notes growing anxiety within the rank and file regarding a potential full-scale merger of Shiv Sena(UBT) into the Congress party, highlighting that the regional party was never envisioned to lose its identity to a national outfit. The MPs further referenced recent statements by senior leader

Sanjay Raut suggesting that regional parties like the Trinamool Congress should merge with Congress, amplifying fears that a similar fate awaited the Thackeray group. Anticipating public outrage and potential law-and-order issues across Maharashtra, security has been beefed up substantially outside the residences of the defecting MPs. Local police forces

have set up heavy bandobast (security deployments) outside several properties, including Mumbai North East MP Sanjay Dina Patil's residence, to prevent any untoward incidents. Sources indicate that Sanjay Jadhav is slated to take up the leadership mantle of this newly formed parliamentary breakaway group.

Chinese FM Wang Yi To Visit India For BRICS NSA Meeting

Beijing, 18/6: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi will visit India to attend the 16th Meeting of BRICS National Security Advisors (NSAs) and High Representatives on National Security set to be held from June 22-23. Confirming the visit, spokesperson for the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on Thursday that Wang Yi will visit India at the invitation of National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval. "At the invitation of India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, Wang Yi, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs, will attend the 16th Meeting of BRICS National Security Advisors and High Representatives on National Security to be held in India from June 22 to 23," the ministry spokesperson posted on X. India holds the BRICS chair in 2026 guided by the theme of 'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability', reflecting a people-centric and humanity-first approach



articulated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the 17th BRICS Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 2025. On May 15, China's Ambassador to India, Xu Feihong, congratulated India for successfully hosting the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting. He stated that BRICS Chair's statement and outcome document demonstrate broad consensus on international and regional issues, the future development of BRICS and the reform of global governance and the multilateral system. In a post on X, Xu

Feihong stated, "Congratulations to India on successfully hosting the BRICS FMM. In the face of a complex global landscape, BRICS countries engaged in in-depth and constructive discussions on a wide range of issues." "The Chair's Statement and Outcome Document demonstrate broad consensus on international and regional issues, the future development of BRICS, as well as reform of global governance and the multilateral system. As incoming Chair, China stands ready to work with all partners

to deepen solidarity and cooperation, and looks forward to welcoming colleagues to China next year," he added. India issued a Chair's statement instead of a joint statement at the conclusion of the two-day BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi, insisting that there were differing views among members with regard to the situation in West Asia and the Middle East. The high-level gathering was chaired by External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar and witnessed participation of foreign ministers and senior representatives from BRICS member countries and partner nations. In February, China's Executive Vice Foreign Minister Ma Zhaoxu visited India to participate in the BRICS Sherpa Meeting. During the visit, Ma Zhaoxu and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri held the India-China Strategic Dialogue in New Delhi during which both sides discussed bilateral ties. The officials of two nations also exchanged views on global, regional situations and other multilateral issues.

India Is A Compelling Case For World On AI: Piyush Goyal

Paris/New Delhi, 18/6: India is a compelling case for the world, Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Thursday — highlighting the country's young population, affordable data, growing technological capabilities and vision for inclusive growth as key factors positioning it at the forefront of the global technology revolution. Speaking on India's role in the age of artificial intelligence (AI) at Viva Tech 2026, Goyal said the country has several inherent strengths that make it uniquely placed to bridge the global technological divide. He asserted that India adapts technology faster and more efficiently than many other nations and views AI as an enabler of growth rather than a threat. "India is a compelling case for the world. Our young & talented population, affordable data, growing capabilities & a vision for shared growth, position India at the forefront of technological development," Goyal mentioned. The minister emphasised that AI can never



replace human intelligence, values, culture and traditions. Goyal noted that India's demographic advantage remains one of its biggest strengths, with the country's average age being below 30 years. "We have a youthful population. That's important. Our average age is under 30 years. We are the world's fastest growing large economy. So a lot of economic activities which spur innovation. We have 1.4 billion people generating demand and that gives us economies of scale," Goyal stated. The minister further said India has sufficient power resources to

meet the growing requirements of data centres and computing infrastructure. "We have data at a fraction of the cost it costs in other countries. We have abundant power to meet the needs of data centres, computing capacity and all of that. And we produce the world's largest number of STEM graduates, the techies in science and engineering and technology," Goyal noted. Addressing concerns over job losses due to AI, Goyal said technological advancements would create new opportunities and career paths rather than eliminate human relevance.

G7 Summit: PM Modi Discusses India-EU FTA & West Asia With EU Leaders, Says MEA

Evian (France), 18/6: Prime Minister Modi met the European Council President Antonio Costa and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Evian, France. "Recalling the landmark 16th India-European Union (EU) Summit held in India in January 2026, the leaders welcomed the remarkable progress made in India-European Union bilateral relations since then," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in an official statement. "The leaders emphasised the recent conclusion of negotiations for the India-EU Free Trade Agreement as a historic achievement and stressed its expeditious signing and implementation, which would unlock huge opportunities for trade and investment and contribute towards diversification of supply chains, particularly in the current turbulent geopolitical context," the MEA said in the statement. "As the world's two largest democracies, with open

market economies and pluralistic societies, India and the EU share a relationship based on trust, shared values and a common vision for the future." The leaders discussed the progress on the Joint India-EU Comprehensive Strategic Agenda endorsed in January 2026 and shared the sentiment that it would further reinforce India-EU strategic partnership and deliver mutually beneficial and transformative outcomes, the MEA statement added. "Exchanging views on regional and global issues of mutual interest, the leaders welcomed the developments in West Asia," the MEA statement said. "PM Modi and the two EU leaders reiterated their shared commitment to shaping a resilient multipolar global order that contributes to peace and stability, prosperity and sustainable development." Describing his meeting with Costa and Leyen as "wonderful", PM Modi stated that they discussed strengthening of economic linkages. He noted that the growing cooperation

between India and the EU can play an important role in strengthening peace, stability and prosperity in the current global environment. "It was wonderful meeting European Council President Antonio Costa and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in Evian earlier today. At the start of this year, India was proud to host them for our Republic Day celebrations. This has been a great time for India-EU ties as we have concluded the Free Trade Agreement. During our talks, we discussed how to further deepen economic linkages in the times to come. Our growing cooperation can play an important role in strengthening peace, stability and prosperity in today's global environment," PM Modi posted on X. Costa stated that India and the EU will sign the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) by the end of the year. He also mentioned that both sides will work together to better connectivity by advancing India Middle East Europe Corridor (IMEC).

France To Get Its First Traditional Hindu Temple Built With Indian Stones

Paris, 18/6: Members of the Indian diaspora in France on Thursday announced that the country will soon have its first traditional Hindu temple, with its inauguration scheduled for September. Speaking to IANS, members of the Indian community expressed pride over the development. Bhavi Parekh, a member of the Indian diaspora, said, "We are feeling very proud after welcoming Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Another major occasion for us is the opening of France's first traditional Hindu temple in September. We welcome everyone to visit. The speciality of this temple is that it has been crafted in India and assembled in France." Another member of the Indian diaspora associated with BAPS said the temple is being built using stones sourced from India. "The temple has been made in India and built in France. We invite people from France, India, and the Hindu community worldwide to visit. A 15-day programme will be organised here in September, and everyone is welcome to attend," he said. After concluding a



successful round of meetings at the G7 Summit in France's Evian, PM Modi arrived in Paris on Thursday morning, where he received a 'warm welcome' from the Indian diaspora living here. The Prime Minister said that he was "proud of the Indian community's efforts in bringing India and France closer to each other". He also added that the "India-France partnership is vital for the progress of the planet

Earth". Taking to his official social media platform X, Prime Minister Modi wrote: "Reached Paris a short while ago to a warm welcome by the Indian diaspora. I am proud of their efforts in bringing India and France closer. The India-France partnership is vital for the progress of our planet." Earlier on Wednesday evening, PM Modi said he had a productive round of meetings and interactions at the G7 Summit in

Evian, where he presented India's views on governance, policy-making and the importance of working closely with the Global South to ensure global prosperity. PM Modi noted that the discussions at the summit provided an opportunity to highlight India's efforts in key areas of governance and to emphasise the role of the Global South in shaping a more equitable international order.

Trump Seals Iran Breakthrough At Versailles; Says Step Towards Regional Stability, Lower Energy Prices

Washington, 18/6: US President Donald Trump has secured a major diplomatic breakthrough with Iran, finalising a US-Iran memorandum of understanding aimed at ending hostilities and reopening the Strait of Hormuz before signing the accord at France's Palace of Versailles. Speaking to reporters after arriving in Paris, Trump said the agreement was nearing completion and suggested a formal conclusion was imminent. "I'd say 48 hours," Trump said when asked when the deal would be signed. Hours later, as he emerged from a dinner hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron at Versailles, Trump confirmed that the accord had been executed. "It's signed," Trump told reporters. "I signed it in Versailles. Just signed it." The memorandum is intended to create a framework for further negotiations between Washington and Tehran while



reducing tensions in the Gulf region and restoring normal shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most important energy corridors. Trump repeatedly portrayed the agreement as a step towards regional stability and lower energy prices. "The question was, how long will you leave the military in the Gulf? I would say a little while,

see how it all goes. I think it's going to go well, but we'll see," he said. The president indicated that preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon remained the central objective of the negotiations. Asked about provisions concerning Iran's nuclear programme, Trump said concerns over existing nuclear material were "much less important than

having a nuclear weapon". He also signalled flexibility regarding the memorandum's reported 60-day timeframe for negotiating a broader settlement. "I don't view it as hard, no," Trump said. "Just as long as they're behaving, I really don't care that much." At the same time, he made clear that military action remained an option if Iran failed to comply with the agreement. "If they don't come through, is it a threat that we'd bomb? You can call whatever you want, but it will probably happen," Trump said. The president also drew a distinction between nuclear weapons and conventional missile capabilities, suggesting Iran should be permitted some ballistic missiles if neighbouring states maintained similar arsenals. "I'm saying that if other countries have them, it's a little bit unfair for them not to have some," Trump said. "A ballistic missile is not the same thing

as what we're talking about when we talk nuclear." "But if Saudi Arabia and Qatar and they all have some, I would say in relative proportion, I think it's OK." Trump's comments came as leaders gathered in France for discussions on global security, trade and energy issues. On Ukraine, he said Kyiv was continuing to resist Russia despite Moscow's larger military. "Russia's a big country, a much bigger military. But they're doing pretty well, they're holding their own," Trump said. He also suggested he could reconsider sanctions measures against Russia. "Yeah, I may put them back on," he said. "Now that the oil price is way down ... I may put it back on." The Versailles signing capped a day in which Trump repeatedly defended the emerging agreement and described it as a positive development for global markets and energy security.

'Proud' Of Indian Diaspora's Efforts In Bringing India-France Ties Closer: PM Modi In Paris

Paris, 18/6: After concluding a successful round of meetings at the G7 Summit in France's Evian, Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Paris on Thursday morning where he received a 'warm welcome' by the Indian diaspora living here. The Prime Minister said that he was "proud of the Indian community's efforts in bringing India and France closer to each other". He also added that the "India-France partnership is vital for the progress of the planet Earth". Taking to his official social media platform X, Prime Minister Modi wrote: "Reached Paris a short while ago to a warm welcome by the Indian diaspora. I am proud of their efforts in bringing India and France closer. The India-France partnership is vital for the progress of our planet." Earlier on Wednesday evening, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he had a productive round of meetings and interactions at the G7 Summit in Evian, where he presented India's views on governance, policy-making and the importance of working closely with the Global South to ensure global prosperity. PM Modi noted that the discussions at the summit provided an opportunity to highlight India's efforts in key areas of governance and to emphasise the role of the Global South in shaping a more equitable international order. He said India's perspectives were well received by leaders attending the summit. Following the conclusion of his engagements in Evian, PM Modi will travel to Paris for the final leg of his visit to France. His programmes in Paris include an address at VivaTech 2026, one of Europe's largest technology and innovation conferences, and an interaction with the Indian diaspora at a community event. Taking to his official X account, PM Modi wrote: "I had a series of productive meetings and exchanges during the G7 Summit in Evian. I had the opportunity to present India's positions and efforts on key areas of governance and policymaking.

Regulatory, Tech And AI Risks In NSE IPO, Trading Activity Declines: DRHP

Mumbai, 18/6: The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has cautioned investors that regulatory changes, technology failures, cybersecurity threats and emerging risks associated with artificial intelligence (AI) could materially impact its business operations and financial performance, as the stock exchange moves ahead with its long-awaited initial public offering (IPO). In its draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) filed with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), NSE highlighted its significant dependence on trading revenues, particularly from the derivatives segment.

The exchange said transaction charges accounted for 78.65 per cent of its operating revenue in FY26, with options trading alone contributing 60.22 per cent of total revenue from operations. The exchange noted that recent regulatory measures introduced by SEBI to strengthen the equity derivatives framework have already resulted in moderation in trading activity across both cash and derivatives segments. This, in turn, led to lower trading revenues during FY26. NSE warned that



any further regulatory tightening, increase in transaction taxes, changes in investor behaviour or a shift toward alternative asset classes could adversely affect trading volumes and profitability. The stock exchange also underscored the extensive regulatory oversight under which it operates. It disclosed that it remains subject to continuous inspections, examinations and enforcement actions by SEBI and has received show-cause notices, warning letters, deficiency letters and advisory communications related to governance, operational,

technology and compliance matters. NSE revealed that it has incurred substantial settlement costs in recent years. In October 2024, the exchange paid more than Rs 643 crore in connection with proceedings related to its Trading Access Point (TAP) architecture and network connectivity. It also paid Rs 40.35 crore in July 2025 under a settlement order linked to regulatory inspection findings. The exchange further stated that several legal and regulatory proceedings remain unresolved, including matters related to the co-location and

dark fibre cases. According to the DRHP, these proceedings could continue to have reputational and financial implications for the bourse. Given the fully electronic nature of stock market operations, NSE identified technology failures and cyberattacks as major operational risks. The exchange acknowledged experiencing multiple technology-related incidents in recent years, including website outages, market data dissemination issues, login disruptions and errors involving derivatives-related information. Additionally, the bourse flagged risks associated with AI-powered cyberattacks, deepfake-based impersonation, data leaks through third-party AI tools and vulnerabilities introduced by AI-assisted software development. NSE also highlighted concentration risks among its trading members. The exchange said its top 10 trading members accounted for 46.78 per cent of operating revenue in FY26, making its earnings vulnerable to any disruption or decline in activity among these key participants.

Sensex, Nifty End Higher As PSU Banks, Healthcare And Realty Stocks Lead Gains

Mumbai, 18/6: Indian equity benchmark indices closed higher on Thursday, supported by flag-end buying and gains in PSU bank, healthcare, metal and realty stocks, even as weakness in the IT sector capped the upside. The Sensex rose 254.36 points, or 0.33 per cent, to settle at 77,409.98, while the Nifty gained 82.30 points, or 0.34 per cent, to close at 24,168.00. Commenting on Nifty technical outlook, experts said that the 24,200 level now emerges as the immediate resistance. "A sustained breakout above this level would reinforce bullish momentum and could pave the way for an extension of the rally towards the 24,400 region, which represents the next significant upside target," an analyst said. "On the downside, the psychological 24,000 mark is expected to act as an important immediate support level. Holding above this zone will be crucial to preserve the ongoing recovery structure and maintain the positive momentum. However, a decisive break below 24,000 could trigger fresh profit booking and drag the index towards the 23,900 support region," a market expert mentioned. Market sentiment improved in the latter half of the

trading session, helping benchmark indices recover and end in positive territory. Buying interest in public sector banks, healthcare and real estate counters provided support to the broader market. Among the Nifty constituents, Adani Enterprises, InterGlobe Aviation and Max Healthcare Institute emerged as the top gainers of the day. Among Sensex constituents, shares of Adani Ports, InterGlobe Aviation, Trent, NTPC, Bharat Electronics Limited, HDFC Bank and State Bank of India were among the major gainers, helping benchmark indices end the day in the green.

the broader market. The healthcare pack led the gains, with the Nifty Healthcare index climbing 0.98 per cent. On the other hand, information technology stocks remained under pressure. The Nifty IT index declined 1.19 per cent, making it the worst-performing sectoral index of the session. "Going forward, market participants will continue to monitor developments in the US-Iran talks, crude oil prices, and foreign fund flows," an analyst stated. Meanwhile, Rupee traded stronger by around 16 paise to 94.32, extending its positive trend

The broader market also witnessed positive momentum. The Nifty MidCap index ended



0.41 per cent higher, while the Nifty SmallCap index advanced 0.44 per cent. Sectorally, the Nifty PSU Bank, Nifty Healthcare, Nifty Realty and Nifty Consumer Durables indices outperformed

for the fifth consecutive session. "Technically, the rupee remains well supported, with the near-term trading range seen between 94.00 and 94.75," the analyst mentioned.

RBI Compounds FEMA Violations In Apollo Hospitals Case With Rs 17.77 Crore Fine

New Delhi, 18/6: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday issued a compounding order under Section 15 of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), in the case of M/s. Apollo Hospitals Enterprises Limited and its five concerned directors and officers, including Preetha Reddy, Suneetha Reddy, S.K. Venkatraman, Akhileswaran Krishnan and S.M. Krishnan, which has resulted in termination of adjudication proceedings against the company for contraventions of provisions under FEMA with a one-time payment of Rs 17.77 crore. In addition, each of the directors and officers of the company have to pay Rs 18 lakh.

The order has been passed by the RBI after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) issued a "no objection" in the case. The ED had taken up investigation after receiving credible information in the case. After completion of investigation, the ED filed a case under FEMA before the Adjudicating Authority. The company, later on, filed an application before the RBI for



compounding the contraventions in accordance with the provisions of Section 15 of the Act. 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. 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 the contraventions in the case which

include receiving FDI in retail trading, which is a sector in which foreign investment is prohibited. A sum of Rs 859.88 crore was involved in the contravention. The complaint filed against Apollo Hospital Enterprise also included issuance of Foreign Currency Convertible Bonds (FCCBs) valued at Rs 70.02 crore in contravention of FEMA. Besides, the company received foreign investment under Foreign Institutional Investor-Portfolio Investment Scheme route to the tune of Rs 623.88 crore which in aggregate breached the 24 per cent paid-up capital limit.

Gold, Silver Trade Lower Amid Fed Hawkishness, Easing Geopolitical Tensions

Mumbai, 18/6: Gold and silver prices traded lower on Thursday after easing geopolitical tensions, and the US Federal Reserve kept interest rates unchanged while signalling support for additional rate hikes. On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold futures (August) declined as much as 1.37 per cent or Rs 2,111 to hit an intraday low of Rs 1,51,768 as of around 11:36 am. The yellow metal was trading at Rs 1,51,797, down 1.35 per cent or Rs 2,082. It touched an intraday high of Rs 1,52,831, down 0.68 per cent or Rs 1,048 from its previous close of Rs 1,53,879. Meanwhile, silver futures (July) were trading at Rs 2,44,945, down Rs 6,862 or 2.73 per cent from the previous close of Rs 2,51,807. The white metal touched an intraday low of Rs 2,44,647, down nearly 3 per cent or Rs 7,160 during the session. It recorded an intraday high of Rs 2,48,000 during the day. Earlier in the day, gold and silver opened at Rs 1,52,306 and Rs 2,48,000,



respectively. According to commodity market experts, gold and silver remained under pressure as rising US Treasury yields and a stronger dollar reduced the appeal of precious metals. They said sentiment weakened after the US Federal Reserve kept interest rates unchanged while signalling support for additional rate hikes and reiterating its commitment to bringing inflation back to

target. Analysts said easing geopolitical tensions following the interim US-Iran agreement further dampened safe-haven demand. However, silver's losses remained limited amid expectations of strong industrial demand, supported by investments in artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure, data centres, renewable energy projects and energy storage systems, particularly in China,

analysts added. Similarly, in international markets, COMEX silver was trading nearly 3 per cent lower at \$68.76, while COMEX gold was at \$4,318.90, down more than 1 per cent. On the oil commodities front, the international benchmark Brent crude declined 1.64 per cent to trade around \$78 per barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude fell 2 per cent to about \$75 per barrel.

Apple May Increase Product Prices Amid Soaring Memory, Storage Costs: CEO Tim Cook

New Delhi, 18/6: US-based tech giant Apple may raise prices across some of its products as surging memory and storage chip costs due to an increase in demand from artificial intelligence (AI) data centres continue to put pressure on the company's margins, according to a report. Speaking to The Wall Street Journal, Apple CEO Tim Cook said the company can no longer fully absorb the sharp increase in component costs and may eventually pass some of the burden on to consumers. "Unfortunately, price increases are unavoidable," Cook was quoted as saying. "We're doing our best to mitigate the huge increases that are being passed to us, and we've been trying to shield our customers from the increases, but the situation has become



unsustainable." The comments come amid growing concerns over the impact of AI-driven demand on global semiconductor supply chains. Industry groups representing automakers, retailers and electronics manufacturers have warned that rising demand for

memory chips could lead to higher consumer prices and supply disruptions. However, Cook did not specify when the price increases could take effect, how large they would be or which Apple products would be affected. According to the report, memory and storage components have emerged as key concerns for the iPhone maker, particularly the dynamic random-access memory (DRAM) market, where supplies have tightened as chipmakers allocate more production capacity to high-bandwidth memory used in AI servers. Cook said increasing volumes of memory supply are being directed towards AI infrastructure, reducing

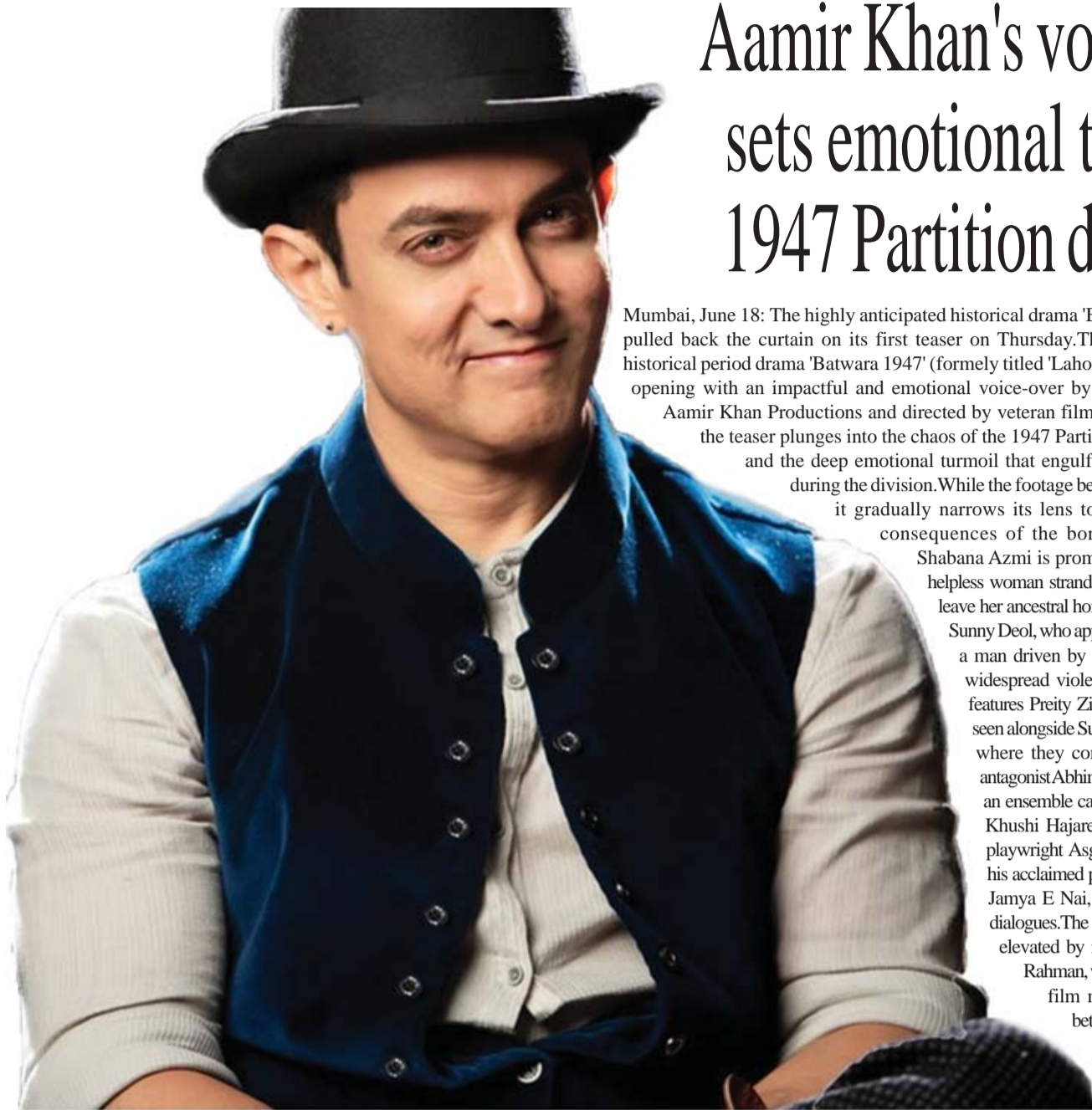
availability for consumer electronics. "There's less supply at a time when consumers want devices and the memory guys are passing along huge price increases," he said. Cook said memory pricing and supply need to return to reasonable levels for consumer products. Earlier in April, the US-headquartered firm announced that John Ternus, Senior Vice President of Hardware Engineering, will succeed Tim Cook as Chief Executive Officer, effective September 1, 2026, concluding a long-running succession process that the board approved unanimously. However, he will transition to the newly created role of Executive Chairman, where he will engage with global policymakers and assist with select company matters.

RBI Allows Banks To Offer Higher Interest On NRI Deposits To Draw More Foreign Funds

Mumbai, 18/6: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday temporarily eased interest rate curbs on certain non-resident deposits to enable banks to offer higher returns on fresh FCNR(B) and NRE deposits with the aim of attracting more overseas funds to prop up the country's foreign exchange reserves and strengthen the rupee. Under the relaxed rules that have been put in place till September 30, the RBI has withdrawn the interest rate ceiling on fresh Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) deposits with maturities of more than three years and up to five years. It has also removed restrictions on interest rates offered on fresh Non-Resident External (NRE) deposits of three years and above. However, the RBI said that transfers from Non-Resident Ordinary (NRO) accounts to NRE accounts would not qualify

for the exemption. Before the new rules were rolled out, banks were required to ensure that interest rates on NRE deposits did not exceed those offered on comparable domestic rupee term deposits. FCNR(B) deposits of three to five years were subject to an interest rate ceiling linked to the applicable overnight alternative reference rate or swap rate plus 350 basis points. The move gives banks more freedom to offer higher interest rates to non-resident Indians, in order to mobilise more foreign-currency and rupee deposits from overseas investors and savers. The measure also comes close on the heels of a series of steps that have been taken with a view to attracting foreign currency amid soaring oil prices in the global market and the exit of foreign funds from the Indian stock markets, which had led

to a drawing down of the country's foreign exchange reserves and weakened the rupee. Earlier this month, the RBI allowed all foreign individual investors to directly purchase shares in listed Indian companies, expanding access beyond non-resident Indians and overseas citizens of India. The move followed changes to foreign exchange rules that offered more investment opportunities to NRIs. The central bank also introduced a special swap facility that absorbs much of the hedging costs usually borne by banks. As a result, several private and public banks have passed on this benefit to customers, significantly hiking their dollar-denominated FCNR deposit rates (with some lenders offering between 6 per cent and 7.10 per cent on eligible tenor.



Aamir Khan's voice-over sets emotional tone for 1947 Partition drama

Mumbai, June 18: The highly anticipated historical drama 'Batwara 1947' has officially pulled back the curtain on its first teaser on Thursday. The teaser of the upcoming historical period drama 'Batwara 1947' (formerly titled 'Lahore 1947') has been released, opening with an impactful and emotional voice-over by Aamir Khan. Produced by Aamir Khan Productions and directed by veteran filmmaker Rajkumar Santoshi, the teaser plunges into the chaos of the 1947 Partition, depicting violent riots and the deep emotional turmoil that engulfed the Indian subcontinent during the division. While the footage begins with large-scale unrest, it gradually narrows its lens to the personal and human consequences of the border split. Veteran actress Shabana Azmi is prominently featured as an elderly, helpless woman stranded in Pakistan who refuses to leave her ancestral home. The narrative then shifts to Sunny Deol, who appears as the central protagonist, a man driven by courage and humanity amid widespread violence and fear. The teaser also features Preity Zinta and Karan Deol, who are seen alongside Sunny Deol in intense sequences where they confront violent mobs led by antagonist Abhimanyu Singh. The project boasts an ensemble cast that also includes Ali Fazal, Khushi Hajare, and Kanikka Kapur. Noted playwright Asghar Wajahat, best known for his acclaimed play 'Jis Lahore Nai Vekhya, O Jamya E Nai', has contributed to the film's dialogues. The film's emotional tone is further elevated by its music, composed by A R Rahman, with lyrics by Javed Akhtar. The film marks a significant reunion between Deol and Santoshi, who previously collaborated on acclaimed films such as 'Ghayal', 'Damini' and 'Ghatak'. 'Batwara 1947'.

Nora Fatehi gives fans BTS look at FIFA anthem 'Siir Siir'

Mumbai, June 17: Actor and dancer Nora Fatehi has offered fans a behind-the-scenes look at the making of SIIR SIIR, the FIFA World Cup 2026 song she performed during the tournament's opening celebrations in Toronto. Nora took to her Instagram account to share a video featuring herself alongside French singer Vegeedream and music producer DJ Sanjoy as they worked on the track in the studio. In the clip, Nora is seen singing with Vegeedream while Sanjoy adds the musical arrangements, giving fans a glimpse into the collaboration behind the song. Sharing the video, Nora wrote, "We made this song with a lot of heart and soul. Please stream SIIR SIIR on Spotify," while also using hashtags related to the FIFA World Cup and the track. The post comes after Nora took centre stage at the second FIFA World Cup ceremony in Toronto, where she performed SIIR SIIR before an international audience. Vegeedream and DJ Sanjoy, who collaborated on the song, were also part of the celebrations. The Toronto ceremony featured several other musical performances, including appearances by Canadian artists Jessie Reyez and Alessia Cara, while Palestinian singer Elyanna also performed ahead of the opening match in the city.



SPORTS

India Women Rally Past Uruguay to Top Pool A at FIH Nations Cup



NEWDELHI: India Women's Hockey Team defeated Uruguay 3-2 in their final Pool A match at the FIH Nations Cup in Auckland, maintaining an unbeaten record and securing the top spot in the group. Uruguay struck first in the 13th minute through Chiara

Appennino's penalty corner. India responded with resilience as drag-flicker Deepika converted a penalty corner in the 24th minute to level the score. After halftime, India intensified their attack and Deepika Soreng netted a fine field goal in the 43rd minute to give India a 2-1

lead. Uruguay captain Manuela Vilar equalised in the 55th minute, setting up a tense finish. India answered immediately when Deepika converted her second penalty corner in the 56th minute, sealing the 3-2 victory. The win marked India's third consecutive triumph after

earlier victories against USA and Japan, ensuring they topped Pool A. USA joined India in the semi-finals as runners-up. The match also carried special significance for midfielder Neha, who celebrated her 200th senior international appearance, a milestone applauded by

teammates and fans alike. With three straight wins, India enters the semi-finals brimming with confidence as they chase the Nations Cup title and a return to the FIH Pro League. They are likely to face Chile or Korea in the semi-final scheduled for June 20.

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