

Dumani Mail

Published simultaneously from NEW DELHI, Bhubaneswar (Odisha), Keonjhar (Odisha).



Supreme Court stays Delhi High Court order on release of 1993 Kolkata Bowbazar blast case

New Delhi: The Supreme Court today stayed the Delhi High Court order directing the premature release of a life-term convict in the 1993 Kolkata Bowbazar blast case. A bench comprising Justices PK Mishra and Sanjeev Sachdeva gave the interim relief on a plea filed by the West Bengal government, challenging the 5th June order of the high court directing the immediate release of the 77-year-old convict Md. Rashid Khan.

The top court also issued notice to Khan, who was convicted under stringent provisions of TADA, on the plea of the state government.

Appearing for the state government, additional solicitor general SV Raju said the high court made a mistake in its

finding and questioned relying on reformatory theory for granting relief to Khan in a case where more than 70 people died and hundreds got injured in the bomb blasts.

Senior advocate MR Shamshad, appearing for Khan, submitted that he had spent over 33 years in prison and highlighted that a co-accused, Pannalal Jaiswara, was granted remission in March 2014.

The bench, however, said the roles attributed to them were completely different while pointing out that Khan was the "mastermind" of the incident.

The reformatory theory of punishment, also known as the rehabilitative approach, views crime as a social or psychological pathology rather than a simple moral failing.

PM Modi interacts with 183 IAS trainee officers, stresses on 'Nagrik Devo Bhava'

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has stressed 'Nagrik Devo Bhava' and urged officers to keep citizens at the centre of Governance. Interacting with 183 Officer Trainees of the IAS 2024 batch who have been attached as Assistant Secretaries in various Ministries and Departments in New Delhi today, Mr Modi called upon young civil servants to lead India's journey towards Viksit Bharat@2047.

The Prime Minister urged the young civil servants to dedicate themselves to nation-building with a strong sense of purpose, innovation, and citizen-centric governance. Calling for a whole-of-government approach, Mr Modi stressed that major developmental challenges cannot be solved in silos. He further



noted that effective coordination across departments is essential for achieving meaningful and lasting outcomes. Highlighting the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047,

the Prime Minister noted that every policy and administrative decision over the coming decades must contribute towards building a developed India. He stressed

that India's priorities today include Aatmanirbhar Bharat, Make in India, manufacturing growth, energy security, and creating opportunities for youth.

Mr Modi underlined the transformation in governance over the last decade, noting that the administration has moved from a process-centric model to a result-orientated approach.

The Prime Minister also highlighted the growing role of women in nation-building, noting that more than 40% of the current batch comprises women officers.

Mr Modi urged the young officers to constantly evaluate their contribution towards nation-building and derive satisfaction not from positions held but from measurable outcomes achieved. He expressed confidence that their energy, talent, and dedication would play a pivotal role in taking India's development journey to new heights.

President Murmu presents Padma Awards at second Civil Investiture Ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan

New Delhi: President Droupadi Murmu presented the Padma Awards at the second Civil Investiture Ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan this evening. Padma Awards – one of the highest civilian awards of the country, are conferred in three categories – Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri. Journalist P. Narayanan was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in the category of Literature and Education and former judge KT Tomas was given the Padma Vibhushan in social work. Former tennis player Vijay Amritraj, actor Mammooty, and playback singer Alka Yagnik received the Padma Bhushan award.



This year, the Government had announced a total of 131 Padma Awards. These include five Padma Vibhushan, 13 Padma Bhushan, and 113 Padma Shri awards. The Padma Awards, namely, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri, are amongst the highest civilian awards of the country. Instituted in 1954, these Awards are announced on the occasion of the Republic Day every year.

The Padma Awards, one of the highest civilian awards of the

country, are conferred in three categories, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri. The awards are given in various disciplines of activities: art, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, and civil service.

The Padma Awards, namely, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri, are amongst the highest civilian awards of the country. Tennis legend Vijay Amritraj, actor Mammooty, playback singer

Alka Yagnik and cricketer Rohit Sharma are among 65 prominent personalities who will receive the Padma Awards from the President today.

Instituted in 1954, these Awards are announced on the occasion of the Republic Day every year. The Award seeks to recognize work of distinction and is given for distinguished and exceptional achievements in various fields and disciplines, including Art, Literature, Education, Sports, Medicine, Social Work, Science and Engineering, Public Affairs and Trade and Industry.

Delhi extends slum rehabilitation eligibility cut-off to Jan 1, 2025; 20 lakh to benefit

New Delhi: The Delhi government on Tuesday approved rehabilitation benefits for all eligible families living in settlements established till January 1, 2025, in a decision expected to benefit nearly 20 lakh people and facilitate permanent housing for an estimated 4-5 lakh families.

The decision was taken at the 36th board meeting of the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB), chaired by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta at the Delhi Secretariat, according to a statement released here. Urban Development Minister Ashish Sood, Chief Secretary Rajiv Verma and senior officials attended the meeting.

The move removes a key hurdle that had prevented many families from qualifying for rehabilitation benefits under earlier eligibility norms and expands the scope of the recently approved Delhi Slum and JJ Cluster Rehabilitation and Relocation Policy, 2026, the statement said.

MEA confirms ten Indian-flagged vessels remain in Persian Gulf region

New Delhi: The Ministry of External Affairs today informed that ten Indian flagged vessels are still in the Persian Gulf region. Addressing media in New Delhi this afternoon, Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said that since the signing of MoU between the US and Iran on the 17th of June, eleven India bound vessels have transited through the Strait of Hormuz. The vessels include 3 Indian-flagged Crude Oil Tankers, each carrying over 2 lakh 85 thousand MT crude oil, one foreign flagged LPG carrier, one foreign flagged Crude Oil Tanker and six foreign-flagged Bulk Carriers, carrying fertilizer cargo. He hoped that the remaining India flagged vessels would also be able to cross the Strait of Hormuz soon.

On Qatar's explosion, Mr Jaiswal said that 12 Indian citizens were killed in the explosion. He said that a total of 66 people were injured in the incident and are currently receiving medical treatment. Mr Jaiswal said, India is coordinating closely with the government of Qatar to expedite procedures

related to the repatriation of the mortal remains of the deceased.

Responding to the comments made by Pakistani Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on the situation in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, the spokesperson said such remarks are desperate attempts by the neighbouring country to cover-up its own failings and deflect attention away from its human rights abuses. He said New Delhi categorically rejects these fabricated claims with the contempt they deserve. He stressed that the ongoing protests in PoK are a direct consequence of Pakistan's decades-long policy of systemic economic exploitation, denial of fundamental rights, and administrative oppression in areas under its illegal and forcible occupation. He pointed out that the Pakistani state has responded with extreme police brutality, blocking of essential supplies and medicines, internet blackouts, and use of lethal force against unarmed civilians. He expressed hope that the international community will hold Pakistan

accountable for its misdeeds and abuses.

On BRICS National Security Advisor's meeting, Mr Jaiswal informed that NSA Ajit Doval held bilateral meetings yesterday with his counterparts from Iran, Ethiopia, China, Brasil, and South Africa. He said, during the meeting the discussions were focused on enhancing cooperation among member countries in addressing non traditional security challenges and strengthening collective response to emerging global threats.

On India-UAE defence partnership, the spokesperson said India's relationship with UAE in recent several years has seen a major upswing, in which the defence partnership also plays an important role.

Responding to another query, Mr Jaiswal said there are reports from Bangladesh regarding acts of desecration involving deities and their images, which have sparked protests. He said India expects the Bangladeshi government to curb the extremists there and guarantee the safety of the minority community.

Delhi CM approves rehabilitation benefits for slum residents, sets Jan 2025 cut-off

New Delhi: Residents of any slum settlement in Delhi established by January 1, 2025, will be granted rehabilitation benefits, said the Chief Minister's Office on Tuesday.

The decision was taken at the 36th board meeting of the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB), chaired by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta.

Earlier on June 16, Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah chaired a review meeting on the rehabilitation of slums in New Delhi.

The meeting was attended by Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs Manohar Lal, Lieutenant Governor of Delhi Taranjit Singh Sandhu, Chief Minister of Delhi Rekha Gupta, Delhi's Urban Development Minister, Union Home Secretary, Delhi Chief Secretary, and other senior officials from the Central and Delhi governments.

In the meeting, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said that the Delhi Slum and JJ Cluster Rehabilitation and Relocation Policy, 2026, had been finalised and that the Government of Delhi should notify it at the earliest. He directed that the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) and the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB) should issue tenders for five clusters within 45 days.

He further instructed that project documents and tender forms should also be prepared for an additional 50 JJ clusters.

Amit Shah said that the Delhi Government should issue tenders for at least five PPP-based rehabilitation projects every month.

The Home Minister said that in the construction of rehabilitation colonies, adequate provision should be made for community facilities such as Anganwadi centres, educational facilities, health centres, and playgrounds. He added that the decisions taken in the meeting would benefit around four lakh families living in Delhi's JJ clusters. He also stated that the eligibility cut-off date for JJ clusters should be fixed as 01.01.2025.

Delhi-NCR hit by dust storm, showers bring respite from scorching heat

New Delhi: An intense dust storm swept through several parts of Delhi-NCR on Tuesday afternoon, bringing a sudden change in weather conditions across the region, followed by spells of rain and thunderstorms.

The dust storm was witnessed in parts of Chhatrapur, RK Puram, Kartavya Path, RML hospital, Gurdwara Bangla Sahib, Maulana Azad Road, Barakhamba Road, and around India Gate in Delhi, while adjoining areas of Noida Sector 49 in Uttar Pradesh also experienced similar conditions.

The weather disturbance affected multiple areas across the national capital, including parts of Delhi and adjoining regions of Noida, leading to a temporary disruption in normal conditions.

Flight operations at Indira Gandhi International Airport were also impacted due to the inclement weather.

The airport authorities said, "Due to inclement weather conditions in Delhi, flight operations are impacted at Delhi Airport. Our on-ground teams are diligently working with all stakeholders to ensure a seamless and efficient passenger experience. Passengers are advised to consider alternative modes of transport, including the Delhi Metro,



to reach the airport and avoid potential delays. For the latest flight information, passengers are advised to contact their respective airlines."

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the humidity levels stood at around 73 per cent, while temperatures were recorded at a maximum of 40 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 27 degrees Celsius in the national capital.

Meanwhile, in West Bengal, Kolkata city received heavy rainfall as parts of the metropolis were lashed by intense showers. The heavy showers were witnessed in and around Mayo Road in the city.

Furthermore, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) issued an update on rainfall activity recorded in the city between 0800 hrs and 1500 hrs.

According to the civic body, the average rainfall in the city stood at 26 mm, while the eastern suburbs recorded 4 mm and the western

suburbs 13 mm during the said period.

In the hour between 1400 hrs and 1500 hrs, rainfall was recorded at several locations across the city. Siwree Koliwada Municipal School recorded 17 mm, B Nadkarni Municipal School in Wadala recorded 16 mm, while the F/N ward and SWD Workshop recorded 10 mm of rainfall.

The civic body said that light rain was witnessed in both the eastern and western suburbs during the period.

It further stated that subways remained normal and railway traffic was also reported to be operating without disruption despite the rainfall activity.

The rain brought much-needed relief to the public amid intensified heatwave conditions prevailing in several states, offering respite from the soaring temperatures and humid weather that had gripped the region in recent days.

NHAI signs MoU with National Council of Applied Economic Research

New Delhi: National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) to establish the NHAI Centre for Economics of Transportation, Mobility and Logistics at NCAER.

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways said that the centre will serve as a dedicated platform for undertaking applied economic research on transportation, mobility and logistics. The focus of the centre will be on generating actionable insights to support long-term planning, investment and policy formulation in the road and transport sector. The Ministry said that beyond research, the Centre will serve as a knowledge hub for the transportation sector by disseminating findings through policy briefs, working papers and flagship reports.

The Centre will be anchored by an Advisory Committee comprising leading economists, transportation specialists, public policy experts and eminent academicians, along with NHAI's Member (Finance) and the Director General of NCAER.

Telegram operational for some existing users, remains delisted on app stores

New Delhi: Instant messaging app Telegram became operational for some existing users on Tuesday morning but remained delisted on application stores of Google and Apple. The government had temporarily imposed a blanket ban on Telegram until June 22 and sources indicated that there is no change or extension of timelines in the order. Email queries to Google and Apple did not elicit an immediate response in this regard.

Rain and thunderstorms bring relief from heat in Delhi, IMD forecasts more showers

New Delhi: Rain lashed through several parts of the national capital on Tuesday afternoon, leading to significant temperature drops across the city, with the weather department forecasting thunderstorm and rain to continue through the evening hours.

Amidst a red alert issued by the India Meteorological department (IMD) for most parts of the city, strong winds and dust storms swept through the city, bringing respite from the rising heat. According to the latest data from IMD, Safdarjung, representative of the city's weather, recorded a wind speed of 52 kmph at 2.30 pm.

Law Minister Reviews Preparations for Rath Yatra and Snana Yatra; Assures Improved

Puri: With the annual Rath Yatra drawing near, the Odisha government has intensified preparations to ensure the smooth and safe conduct of the world-famous festival of Lord Jagannath. Chairing the second coordination committee meeting at Puri Town Hall, the state's Law Minister reviewed arrangements related to chariot construction, road repairs, uninterrupted power supply, law and order, healthcare services, traffic management and communication systems.

The minister held detailed discussions with officials from various departments, servants (sevayats), members of the Rath

Yatra Coordination Committee and senior citizens of Puri, seeking their cooperation for the successful conduct of the festival.

Given the expected influx of lakhs of devotees, the meeting focused on key civic and security measures, including drinking water supply, sanitation facilities, accommodation, crowd management, crime prevention, orderly darshan, availability of Mahaprasad at reasonable prices, smooth bus and train services, cleanliness drives, food quality monitoring, CCTV surveillance and parking arrangements.

Special emphasis was also laid on ensuring that all rituals and



traditional services associated with Lord Jagannath are conducted smoothly and without disruption during the festival. The minister appealed to the sevayat

community to extend full cooperation in maintaining the sanctity and discipline of the event.

Stating that the

administration is fully prepared for the Rath Yatra, the minister said the government's priority this year is to ensure a well-organised festival with "zero casualty" and

Darshan Facilities for Puri Residents Soon

maximum convenience for pilgrims. He added that all efforts are being made to provide devotees with a safe, seamless and spiritually enriching experience.

The minister further informed that arrangements for improved darshan facilities for residents of Puri would be put in place shortly.

Among those present at the meeting were Panchayati Raj, Drinking Water and Rural Development Minister Rabinarayan Naik; Health, Family Welfare, Parliamentary Affairs,

Electronics and Information Technology Minister Mukesh Mahaling; Higher Education, Sports, Youth Affairs, Odia Language, Literature and Culture Minister Suryabanshi Suraj; Rajya Sabha MP Subhashish Khuntia; senior legislators from Puri district; Chief Administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration Dr Aravind Padhee; Puri Collector Debyajyoti Parida; SP Prateek Singh; senior government officials; police officers; and district administration representatives. The meeting proceedings were conducted by Santosh Kumar Sethi, Deputy Director of the Information and Public Relations Department.

Anti-drug Awareness Rally Organised in Khariar Road



NUAPADA / KHARIAR ROAD, June 23 : As part of the national initiative "Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan" (Drug-Free India Campaign), an Anti-drug Awareness Program was organized by Agrawal Mahila Mandal Khariar Road with the support of District Legal Services Authority Nuapada at Daga Chowk Khariar Road on Monday evening.

The program was held under the Chairmanship of President Agrawal Mahila Mandal, Meenu Agrawal. District Legal Services Authority Secretary Navneeta Dash & NAC Chairperson Dr. Sonia Jain were the special invitees.

Speaking at the event, DLSA Secretary Navneeta Dash expressed concern over the growing issue of drug addiction in the locality, particularly among the younger generation. She emphasized that substance abuse not only affects the individual but also has far-reaching consequences for families and the

broader community. Stressing the need for early education and community involvement, she noted that addressing substance abuse is a collective responsibility.

After meeting, an awareness rally was also taken out. The rally aimed to create awareness among the public, especially the youth, about the harmful effects of drug abuse and to promote a healthy, addiction-free lifestyle. The rally commenced from the Daga Chowk and reached Jonk Police Station, where the volunteers carried placards, banners, and slogans emphasizing the message of "Say No to Drugs" and Choose Life, Not Drugs. They handover a memorandum to IIC Jonk Police Station Pradeep Kumar Dharua.

Secretary Agrawal Mahila Mandal Sheelu Goyal, Treasurer Kalpana Gupta, Poetess Pramila Sharma, Rachna Jain, Priya Jain, Sandeep Sharma, Rakesh Jain, Manoj Daga, Amit Agarwal, Rammu Agrawal alongwith members of Agrawal Mahila Mandal were participated in the awareness rally.

Puri celebrates district-level International Day of Yoga at Blue Flag Beach



Puri: Emphasising the importance of yoga for a healthy and disease-free life, Odisha Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida on Saturday urged people to make yoga an integral part of their daily routine.

She was speaking at the district-level observance of the International Day of Yoga held at the Puri Blue Flag Beach, organised by the district administration and the Sports Department in the early hours of the day. Addressing the gathering as the chief guest, Parida said yoga is essential for physical well-being, mental stability and a healthy lifestyle. "Yoga is like a panacea for maintaining good health and preventing diseases. Every individual should incorporate it into their daily life," she said. Highlighting yoga's growing global acceptance, she noted that what originated in India

has now become a worldwide movement, with countries across the globe observing the International Day of Yoga. Referring to this year's theme, "Yoga for Healthy Ageing," she called upon people of all age groups to actively participate in and promote the practice. Puri MP Sambit Patra said that following the call of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, yoga is being celebrated across the world. He described the global spread of yoga as a reflection of India's cultural strength and soft power, adding that the discipline continues to play a vital role in promoting holistic health and wellness.

Among those present were Upasana Mohapatra, Puri Collector Divya Jyoti Parida, Superintendent of Police Prateek Singh, DFO Magar Dhanaji Rao So, Additional District

Magistrates Sarat Chandra Behera and Nilamadhab Bhoi, along with members of the temple administration, yoga organisations and district officials.

Participants performed various yoga asanas and exercises in accordance with the official International Day of Yoga protocol. The programme was coordinated by District Sports Officer Chandan Kumar Sahu and other officials. A large number of government officials, senior citizens, intellectuals, students from educational institutions, media representatives and members of the public participated in the event and took part in yoga demonstrations and training sessions.

Similar International Day of Yoga programmes were also organised across blocks, gram panchayats and urban local bodies throughout the district.

Elephant rampage again in Anandapur area, Villagers are worried



Naresh Chandra Pattanatak

Keonjhar: Elephant rampage still going on in the Anandpur area of Keonjhar district. Once again, today a tusked elephant has entered in the residential area, spread havoc among the people. Few days back in that area a woman was killed in an attack by this tusked elephant, for which an atmosphere of fear has been created among the locals as the elephant roams near the village. After this, people's concern has increased as the elephant has repeatedly entered residential areas. The forest department is keeping a close watch on the elephant's movements and efforts are being made to drive it back to the forest.

Head-on accident between three bikes; two people died

Naresh Chandra Pattanayak Keonjhar: Two bikers killed and four other injured in Tuesday night, when three bikes collide head-on near Bancho village under Anandpur police station. According to the sources the accident took place yesterday night near the Bhancho village on Anandpur - Bhadrak State Highway No. 53. The collision was high that the bikes seriously damaged. Two people died and four were

seriously injured. The deceased are belong to Akarua and Agarpada areas.

After receiving information local police with the help of local people rescued the injured and sent to the Sub divisional Hospital for treatment, while the dead bodies were sent to medical for postmortem. Due to this accident, the vehicle movement was halt for about an hour. Hundreds of vehicles were halted on both sides of the road.

Model Crematorium Lies Unused Due to Poor Planning, Faulty Construction and Neglect.

Khordha-17/6- A project that was envisioned as a symbol of dignity, compassion and modern civic infrastructure has today become a glaring example of poor planning, faulty execution and administrative neglect. The Model Crematorium, constructed near TLC Road in Khordha at an estimated cost of more than 71 crore, was meant to provide a clean, modern and convenient facility for performing the last rites of deceased persons. However, barely a few years after its construction, the facility remains largely underutilized, with residents alleging that serious design flaws and a lack of maintenance have rendered it impractical for public use. The project was undertaken by the Khordha Municipality in 2023 with the objective of offering a modern cremation facility equipped with essential amenities for residents of Khordha town and surrounding areas. Authorities had projected the crematorium as a model public utility that would ensure a respectful and hassle-free environment for bereaved families during one of the most difficult moments of their lives. However, the reality on the ground paints a very different picture. According to local residents, the crematorium has failed to serve its intended purpose due to

fundamental shortcomings in its design and implementation. The most significant issue revolves around the cremation platforms constructed inside the facility. Although two platforms were built to facilitate cremation activities, both have reportedly been constructed at a height exceeding five feet from the ground level.

Residents claim that carrying a deceased body onto such elevated platforms is extremely difficult and physically demanding. In many cases, grieving family members, already emotionally shattered by the loss of a loved one, find themselves struggling to lift the body onto the unusually high structures. Several residents alleged that families arriving at the crematorium for funeral rites have often returned without using the facility after realizing the practical difficulties involved.

"The platforms are simply too high. It becomes a challenge for ordinary people to carry a body and place it on the cremation bed. Many families come here, see the situation and decide to perform the last rites elsewhere," said a local resident.

The issue becomes even more sensitive considering the emotional circumstances under which people visit a crematorium. Funeral ceremonies are moments

of grief, sorrow and reflection. Instead of providing comfort and convenience during such difficult times, the facility has become an additional burden for bereaved families. A staff member associated with the maintenance of the crematorium, speaking on condition of anonymity, acknowledged the problem. He stated that the excessive height of the cremation platforms has become one of the primary reasons why people avoid using the facility. "Many people are unwilling to conduct cremations here because lifting a body onto the platform is extremely difficult. If the height is reduced and the platforms are redesigned, the facility can become much more user-friendly," the employee said. The problems, however, do not end there.

Residents have also expressed concern over the condition of the temporary toilet facilities built within the crematorium premises. The toilets have reportedly remained locked and non-functional for a prolonged period, depriving visitors of a basic necessity. Families and relatives often spend several hours at cremation grounds during funeral rituals, making access to sanitation facilities essential. People coming from distant villages and nearby areas are particularly



affected. Many complain that despite spending over a crore of rupees on the project, authorities have failed to ensure the availability of basic amenities such as toilets, drinking water and resting spaces.

Observers point out that a model crematorium is expected to provide not only cremation facilities but also a clean and comfortable environment equipped with essential public utilities. The absence or dysfunction of such amenities raises serious questions about both planning and post-construction management.

Another major issue highlighted by residents is the apparent lack of regular maintenance. Several parts of the crematorium premises reportedly

remain unused and neglected. Weeds and vegetation have started growing in certain areas, while waste accumulation and poor upkeep have diminished the overall appearance and utility of the facility. Locals

argue that the project appears to have received attention only during its construction and inauguration stages. Once completed, they allege, the facility was left without adequate monitoring or maintenance.

Perhaps the most controversial allegation concerns the use of the crematorium premises as a parking area for municipal garbage vehicles. Residents claim that garbage-carrying vehicles belonging to the Khordha Municipality are frequently parked within the

premises. For many citizens, this development is deeply disturbing. A crematorium is regarded as a sacred place associated with dignity, respect and final farewell ceremonies. The presence of garbage vehicles within the premises, they argue, compromises the sanctity of the location and reflects a lack of sensitivity in civic management.

"People expect a crematorium to be maintained with dignity and cleanliness. Instead, municipal garbage vehicles are often seen parked here. It sends the wrong message and defeats the very purpose for which the facility was constructed," said another local resident.

The situation has sparked growing public dissatisfaction across Khordha. Citizens, social activists and community members are increasingly questioning how a project built with substantial public funds could become so ineffective within such a short period. Many residents believe the case highlights a larger issue concerning the planning and implementation of public infrastructure projects. They argue that government-funded projects should not merely exist on paper or serve as inauguration achievements but must deliver practical benefits to the people they are intended to serve. As

criticism mounts, demands are growing for a comprehensive inquiry into the construction and management of the crematorium. Citizens have called for immediate corrective measures, including redesigning the cremation platforms, reopening and maintaining the toilet facilities, ensuring access to drinking water and other essential amenities, and implementing a robust maintenance mechanism. There

are also calls for municipal authorities to stop using the premises for parking garbage vehicles and restore the dignity and purpose of the facility. For now, all eyes remain on the Khordha Municipality. Residents are waiting to see whether authorities will acknowledge the shortcomings and take swift action to transform the neglected structure into the modern public utility it was originally intended to be. Until then, the 71 crore Model Crematorium stands as a stark reminder that infrastructure projects are measured not by the money spent on them, but by the service they provide to the people. A facility built to offer dignity in death now finds itself struggling to justify its existence, raising uncomfortable questions about accountability, planning and the effective utilization of public resources.

Forest department issues notice to OMC on illegal felling of trees.

Narsh Chandra Pattanayak Keonjhar : The Forest Department has taken action regarding illegal tree cutting for road work at Kadabandh Sahi near Uparjagar village under the Bhuyana Juanga Pirha range in Keonjhar.

"Notice has been issued to the Regional Manager of Odisha Mining Corporation in Suakati, for felling of trees without taking permission. "Action will be taken according to the laws after receiving a reply," said Nayan Kanta Sahu, Range officer, Bhuyana Juanga Pirha Range. Locals demanded the seizure of machines used for cutting trees and forest resources and the arrest of the guilty persons.

Sources said that a road is being constructed in Kadabandh Sahi with the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds



of the Odisha Mining Corporation. The contractor allegedly cut the trees and bushes without permission from the Forest Department and buried them using a JCB machine.

After the allegations, the Forest Department acted promptly. On Monday, a team led by

Forester Suakati Jyotirmayi Patnaik rushed to the spot, inspected the site, questioned the locals, counted the roots of the cut trees and submitted a report to the range officer. Based on the investigation report, the range officer today served a notice to the RM, OMC and asked him to stop the work. According to

sources, the road is being constructed as part of the corporate social responsibility program of the Odisha Mining Corporation at the cost of about 1 crore. Since this work was done without engineers of OMC present, questions have been raised about how the contractor failed to obtain

permission from the Forest Department. In this regard, OMC Regional Manager Pankaj Mahanta said that there were actually no trees there. We did not cut any trees either. We will take action if we receive the notice".

Mining activities at the Gandhamardan Iron Ore mines owned by OMC are causing severe degradation and pollution to the forest and environment. It is worth noting here that while the Odisha Mining Corporation spends crores of rupees every year on CSR funds for environmental protection, it is simultaneously damaging the environment. Locals urged the OMC Managing Director Sudhansu Mohan Samal to take action to be taken in this direction through investigation.

Corruption allegations of more than two crores : Wildlife DFO Office under suspicion

NUAPADA/KHARIAR ROAD, June 23 : The allegations of corruption worth over two crore rupees at the Wildlife Sunabeda DFO Office Nuapada have now become a topic of discussion. A major government financial scandal has come to light in this office.

According to information, a complaint has been filed against a clerk Bablu Suna, who is working in the said office, for embezzling government funds. As per the information, this corruption is said to have taken place in the last financial years 2023-24 and 24-25.

Preliminary investigation revealed that the then DDO of the said office had entrusted all the responsibilities to Bablu Suna.

The said clerk is said to have withdrawn Rs 2.87 crores from the government treasury through about 36 fake bills in the name of 6



employees.

There is no document in the office for all 36 bills nor is there any file in which the said withdrawal of money has been approved. Bills have only been sent to the Treasury online. While the officer's name and account number are correct in the bill sent from the office to the Treasury, the officer's name is still there in the bill sent from the Treasury to the bank, but the account

number has been changed. Similarly, while the bills sent from the office have the digital signature of the concerned DDO, the bills sent from the treasury to the bank do not have the signature.

When contacted to DFO Wildlife Sameer Kumar Sahu said, after this incident came to light we have suspended the said clerk and we have informed to higher authorities about the incident and requested them to conduct a special audit.

Now, the clerk is not coming to the office.

In this transaction, not only the DFO office but also the district treasury is under investigation. Because How did one bill come out of the office and another bill from the treasury.

There is growing speculation that further information will come to light if a proper investigation is conducted. Investigation is underway process in this connection.

Bomb Attack on Paradip Municipal Chairperson's House Shrouded in Mystery



Paradip (DMS):- Four weeks have passed since the bomb attack on the residence of Paradip Municipality Chairperson Basant Biswal on May 30, but the main conspirators and accused persons are yet to be arrested, raising serious questions about the efficiency of the police administration.

The failure of the police to crack the case involving an attack on the residence of Paradip's first citizen has created suspicion and surprise among the public. The prolonged delay in identifying and apprehending those responsible has led to growing concern among local residents and political circles.

A few days ago, representatives and leaders of

various political parties jointly met Paradip Additional Superintendent of Police Ajinkya Baburao Mane and demanded a thorough investigation into the incident. They urged the police to examine the possible involvement of Bapi Sarkhel, who they alleged had been creating unrest in Paradip. They also requested that CCTV footage from his office be scrutinized as part of the investigation.

However, despite these developments, Bapi Sarkhel recently visited Paradip and spoke to the media, denying any involvement in the bomb attack and attempting to clear his name. The incident continues to remain shrouded in mystery as the police investigation progresses.

Strengthening Monsoon & Cyclone Preparedness at Paradip Port

Paradip (DMS):- Paradip Port Authority (PPA) organized a Pre-Monsoon Awareness & Preparedness Workshop on 23 June 2026 at the New Board Room, bringing together key maritime stakeholders to enhance coordination and readiness for the South-West and North-East monsoon/cyclone season.

The workshop was chaired by T.Venu Gopal, Deputy Chairman, Paradip Port Authority, and focused on cyclone preparedness, heavy weather response, vessel safety, marine pollution prevention, oil spill response, and effective coordination among port authorities, maritime agencies, and local administration.

Through proactive planning and collaboration, Paradip Port Authority remains committed to ensuring the safety, resilience, and operational continuity of port and maritime activities during adverse weather conditions.



IFFCO Paradeep unit organised Yoga Workshop

Paradip, (DMS) : - On the occasion of the 12th International Yoga Day, a yoga workshop was organised by IFFCO Management, Paradeep Unit, and DAV Public School, IFFCO, Paradeep, on 21st June 2026 from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. at the Community Hall. The session was conducted by renowned yoga experts, Ms. Soundarya Prusty and Ms. Simran Moharana from the Barabati Yoga Association, Satyabrata Stadium, Cuttack. The experts guided participants



through various yoga postures and breathing exercises, emphasising the importance of yoga in

promoting physical fitness, mental well-being, and a balanced lifestyle.

The programme

witnessed enthusiastic participation from IFFCO dignitaries, employees, parents, students, and staff

members of DAV Public School. The active involvement of all stakeholders made the event

a resounding success and reinforced the message of embracing yoga as a way of life.

At the end of the programme, the Principal of DAV Public School, IFFCO Paradeep, expressed heartfelt gratitude to the yoga experts, IFFCO management, the Physical Education Department in-charge, and all participants for their wholehearted cooperation and valuable contributions towards the successful conduct of the workshop.

BUSINESS

International Women in Engineering Day: Vedanta Aluminium's Women Engineers Power Core Operations at Jharsuguda

From potlines to plant maintenance, women engineers are driving efficiency and operational excellence at India's largest aluminium plant

Jharsuguda : At Vedanta Aluminium's cutting-edge operations in Jharsuguda, inclusivity is woven into every stage of its manufacturing practices. This approach powers the complex systems that drive operational efficiency, the advanced technologies that strengthen asset reliability, and the processes that enable continuous improvement. Yet, its true impact lies in empowering the people behind these: highly skilled women professionals who combine technical expertise, innovation, and leadership to solve complex challenges and create lasting value.

As India's largest producer of aluminium, Vedanta Aluminium has long recognized that business excellence and inclusion go hand in hand. This belief has translated into several industry-leading milestones at its Jharsuguda operations,

including deploying India's first all-women-operated potline, India's first all-women power unit, and an all-women locomotive team. It is within this ecosystem that its women engineers redefine what 'Engineering Intelligence', the global theme for this year's celebration of International Women in Engineering Day, means in practice.

For Mamta Bhagat, Head of Manufacturing Excellence & Business Partner Management, it implies making complex processes work smoothly. Her work spans inventory optimization, audit compliance, governance improvements, and value creation through strong vendor partnerships. "Over the years, I have been tasked with improving several critical processes that often work behind the scenes but have a major impact on our

overall performance." Recognized as an Emerging Leader and High Potential Leader at Vedanta Aluminium for her exceptional performance, Mamta advocates self-belief, resilience, and continuous learning as essential for young women engineers entering the manufacturing industry.

As Head of CBM & Calibration and Deputy Head of Asset Optimization, Suman Pritidarshinichannel's complex data and technology into better decision-making. With extensive experience in maintenance, reliability engineering, operations, and project management, she has played a key role in improving how large critical assets are managed.

"One of my most important contributions has been the implementation of real-time vibration monitoring across



more than 350 critical assets, enabling a shift from reactive maintenance to predictive, data-driven decision-making." Recognized as a Young CEO, Technical Star, and Emerging Leader, she represents a new generation of engineers who embrace innovation while staying strong on technical fundamentals.

Snigdharoopa Biswal, Head of Business Excellence, focuses on unlocking possibilities through continuous improvement. An engineer by training, she approaches challenges with a solution-oriented mindset. Her work across Total Quality Management, Lean, Six Sigma, Value Stream Mapping, and Quality

Circles has helped convert quality frameworks into practical plant-level improvements, strengthening both performance and workplace culture.

This has earned her several recognitions at Vedanta Aluminium, including that of Technical Star and Emerging Leader. She encourages young

women engineers to stay grounded in their values, keep learning, and never let implied boundaries limit their potential.

C Chandru, CEO - Vedanta Aluminium, Jharsuguda said: "On International Women in Engineering Day, we celebrate the women professionals who are shaping the future of manufacturing with skill, resilience and fresh thinking. We are committed to building an environment where women engineers can lead, innovate and thrive across our operations, advancing India's industrial growth in a meaningful way."

Vedanta Aluminium continues to strengthen its inclusive work environment, that enables women engineers to perform at their best across roles. This includes flexible policies that support

different life stages, access to extensive learning and development pathways, and equitable growth opportunities. Through these efforts, Vedanta Aluminium is building a culture where talent and skill is prioritized, and every woman professional is empowered to grow.

Together, their journeys demonstrate that Engineering Intelligence is not confined to machines, algorithms, or systems. It is equally about judgement, perseverance, collaboration, and the ability to envision better ways of working. As International Women in Engineering Day 2026 celebrates the innovators and problem-solvers shaping our world, these leaders stand as powerful examples of what is possible when women professionals are empowered and equitable opportunities for growth are created.

Ajodhya Misappropriation

Disturbing allegations of misappropriation of donations, including cash and valuables, at the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya are being probed by a Special Investigation Team (SIT) set up by the Uttar Pradesh government. At stake is not only the integrity of a prestigious religious institution, the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, but also the faith of crores of devotees who have contributed generously to the landmark temple. It is alleged that cash



donations amounting to several crore rupees were siphoned off and precious ornaments replaced with fake items. The reported disappearance of 60 kg of silver bars donated during the consecration ceremony has further raised doubts about the mechanism for safeguarding offerings.

As expected, the controversy has triggered a political storm months before the 2027 UP Assembly elections. Opposition leaders have accused the ruling establishment of shielding wrongdoers, while the BJP has dismissed the accusations as attempts to defame Ayodhya and hurt religious sentiments. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has appealed for patience, saying that devotees who waited 500 years for the temple need to wait another 15 days for the SIT to complete its investigation. Indeed, a transparent and time-bound inquiry is a must to get to the bottom of the sordid matter.

The demand for the public disclosure of records and an independent audit cannot be brushed aside. In matters involving public donations and religious devotion, accountability must not be compromised. The row also exposes a malaise afflicting major religious institutions across India. Temples that receive enormous donations require modern systems of auditing, inventory management, digital tracking and autonomous oversight. The Ram Mandir represents the collective aspirations of India's majority community. Precisely because of its immense symbolic importance, every allegation must be investigated impartially and every doubt addressed transparently. Protecting the sanctity of the temple ultimately means preserving the trust of the faithful themselves.

Pharma Ban

THE government's decision to ban 16 fixed-dose combination (FDC) drugs is in line with its efforts to clean up India's pharmaceutical ecosystem. The move reflects a simple but often neglected principle in medicine: more is not always better. Fixed-dose combinations — drugs that mix two or more active ingredients in a single pill or formulation — are widely



used across the country. However, many of them have proliferated without adequate scientific validation, driven more by market incentives than medical necessity. The government's conclusion that the banned FDCs "lack therapeutic justification" lays bare a stark reality: not all easily available medicines are necessarily rational or safe.

The strict measure follows Supreme Court-directed reviews and expert committee assessments under the Drugs Technical Advisory Board. India has previously banned hundreds of irrational FDCs, yet their continued circulation — often when enforcement is fragmented — has exposed persistent gaps between regulation and implementation. The inclusion of antibiotic-based combinations on the ban list is particularly important. In the era of rising antimicrobial resistance, irrational antibiotic use is not just a regulatory concern but also a public health threat with global consequences. Similarly, banning dermatological and analgesic combinations that lack evidence-based justification signals a shift towards evidence-based prescribing norms. Whether this approach percolates down to prescribing doctors and pharmacies is the real test.

The tightening of rules on cough syrups and over-the-counter liquid medicines further indicates a wider regulatory recalibration. Together, these measures are aimed at reducing unsupervised access and enforcing prescription discipline. If the ban is implemented rigorously, it can strengthen rational drug use in India. If not, it would be added to the list of well-intentioned but unevenly enforced pharma reforms.

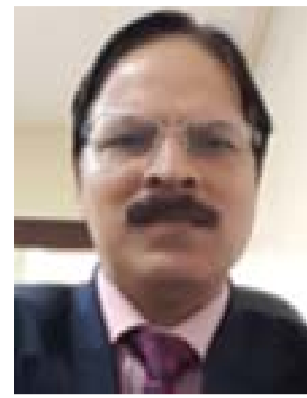
The Art and Economics of Bargaining

W e feel happy if we can reduce the price even by a small amount by bargaining with the shopkeeper. But most people feel comfortable if the shop displays a Fixed Price board as they feel that they have not been cheated. But some people prefer to go to the market where bargaining is practiced as they feel that they have mastered the art of bargaining. Bargaining is very common in market places in Africa, Asia and Middle East. Fixed price is followed in most of the markets in Europe, North America and Japan. Fixed price is the price either fixed by the seller or the authorities and there is no scope for bargaining to reduce the price. Today the biggest bargaining platform in the world is the middle east where US is engaged in a bargaining process with Iran for several weeks with the mediation of Pakistan to settle the terms for ending the war.

Bargaining is not a bad thing nor it is uncommon. In financial markets quite a number of transactions are done over bargaining. In forex transactions involving millions of dollars and rupees there is a bargaining process between the buyer and seller. In international bond markets there is a bargaining process between the buyer and the seller and many a times the buyer and the seller ask each other over the trading screen to improve the price and finally a deal is done. Even in placement of fixed deposits with foreign banks a bargaining process takes place on the interest rate at which the deposit will be placed. The much talked about tariff negotiations of countries with USA was a huge negotiation process which went on for days involving trade in several commodities and the rate of tariff by both

the negotiating sides.

One of the important factors in the bargaining process is the bargaining power. The bargaining power is a party's relative ability to influence the opposite side during negotiations, allowing them to secure more favorable terms or leverage. It dictates who holds the upper hand and is primarily driven by available alternatives, information advantages, market dominance, and resource strength. Bargaining power can be dynamic and depends on information flow and the



Subash Chandra Misra

depending on the dynamics of demand and supply. When we book a Uber cab, it gives dynamic price which is different in busy hours and slack hours and the customer

While purchasing commodities, a fixed price gives us a sense of fairness and not being cheated. In contrast many fixed or non negotiable prices are variable price depending on the dynamics of demand and supply. When we book a Uber cab, it gives dynamic price which is different in busy hours and slack hours and the customer has no mechanism to enter in to negotiation. Several other cab booking apps have a mechanism to offer more over and above the base price to improve their chance of getting the cab over other potential customers. Airlines and e-commerce sites follow a dynamic pricing mechanism while selling tickets and goods.

alternatives available to the bargaining sides as the side with more and better alternatives will have an upper hand in the bargaining process. In business and in market place, it is influenced by supply, demand, USP, the price of the product and the urgency for delivery of the product. One of the common theories to determine the bargaining power of the parties is known as BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement) which says that the party who has a better alternative to the terms of negotiations will have more bargaining power in the negotiating table. The bargaining process may have a duration of a few seconds like

has no mechanism to enter in to negotiation. Several other cab booking apps have a mechanism to offer more over and above the base price to improve their chance of getting the cab over other potential customers. Airlines and e-commerce sites follow a dynamic pricing mechanism while selling tickets and goods.

Fixed pricing has several advantages as it helps the seller and buyer to know the cash flow in advance, prepare budgets and it is less complex to understand. It is easier to market, predict customer demand and it enhances customer comfort and creates customer loyalty. In contrast, the dynamic pricing creates

a sense of uncertainty but helps in beating competition by adjusting price upwards or downwards depending on demand and supply. Banks also sell credit products on fixed price or floating price basis. In financial markets, it is regular feature to swap fixed price products in to floating price products depending on the need of the parties to hedge their cash flows.

A fixed price may not be beneficial or fair always. It depends on whether the seller is a monopoly or in a competition. In a monopoly situation, the seller may reduce the quantum of production and increase the price to get exorbitant profit while in a competitive situation, since there are many sellers one seller can not determine the price. But in some competitive markets the sellers form a cartel and fix the base price below which none of the cartel members will sell. They may also agree together to raise the price or fix the maximum discount to be offered on some products and thus influence the price. In 2018 the major bread makers in Canada decided together to raise the price of bread by a fixed amount over a fixed period.

The negotiation process during a war or in a post war period can drag on for weeks or months. The Iran-USA war negotiation is going on for months and several rounds of discussions are taking place through a mediator to arrive at mutually agreed points for a permanent ceasefire. In a political or war negotiation, the negotiating sides, while keeping in view their military striking power and advantage have to take care of the aspirations of the domestic constituency which does not like to see the government surrendering or giving a long leeway to a foreign power. Bargaining is a part of life whether in purchasing a commodity or negotiating for a ceasefire between nations.

The author is a Retired Chief General Manager of Reserve Bank of India.

Narcissistic Personality Disorder

Prof. Dr. Samrat Kar

Narcissism finds its roots in Greek mythology. Narcissus was a man who fell in love with his own image when it was reflected in a pool of water. In today's terms, narcissism means to derive gratification from vanity or egotistical admiration of one's own attributes. It is seen as a form of self-defeating pride. But I, for one completely disagree with this view of narcissism. There is nothing innately wrong with a Narcissus. Adoring one's own reflection, deriving gratification from admiring oneself is in fact healthy. It is much healthier than being critical of oneself or striving to be self less (which is actually not possible). But our culture, which has been heavily influenced for thousands of years by biblical Christianity, recognizes self-love as vanity and ultimately as pride, which is one of the original seven sins. And so, sadly, narcissus has become the poster child not only for self-love, but also for pride. As a result, we confuse self-love with selfishness, when they are drastically different things.

Extremely selfish. Unable to deal with criticism, perceived slights, or disagreements. Hypersensitive, defensive, and anxious. Not settling for anything less than what you think you deserve. The cause is likely complex. It ultimately depends on the narcissist, the partner, and the circumstances. Very few narcissists are capable of living a normal life, since most of them are unaware of themselves. They cannot see their faults to get out of their vicious, neverending cycle. Even for self-aware narcissists, it's not easy.

There is no cure, but therapy can help. The goal is to build up the person's poor self-esteem and have more realistic expectations of others. Treatment usually centers on talk therapy. Sometimes people call this psychotherapy.

The other crucial thing is that we recognize what the narcissist is mirroring in us. To do this, assess the emotions you feel relative to them. Do you feel worthless, invisible, used or exhausted? If so, we need to get into an attitude of pre-manifestation by understanding that this person is nothing more than a mirror for those feelings, which were already inside us. Those feelings were what attracted this experience with this person into our lives in the first place. Where did those feelings really begin? We need to make it about ourselves instead of about the narcissist and realize that if we find improvement in those areas, they will not reflect into our life experience. We will stop attracting narcissistic people to mirror the issues within us that need to be healed. Psychiatrist, The Brain Foundation, Purigat Road, Cuttack, Mob. : 9132433333

Be a helping hand

Utkalananda Ajaya Kumar Behera
The whole purpose of life is to have happiness. All of us strive for it; work towards it and deep inside feel that it is the ultimate goal. Different people have different definitions of happiness but ultimately we all want it.

You are to born to help others. He who helps others, God helps him. You have been taught from the very childhood that how a father helps his baby. In our mythology, it has been mention everywhere that there is no religion other than to serve and help others. Only he is a real human being who lives for others. Whatever you say or do to others let it be with love. Learn to earn but also learn to distribute, donate and help the needy. To the world you might be one person but to one person you might be the world. You have been gifted not only with a handsome but also with a wisdom, knowledge, kindness, sympathy, power, thought, strength, talent, skills. For what? Have you ever thought? Only to serve others. Learn to show, enthusiasm ever when you don't feel like it. Everyday show your people how much you love them with

your thoughts, with your touch and with your thought fullness

In every age, people, specially the older generation bemoan the fact that human values are not what they were. They look back and wonder what life is coming to. And there are people who make us think that all that is good in life is disappearing. But fortunately there are those hundreds and hundreds of people who show in small and big ways that Life is indeed wonderful. Anyway, not only got to see a beautiful place but also came across such helpful people. They have made our visit so much more memorable. We may forget the place after many years but such people are always a part of our Life. They make life so much more beautiful heart.

Purpose of life is to be useful to others. Not only other sentient beings but all of the environment. As we say, to both the container and the contained. Here, container is Earth. Even though we read about many galaxies and Goldilocks zones, I am thinking only Earth and its inhabitants. To be useful

to all sentient and non-sentient beings, be it a small insect or a plant. That is the only way to go on.

Do not try to be a perfect human being in our life. Trying to be better in our life better will be easy for us to practise in our life. Don't look others for our success in our life. Aim for our own success as success knocks our door when we keep on trying to achieve it. Accusing others makes us to stay away from what we want to be in our life. Always apologize other's mistakes, then we will be marching forward to see the victory in our life. Let us not waste our time to find what others are doing wrong in their life as we have time only to do right things in our life. Don't bother whether others are helping us for our success in our life. Always be a person to help others for THEIR success in their life. Our success always depends at the time of not resisting the success of others. We all have a meaning in our life when we learn how we can be more helpful to others.

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Cultivation of Medicinal Plants: Future Beneficial Agriculture

By Dr. Vijay Garg
Agriculture has always been the backbone of human civilization, providing food, employment, and economic stability. However, changing climatic conditions, rising cultivation costs, and fluctuating market prices have encouraged farmers to explore alternative and more profitable farming options. Among these, the cultivation of medicinal plants has emerged as one of the most promising sectors. With growing global demand for natural remedies, herbal products, and traditional medicines, medicinal plant cultivation is increasingly being viewed as the future of beneficial agriculture. Rising Demand for Medicinal Plants The world is witnessing a renewed interest in natural healthcare systems such as Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Traditional Chinese Medicine, and herbal therapies. Consumers are becoming more conscious of the side effects associated with excessive use of synthetic drugs and are turning toward plant-based alternatives.

Medicinal plants such as Ashwagandha, Tulsi (Holy Basil), Aloe Vera, Brahmi, Shatavari, Giloy,

Lemongrass, and Stevia are widely used in pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, nutraceuticals, and wellness products. As a result, the demand for raw herbal materials is growing steadily in both domestic and international markets.

Why Medicinal Plant Cultivation Matters

High Income Potential
Many medicinal crops offer significantly higher returns compared to conventional crops. Their market value is often more stable, particularly when farmers establish links with herbal medicine companies and processing units.

Low Input Requirements
Several medicinal plants require less water, fewer chemical fertilizers, and limited pesticide use. This reduces cultivation costs and promotes environmentally friendly farming.

Climate Resilience
Many medicinal species are adaptable to diverse climatic conditions and can thrive in marginal lands where conventional crops may not perform well. This makes them suitable for regions facing water scarcity and unpredictable

weather patterns.

Export Opportunities
India is one of the world's richest countries in terms of medicinal plant biodiversity. The increasing international demand for herbal products creates substantial export opportunities, helping farmers access global markets.

Popular Medicinal Crops for Cultivation

Farmers can choose from a wide range of medicinal plants depending on soil type, climate, and market demand. Some of the most popular include:

- Ashwagandha
- Aloe Vera
- Tulsi
- Safed Musli
- Shatavari
- Brahmi
- Kalmegh
- Giloy
- Lemongrass
- Stevia
- Sarpagandha

These crops are used in various pharmaceutical and wellness industries and often fetch attractive prices.

Railways approves deployment of Automatic Train Protection system Kavach on East Coast Railway routes

New Delhi,23/6: Indian Railways has approved the deployment of Automatic Train Protection system Kavach on 631 route kilometres of East Coast Railway to enhance safety and operational efficiency. The Railways Ministry said that the project covers six important railway sections of East Coast Railway, including Baghuapal-Budhapank, Haridaspur-Paradeep, Khurda Road-Balangir, Naupada-Gunupur, Lanjigarh Road-Junagarh and Bobbili-Salur. The installation of Kavach on these routes will help achieve a higher level of safety in train operations by providing automatic train protection and collision avoidance capabilities. The ministry said that the project is expected to benefit both passenger and freight train operations across key sections of Odisha and neighbouring regions served by East Coast Railway. It will also strengthen Indian Railways' ongoing mission to expand Kavach coverage across high-density and strategically important routes.

Aadhaar App crosses 31 million downloads since launch

New Delhi,23/6: The Aadhaar App has crossed over 31 million downloads since it was launched in January this year. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology said that the growing adoption reflects people's confidence in the App for bringing services at their fingertips. Almost four million people have updated their mobile numbers using the App and around 850,000 people have used the App to update their address. The app also includes features like locking or unlocking in a single click, face verification for proof of presence, authentication history, and a QR-based editable contact card for easy sharing of contacts instead of physical visiting cards.

Public trust is greatest asset of good governance : PM Modi

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi today said that the changes that have taken place over the past 12 years have succeeded in strengthening people's faith in governance and administration. He added that it also played a crucial role in making the lives of millions of citizens more convenient, secure, and dignified through public welfare schemes. The Prime Minister said this while sharing an article written by Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal in a social media post. Mr Modi further said that public trust is the greatest asset of good governance. The article written by Mr Goyal highlights the journey of good governance, public welfare, and the positive changes in the lives of the poor during the 12 years of the Central Government under the leadership of PM Modi.

Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs begins study visit to J&K and Ladakh

New Delhi,23/6: The Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs, chaired by Member of Parliament Shashi Tharoor, has begun a four-day study visit to Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh to review strategic border security and foreign policy issues. Our Correspondent reports that the committee will visit Jammu, Srinagar, Kargil and Leh till the 25th of this month to gain first-hand insights into border management and the security situation in frontier areas. The panel is examining recent developments in India's bilateral relations, the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, and threats posed by cross-border terrorism along the Line of Control and the International Border. It is also focusing on India-China relations and the situation along the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh. Committee members are holding discussions with senior civil and military officials, besides interacting with local residents in forward areas. Earlier, the Ministry of External Affairs and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri briefed the panel in New Delhi on Sino-Indian relations and India's position on Pakistan.

CBSE Begins Releasing Class XII Verification and Re-Evaluation Results

New Delhi,23/6: CBSE has commenced the release of Class XII verification of issues observed and re-evaluation outcomes. It said in a statement that the outcomes are being released in a phased manner, with over 87 per cent of the total applications received being declared today. The outcomes of the remaining applications will be made available in phases and the entire process is expected to be completed soon. The status of application can be checked at <http://results.digilocker.gov.in/> CBSE has assured students that every application has been processed through a robust, transparent, and carefully monitored system to ensure fairness and accuracy. Students have been advised not to believe rumours or unverified social media posts and to rely only on official CBSE communications for authentic information.

CBI Conducts Raids in 62.42-Crore Bank Fraud Case

New Delhi,23/6: The Central Bureau of Investigation, CBI has conducted searches at multiple premises linked to the partners of a Mumbai-based firm and other locations in connection with an alleged bank fraud of 62 crore 42 lakh rupees. In a statement, the CBI said the searches were carried out following the registration of a case on the 18th of this month on the complaint of Indian Bank's SAM Branch, Mumbai. The agency has registered the case against the firm, its partners, unknown public servants and unknown private persons. CBI said that the accused persons allegedly entered into a criminal conspiracy, cheating and falsification of accounts by submitting inflated debtor figures and other false financial information to the banks and obtained higher Cash Credit facilities from Indian Bank and another bank. It informed that during the searches, incriminating documents relevant to the investigation were recovered and seized. The documents relating to the alleged inflation of debtor figures for availing enhanced credit facilities have also been seized.

President Droupadi Murmu reviews progress of Project Cheetah at Kuno National Park

New Delhi,23/6: President Droupadi Murmu visited Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park yesterday and reviewed the progress of Project Cheetah, India's flagship initiative to reintroduce the species in the wild after its extinction in the country. During the visit, the President toured the park's Cheetah Management Area and was briefed by officials on the status

of the project. Kuno, the country's first cheetah reintroduction site, has been developed under Project Cheetah because of its suitable habitat, adequate prey base and relatively low human disturbance. President Droupadi Murmu went on a safari at Kuno National Park this morning. The President will also interact with members of the Sahariya tribe working as Cheetah Mitras,

cheetah trackers, local forest personnel and tourist guides to learn about their experiences and role in the project. Earlier, on Sunday, President Murmu visited the Cheetah Command and Control Centre at Kuno and viewed an exhibition related to the cheetah project. Officials informed her that India currently has 52 cheetahs, of which 49 are in Kuno National Park, while three have been shifted to the

Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary. She was also briefed about the monitoring and tracking system used for the animals. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched India's ambitious cheetah reintroduction project in 2022 by releasing eight cheetahs brought from Namibia into Kuno National Park on his birthday. Subsequently, more cheetahs were brought from South Africa and Botswana.

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Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat participates in tourism EoDB session

New Delhi,23/6: Union Minister for Culture and Tourism, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, today participated in the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) Interactive Session, organized with representatives of the tourism and hospitality sector in New Delhi. In a social media post, Mr Shekhawat said that the development of the tourism and hospitality sector is a means of transformation in the lives of millions of people. He noted that the central government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is creating new opportunities for employment, growth, and prosperity.

CBSE to issue revised Class-12 physical marksheets through regional offices

New Delhi,23/6: Revised physical marksheets of students whose Class-12 scores changed after verification or re-evaluation will be made available at the CBSE's regional offices in due course, sources said on Monday. Candidates will be required to surrender their old original marksheets before the issuance of the revised marksheets. "Revised physical marksheets will be available at the regional offices in due course. Candidates will be required to surrender their old original marksheets before the issuance of the revised marksheets.

India-UK FTA To Benefit Farmers, Fishermen, MSMEs: Piyush Goyal

New Delhi,23/6: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Tuesday that the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) is a truly people-centric pact that will benefit Indian farmers, businesses, artisans, and people across the country. "By unlocking the premium UK market, it creates attractive global opportunities for women entrepreneurs, youth, startups and MSMEs, while empowering the underprivileged without compromising India's core interests," the minister said in a post on X. He further stated that the landmark agreement will help Indian farmers, fishermen, artisans and small businesses prosper globally and accelerate job creation, while enabling the common man to access high-quality goods at competitive prices. The transformational win-win agreement, which comes into force on July 15, will ensure comprehensive market access for Indian goods in the UK across sectors, particularly labour-intensive ones. It will immediately eliminate tariffs on about 99 per cent of tariff lines, covering almost 100 per cent of trade value, creating enormous opportunities for Indian exports, Goyal said

in a detailed article. The CETA was signed last year in the presence of PM Narendra Modi and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer. It delivers benefits across society. Farmers gain access to premium export markets without compromising their domestic interests. Fisherfolk benefit from enhanced seafood exports to the vast UK market. Workers gain new employment opportunities in labour-intensive sectors. Women entrepreneurs, youth, start-ups and MSMEs receive improved access to global value chains. Professionals benefit from enhanced mobility and recognition opportunities, the minister observed. He further stated that the agreement unlocks benefits in the UK market for Indian farmers that match or exceed the benefits enjoyed by other European nations. Turmeric, pepper, cardamom and processed goods such as mango pulp, pickles, and pulses will receive duty-free access. Higher agricultural exports will boost farm incomes and create greater incentives for quality, packaging and certification. It will also generate numerous jobs across the agricultural value chain.

From Rajagopal To Kurian, BJP's Kerala Formula Faces Another Test

New Delhi/Kochi,23/6: With Union Minister George Kurian resigning after the BJP decided not to renew his Rajya Sabha term, attention has shifted to whether Kerala will get a new representative in the PM Narendra Modi-led Union Council of Ministers. Kurian submitted his resignation on Tuesday after completing his term in the Upper House, and President Droupadi Murmu accepted it. Sources said Kurian is likely to return to organisational responsibilities, with the BJP leader having expressed his interest in working in Kerala. However, the party is yet to clarify whether he will be given a role at the national level or in the state. Kurian, a long-time BJP leader who joined the party when it was formed in 1980, was inducted into the third Narendra Modi government in June 2024 as Minister of State for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and

Dairying, and Minority Affairs. His entry into the Cabinet had surprised many as he was not then a member of either House of Parliament. In August 2024, Kurian was nominated to the Rajya Sabha from Madhya Pradesh after the seat fell vacant following the resignation of Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, who moved to the Lok Sabha after winning the general election. With the BJP not extending his Rajya Sabha term, Kurian becomes the fourth BJP leader from Kerala to exit the Union Cabinet without securing a second stint. The BJP has in the past followed a similar route of bringing Kerala leaders into the Rajya Sabha and inducting them into the Union Cabinet. Former Union Ministers O. Rajagopal, K. J. Alphons, and V. Muraliedharan had entered Parliament through the Upper House before holding ministerial positions. Kurian, a lawyer who had

practised in the Supreme Court, had served in several organisational roles, including BJP state Vice President, National Executive member, Core Committee member, and party spokesperson. He had also worked as an Officer on Special Duty when Rajagopal was a Union Minister. His electoral journey in Kerala, however, remained challenging. He had contested Assembly elections several times, including from Kanjirappally in the recent state polls, but could not secure a victory. At present, the lone BJP representative from Kerala in the Union Cabinet is actor-turned-politician Suresh Gopi, who scripted a historic victory from the Thrissur Lok Sabha constituency. Now, all eyes are on whether BJP's Rajya Sabha nominee from Kerala, C. Sadanandan Master, will be considered for a ministerial berth, or whether Kerala's representation in the Modi Cabinet will remain limited to one.

PM Modi Asks Young Civil Servants To Lead Journey Towards Viksit Bharat @2047

New Delhi,23/6: Highlighting the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday interacted with 183 Officer Trainees of the IAS 2024 batch and urged them to dedicate themselves to nation-building with a strong sense of purpose. Emphasising the importance of data-driven governance, the Prime Minister urged the young officers to constantly evaluate their contribution towards nation-building and derive satisfaction not from positions held, but from measurable outcomes achieved. Speaking at a session held at Seva Teerth, PM Modi expressed confidence that the young officers attached as Assistant Secretaries in various Ministries and Departments would use their energy, talent, and dedication to play a pivotal role in taking India's development journey to new heights. The young Officer Trainees shared their field experiences from their training and their attachment to Ministries. The Prime Minister said that after two years of field exposure and administrative learning, they now stand at a crucial stage where their decisions will shape not just their own careers, but the future of crores of citizens. He emphasised that the



real test of public service begins by handling real-life situations with integrity, sensitivity, and commitment. The Prime Minister urged the young civil servants to dedicate themselves to nation-building with a strong sense of purpose, innovation, and citizen-centric governance. He urged the officers to always remember the human impact behind every administrative file. He said that every file represents the aspirations, concerns, and lives of countless citizens. Stressing the mantra of "Nagrik Devo Bhava", he called upon officers to place citizens at the center of every decision and ensure governance remains empathetic, responsive, and inclusive. Calling for a whole-

of-government approach, the Prime Minister stressed that major developmental challenges cannot be solved in silos. He further noted that effective coordination across departments is essential for achieving meaningful and lasting outcomes. Highlighting the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, the Prime Minister noted that every policy and administrative decision over the coming decades must contribute towards building a Viksit Bharat. He stressed that India's priorities today include Aatmanirbhar Bharat, Make in India, manufacturing growth, energy security, and creating opportunities for youth. The Prime Minister underlined the

CM Rekha Gupta hands over ex-gratia to affected families in Saidulajab, Malviya Nagar incidents

New Delhi: Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Monday handed over ex-gratia assistance to the families of people who died in Malviya Nagar fire and the Saidulajab building collapse incidents, saying the government is taking concrete steps to prevent such tragedies in future. Gupta also asserted that those responsible for the two incidents will not be spared under any circumstances.

CISF to integrate facial recognition data from major airports

New Delhi,23/6: The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) is planning to create a "data fusion centre" in Delhi that will integrate facial recognition data from across the country's major airports, a top officer said on Monday. The proposal is currently under consideration by the Ministry of Home Affairs, CISF Director General Praveer Ranjan said. He was speaking at an event in the national capital, where Minister of State for Home Bandi Sanjay Kumar laid the foundation for a new headquarters building of the paramilitary force.

Security Agencies Flag Hamas Attempt To Expand South Asian Network Through Regional Tie-Ups

New Delhi,23/6: Indian security agencies are closely monitoring what they describe as a growing pattern in Hamas's efforts to expand its influence in South Asia. Intelligence inputs suggest that the Palestinian militant group is seeking to strengthen ties with extremist organisations across the region, particularly in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. Pakistan has, on several occasions, hosted senior Hamas leaders, who have reportedly been seen interacting with members of terror outfits such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM). Security officials also point to similarities between the Pahalgam attack and the tactics used during Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel. While Hamas's links with Pakistan-based terror groups have long been viewed as an open secret by intelligence agencies, officials now say the outfit is attempting to widen its reach beyond Pakistan into Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. According to intelligence inputs, Hamas is seeking to establish a broader footprint in South Asia by forging connections with multiple extremist



organisations. Traditionally focused on Palestine and its conflict with Israel, the group is now believed to be pursuing a wider regional presence following its engagement with Pakistan-based networks. An Intelligence Bureau official said Hamas is unlikely to operate directly under its own banner in these countries. "It would work along with outfits such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba, Al-Qaeda in Bangladesh, Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and pro-Hamas groups in Sri Lanka," the official said. The broader objective,

officials believe, is to move beyond Gaza and create a support network across South Asia. By cultivating multiple partnerships, Hamas could significantly increase its regional reach and influence. Another official noted that Hamas may not necessarily participate directly in operational activities alongside these groups. Instead, the value of such alliances lies in expanding the organisation's influence, visibility and support infrastructure. The official added that these partnerships could also provide logistical advantages while helping Hamas raise funds

through networks established across South Asia. Security agencies assessed that such efforts could eventually extend into Nepal, Myanmar and the Maldives. "Hamas would not find it difficult to undertake these operations," another official said. According to the intelligence agencies, Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) played a key role in facilitating Hamas' engagement with networks in the region. Officials allege that the Pakistani spy agency has encouraged Hamas leaders to visit various South Asian countries and cultivate alliances with local organisations. Such arrangements, officials believe, serve the ISI's interests by expanding its influence and strengthening connections among extremist groups operating across the region. An official said that the immediate concern is not necessarily the launch of coordinated terror operations. Rather, agencies are worried that a Hamas-linked network could significantly enhance recruitment efforts for multiple extremist organisations. "All these terror groups would also benefit from the Hamas branding. The alliance

partners of Hamas all have a common enemy in Israel, and hence this combination would work out best for all of them," the official said. Officials fear that recruitment could increase substantially if such alliances deepen. Security officials also warn that Hamas could contribute to radicalisation efforts through ideological outreach and support networks, further strengthening extremist groups in the region. Recently, Israeli Ambassador to India Reuven Azar, in an interview, said that Hamas-linked activities had been taking place in Pakistan and Bangladesh. He expressed concern that the organisation's influence could spread beyond the Middle East. Azar further stated that Hamas has been active in Pakistan and Bangladesh since the October 7 attacks on Israel. From India's perspective, officials say Hamas' efforts to build relationships with extremist groups in neighbouring countries remain a significant security concern. They warn that such networks could eventually seek to radicalise and recruit Indian youth, creating long-term challenges for regional security.

EAM Jaishankar Expresses Grief Over Qatar Explosion, Assures

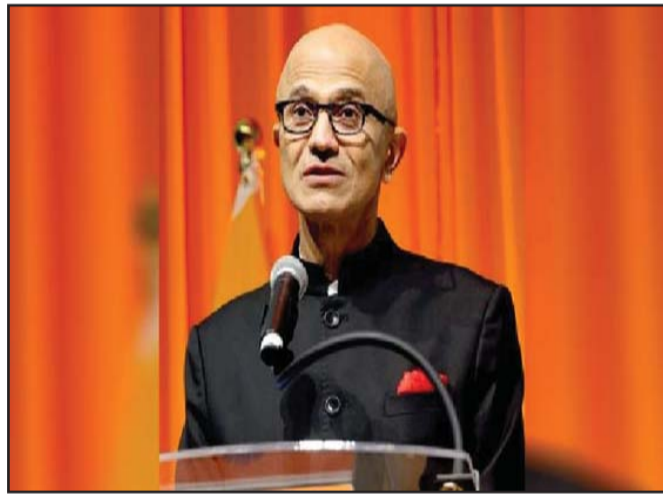
New Delhi,23/6: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Tuesday expressed deep sorrow over the deaths and injuries caused by the explosion at Qatar's Ras Laffan Industrial City, including those involving Indian nationals. He assured that the Indian Embassy in Doha is in constant touch with Qatari authorities and is providing all necessary assistance to the families of affected Indian citizens. "Deeply saddened by the loss of lives and injuries, including of Indian nationals, in the explosion at Qatar's Ras Laffan Industrial City. As further details emerge, our embassy continues to be in touch with Qatari authorities, and is reaching out to render assistance to the families of Indian nationals affected by this tragedy. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families," EAM Jaishankar posted on X. Qatari authorities on Monday confirmed that 12 Indian nationals have died in the Ras Laffan incident on Sunday night, the Embassy of India in Qatar stated. "We extend our deepest condolences to the bereaved families and prayers for the departed souls. Qatari authorities have also confirmed that all those who got injured in the incident are in stable condition and are receiving appropriate medical treatment," the Indian Embassy posted on X. "Our embassy is working in close contact with the Qatari authorities to extend all possible help to the Indian nationals and their families affected by this incident, including ensuring that mortal remains of the deceased are sent to India at the earliest," it added. According to a statement by the Qatari Ministry of Interior, 13 people died, and 66 others were injured due to a technical malfunction during an operation at a factory in Ras Laffan Industrial City. The statement also noted that authorities are continuing their procedure to verify the circumstances of the incident to accurately determine its technical causes and take the necessary measures in accordance with the applicable legal and technical frameworks. It also highlighted that no leaks were detected resulting from the incident that would pose a threat to the safety of individuals or the surrounding environment. The Ministry also extended its condolences to the families of the deceased. In a statement on X, QatarEnergy said there was an operational incident during the startup of operations at Ras Laffan Industrial City, which resulted in an explosion and fire at the Barzan local gas supply facility in the evening hours of Sunday, June 21, 2026. Emergency response teams were deployed immediately to contain the fire, which is now under control.

Iran Talks Could Transform Middle East: Vance

Burgenstock,23/6: US Vice President JD Vance said on Monday that negotiations with Iran had produced agreements on maritime security, regional ceasefire enforcement and nuclear inspections, describing the talks as the foundation for what could become a "truly transformed Middle East." Speaking to reporters before departing Emmen Air Base in Switzerland, Vance said the latest round of diplomacy had delivered tangible progress, even as both sides prepared for further technical negotiations in the days ahead. He stressed that the Trump administration would continue to judge Tehran by its actions rather than its promises. "This is laying a foundation for what could be a truly transformed Middle East," Vance said. "We haven't built the house yet, we're gonna have to keep on building." The Vice President said one of the most significant outcomes was the creation of a mechanism designed to keep shipping lanes open and ensure continued energy flows through the region. "The fundamental thing we got is number one, we set up the mechanism to ensure not only the straight support moves are open, but will stay open," he said. "We saw, we think, about 15 million barrels of oil come out. That's one of the reasons why oil is so low right now. Obviously, that means lower gas prices, and gas prices are going to keep coming down." Vance also highlighted what he described as a breakthrough on regional security. "We actually set up the right mechanism to ensure the regional ceasefire to manage the inevitable conflicts that will come up," he said. "We're working with our allies, from the Israelis to the Gulf Arabs, to make sure that sticks, and we feel very, very good about where that is." On the nuclear issue, Vance pointed to Iran's agreement to allow inspectors into the country. "We have the Iranians allowing weapons inspectors, nuclear inspectors into the country for the first time in a long time," he said. "We're obviously going to bolster those inspections, that inspection regime, to make sure they could never have a nuclear weapon." However, he cautioned that verification remained essential. "Whether good faith or bad faith, you can't trust anybody's worries; you have to trust what they actually do," Vance said.

Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella Warns Against AI Concentration

Washington,23/6: Microsoft Chief Executive Satya Nadella has issued a sharp warning against the growing concentration of power in the artificial intelligence industry, arguing that a handful of companies should not dictate the future of a technology that is reshaping economies, workplaces and societies. In an exclusive interview with The Wall Street Journal, Nadella outlined a vision for the next phase of the AI boom that centres on lower-cost models, greater user control and broader access to the technology. "You can't say, hey, all white-collar jobs are gone and this could even be a weapon and we will use all the power to build data centres," Nadella said. He argued that the public would not accept a future in which only a small number of companies controlled the learning, deployment and benefits of AI. Instead, he called for an approach that wins public trust and earns



what he described as the industry's "social permission". The remarks place Nadella at the forefront of a growing debate over the direction of the AI race. While not naming specific rivals, he criticised a model in which a small group of firms capture most of the value from AI while simultaneously warning about safety risks, job

losses and the need for vast resources to continue scaling their systems. One of the most closely watched decisions facing Microsoft is whether to host DeepSeek, a Chinese AI company whose low-cost models have attracted global attention. Such a move could significantly expand the reach of the Chinese firm

while increasing pressure on major AI developers already facing the prospect of intensifying competition and lower prices. Nadella said the future of AI should be more democratic and less dependent on a small number of frontier model developers. He maintained that technological progress should focus on reorganising work rather than eliminating jobs. "No, how about we think about reorganizing the jobs?" he said when discussing the impact of AI on employment. He acknowledged that the transition would involve disruption but argued that businesses must develop practical pathways for workers to adapt. "Yes, it's a lot of change management, it's a lot of displacement, but there is a path," he said. Nadella described AI as a knowledge engine that helps organisations make better use of workers, data and technology. He envisioned

companies drawing from a range of models with different capabilities and price points rather than relying on a single provider. He also stressed that restoring public confidence would require more than messaging. "No amount of just narrative is going to do it because where we are now, we have to sort of walk the walk," he said. "We now have to do the hard work in earning the social permission." The comments come at a time when debate over AI's impact on employment, economic power and national competitiveness is intensifying across the United States and other major economies. Technology companies are investing hundreds of billions of dollars in AI infrastructure, data centres and advanced computing systems. Microsoft remains one of the most influential players in the sector through its partnerships and investments in leading AI companies.

California Wildfire Threat Intensifies As Crews Brace For Hotter, Drier Months

Los Angeles,23/6: Even before California's traditional fire season reaches its peak, firefighters across the state have already responded to over 2,580 wildfires this year, as rising temperatures and increasingly dry vegetation heighten concerns over what officials now describe as a year-round fire threat. Several wildfires remained active on Monday, including blazes in Riverside, Kern and San Diego, while fire officials warned that hotter and drier conditions are likely to bring above-average fire activity in the months ahead, Xinhua news agency reported. The changing pattern has prompted California fire authorities to move away from the term "fire season," arguing that wildfire risk is no longer confined to late summer and autumn. "It does back up the need for us to utilize the term peak 'fire year' rather than the antiquated 'fire season' that we used to use," said David Acuna, a battalion chief of the California Department of



Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). According to CAL FIRE, 2,584 wildfires have burned over 79,690 acres statewide so far this year, destroying 25 structures. No fatalities have been confirmed. Officials said a combination of prolonged drought, rising temperatures and increasingly dry vegetation has made the state more vulnerable to fast-moving fires. Heavy

vegetation growth from previous wet periods has also become fuel as plants dry out under hotter conditions. "We're looking at all the predictive models and they're saying it's going to be an above-average peak fire season," said Brent Pascua, another CAL FIRE battalion chief. Scientists say climate change is altering the timing and intensity of California wildfires. A study led by

researchers at the University of California, Los Angeles found that human-caused climate change advanced the start of the state's fire season by six to 46 days between 1992 and 2020. The study identified fuel aridity — the dryness of typical fire fuels like grasses and trees — as the strongest influence on when the fire season begins. "Climate change is fueling more extreme weather

and the kind of dangerous conditions that can turn a single spark into a catastrophe," California Governor Gavin Newsom said in a recent proclamation marking Wildfire Preparedness Week. He warned that there is "no off-season for wildfire." Newsom's office said California has nearly doubled CAL FIRE's budget since 2019, expanded firefighting personnel and built what it described as the "world's largest aerial firefighting fleet." Fire officials are urging residents to prepare before conditions worsen. Recommendations include creating defensible space around homes, strengthening structures with fire-resistant materials, assembling emergency kits and signing up for local emergency alerts. "Drier than average conditions across the state mean more fuel for potential wildfires," CAL FIRE Director Joe Tyler said. "CAL FIRE and our emergency response partners across California are ready for wildfire — now it's your turn."

Indian Americans Take Priorities To Capitol Hill

Washington,23/6: Nearly 200 Indian American delegates from 25 states are set to meet lawmakers and Congressional staff across the Capitol Hill on Tuesday as part of a major advocacy effort focused on strengthening the US-India partnership, advancing immigration reform and bolstering Indo-Pacific security. The initiative, organised by the Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies (FIIDS), is expected to bring delegates to more than 125 elected offices during its fourth annual Capitol Hill Day. The meetings will focus on issues ranging from trade and security cooperation with India to critical minerals supply chains and the role of Indian Americans in the United States' economy, it said. "This is a moment to translate influence into policy impact," said Khanderao Kand, FIIDS Chief of Policy and Strategy. "Indian Americans contribute across technology, research, academia, hospitality, health care, small business, and agriculture, and our community is engaged in ensuring that Congress understands the issues that matter most to America's future," he added. FIIDS said delegates will advocate on five major policy areas: Indo-Pacific trade and security, the US-India strategic partnership, Indian American contributions and concerns, immigration reform for US innovation, and critical minerals supply-chain security. According to the organisation, the agenda reflects both the growing influence of Indian Americans in public life and broader concerns about US competitiveness, national security and democratic resilience. The advocacy meetings will be followed by the US-India Partnership Summit later on Tuesday. The event is expected to bring together diplomats, elected officials and policy leaders to discuss the future of bilateral cooperation. FIIDS said speakers are scheduled to include Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Bethany Morrison, Deputy Chief of Mission Ambassador Mangya Khampa and other diplomats, elected officials and leaders focused on strengthening US-India ties. The organisation's policy platform calls for greater Indo-Pacific resilience, stronger defence and technology cooperation between Washington and New Delhi, recognition of Indian American contributions, reforms to high-skilled immigration programmes and a long-term strategy for securing critical minerals supply chains.

India Needs Quantum Jump Into Manufacturing High-Value Pharma Products: Economists

New Delhi, 23/6: India, which is one of the world's largest suppliers of generic medicines and a major provider of vaccines and essential drugs, needs to make a quantum jump into manufacturing high-value pharmaceuticals and Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API), and there has to be strong Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes to achieve this, economists said on Tuesday. Commenting on the NITI Aayog report on pharmaceutical trade that came out on Tuesday, economist Ved Jain told IANS that the time is ripe to make a jump into exporting high-value pharmaceutical products. "We should invest in research innovation on basic drugs and facilities and for that, and I believe there has to be a strong PLI scheme for valued products, like high basic drugs and API products," he mentioned. According to the NITI



Aayog report, India's comparative advantage remains concentrated in formulations, particularly retail medicaments and generic drugs, where it remains highly competitive even in regulated markets such as the

United States and Europe. Jain said that we need to further remove regulatory barriers, ramp up production and, at the same time, increase the production of high-value pharmaceutical products which can be

exported. Various free trade agreements (FTAs) India has signed would definitely help in this direction once certain regulatory restrictions are addressed, he noted. The PLI Scheme for pharmaceuticals

supports the manufacturing of high-value products like biopharmaceuticals, complex generics, patented/off-patent drugs, orphan, and autoimmune drugs. It generated a total sale of Rs 3,08,408.60 crore, including Rs 1,98,509.49 crore in exports, since inception till September 2025. Further, investment worth Rs 40,294 crore has also been made under the scheme till September 2025. The amount significantly exceeded the targeted investment of Rs 17,275 crore. The PLI scheme for the promotion of domestic manufacturing also helped reduce the import dependence for bulk drugs. Meanwhile, the global pharmaceutical landscape has increasingly shifted towards high-value segments such as biologics, vaccines, immunologicals, and advanced therapeutics, where India's export presence remains limited.

Sensex, Nifty Open Subdued Amid Easing West Asia Tensions

Mumbai: Indian equity markets opened on a flat note on Tuesday after a multi-session rally driven by easing tensions in West Asia. Sensex opened at 77,086.05, down 8 points or 0.01 per cent, while Nifty started the session at 24,071.30, lower by 31.60 points or 0.13 per cent.

Sector-wise, Nifty Pharma was top gainer, rising 0.41 per cent, followed by Nifty MidSmall Healthcare (up 0.40 per cent), Nifty 500 Healthcare and Nifty Media, both gaining 0.29 per cent. While Nifty Cement and Nifty Oil & Gas also advanced 0.27 per cent and 0.18 per cent, respectively. In contrast, Nifty Metal was the worst-performing sector, declining 0.8 per cent, followed by Nifty IT, which fell 0.77 per cent. Among Nifty 50 constituents, Infosys, Hindalco Industries, TCS, HCLTech, Tech Mahindra, Tata Steel and Wipro were the top losers in early trade. The broader market remained resilient, with smallcap and midcap indices outperforming the benchmarks. Nifty Smallcap 50 rose 0.34 per cent, while Nifty Smallcap 250 and Nifty Smallcap 500 gained 0.33 per cent and 0.28 per cent, respectively. Meanwhile, India VIX — the market's fear gauge — declined 0.7 per cent to 12.75. According to market experts, easing tensions in West Asia and the sharp correction in Brent crude prices below \$80 per barrel have improved the outlook for India's GDP growth and corporate earnings in FY27. They noted that stability in the rupee and a moderation in foreign portfolio investor (FPI) selling remain key positives for equities.

Markets Tumble Over 1 PC As Metal, IT Stocks Trigger Broad Sell-Off

Mumbai, 23/6: Domestic equity benchmarks ended sharply lower on Tuesday, dragged down by heavy selling in metal, information technology and public sector banking stocks amid weak global market cues. The Sensex declined 893.39 points, or 1.16 per cent, to settle at 76,200.68, while the Nifty fell 278.80 points, or 1.16 per cent, to close at 23,824.10. Investor sentiment remained subdued as weakness in global equity markets weighed on domestic equities, prompting broad-based selling across key sectors. Market participants largely remained cautious amid concerns over global growth and persistent uncertainty in international markets. Among the major laggards on the Nifty index were Infosys, JSW Steel and Tata Consultancy Services, which witnessed significant selling pressure during the session. The weakness extended to the broader market as well. The



Nifty MidCap index ended 1.05 per cent lower, while the Nifty SmallCap index slipped 0.48 per cent. Sectorally, metal stocks emerged as the biggest losers, with the Nifty Metal index plunging more than 3 per cent. The Nifty IT and PSU Bank indices also underperformed amid continued weakness in technology and banking shares. Moreover, the technology index declined more than 2 per cent amid a global sell-off,

with all constituents ending in the red, declining up to 3 per cent. However, defensive sectors offered some support to the market. The Nifty Pharma and Nifty Healthcare indices outperformed the broader market, attracting investor interest amid heightened volatility. According to experts, market sentiment weakened as early gains proved unsustainable amid negative global cues and prevailing caution.

New Delhi, 23/6: India needs 7 to 8 per cent growth to become Viksit Bharat by 2047, which needs more investment from the private sector as well as strong export growth, Mahendra Dev, Chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM), said on Tuesday. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a FICCI India event here, he said that "private sector investment is equally important and also export growth important. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has mentioned about 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', that is equally important". Dev further said that structural reforms implemented over the last few years laid the groundwork for this trajectory. India's GDP growth was estimated at a robust 7.8 per cent in the January-March quarter (Q4) of 2025-26, as result of which the growth rate for the full



financial year works out to 7.7 per cent on the back of a strong performance of the agriculture, construction, and services sectors, according to latest data released by the Ministry of Statistics. The secondary sector recorded a strong 8.8 per cent growth while the tertiary sector grew by 9.9 per

cent, according to the official statement. The primary sector recorded a 3.2 per cent growth, mainly driven by the performance of the agriculture and fisheries sectors. Manufacturing, trade, repair, hotels, transport, communications and services related to broadcasting, storage,

financial, real estate, and professional services sectors have attained double-digit growth during 2025-26, the official statement said. This reflects the massive investments by the government in big-ticket infrastructure projects, such as highways, railways, ports and airports, which have helped to drive up the growth rate as India continues to be the fastest-growing economy amid the global slowdown. Dev said he is glad that FICCI is organising this important innovative crop nutrition conclave, and inviting all the stakeholders, including the farmers, on a common platform. "I'm also happy to know that they have a task force on innovative crop nutrition. As you know, the future of plant nutrition will be a collaborative effort between farmers, industry, and the government," he mentioned.

RBI Injects Rs 1.41 Lakh Crore Into Banking System

Mumbai, 23/6: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Tuesday pumped in over Rs 1.41 lakh crore transient liquidity into the banking system through a seven-day variable rate repo (VRR) auction. The funds were injected into the system at a cut-off rate and weighted average rate of 5.26 per cent, according to figures released by the RBI. This was done after the liquidity in the banking system turned into a deficit of Rs 19,971.89 crore as on June 22, from a surplus of Rs 30,685.11 crore as on June 21. Analysts said that the outflow of money from banks due to goods and services tax (GST) payments had led to the tightening of liquidity in the system. The decline in liquidity had brought overnight money market rates under pressure, with the weighted average call money rate trading at 5.43 per cent, which is 0.18 per cent above the RBI's repo rate. If banking liquidity tightens excessively due to events like Goods and Services Tax (GST) outflows, short-term money market rates (such as the weighted average call money rate) can push above the RBI's standard repo rate. By



stepping in with liquidity injections, the RBI ensures that short-term funding pressures ease and credit continues to flow smoothly across the financial system without triggering economic slowdowns. The RBI routinely injects transient and durable liquidity into the banking system to manage short-term deficits caused by tax outflows, advance tax payments, or seasonal credit demand. The central bank achieves this through various

monetary tools and market operations. The apex bank frequently conducts VRR auctions, including 3-day or 7-day tenors, to infuse substantial transient liquidity into the banking system. Banks pledge eligible government securities to borrow funds directly from the central bank, providing immediate relief when liquidity slips into deficit. To inject durable liquidity into the system, the RBI purchases government securities from the secondary

market. This permanently adds cash into the banking system, allowing banks to easily meet their Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) requirements. The central bank can execute USD-INR swap auctions. For example, the RBI might temporarily buy US dollars from commercial banks in exchange for rupees, directly increasing the rupee supply in the money market and preventing overnight interest rates from spiking.

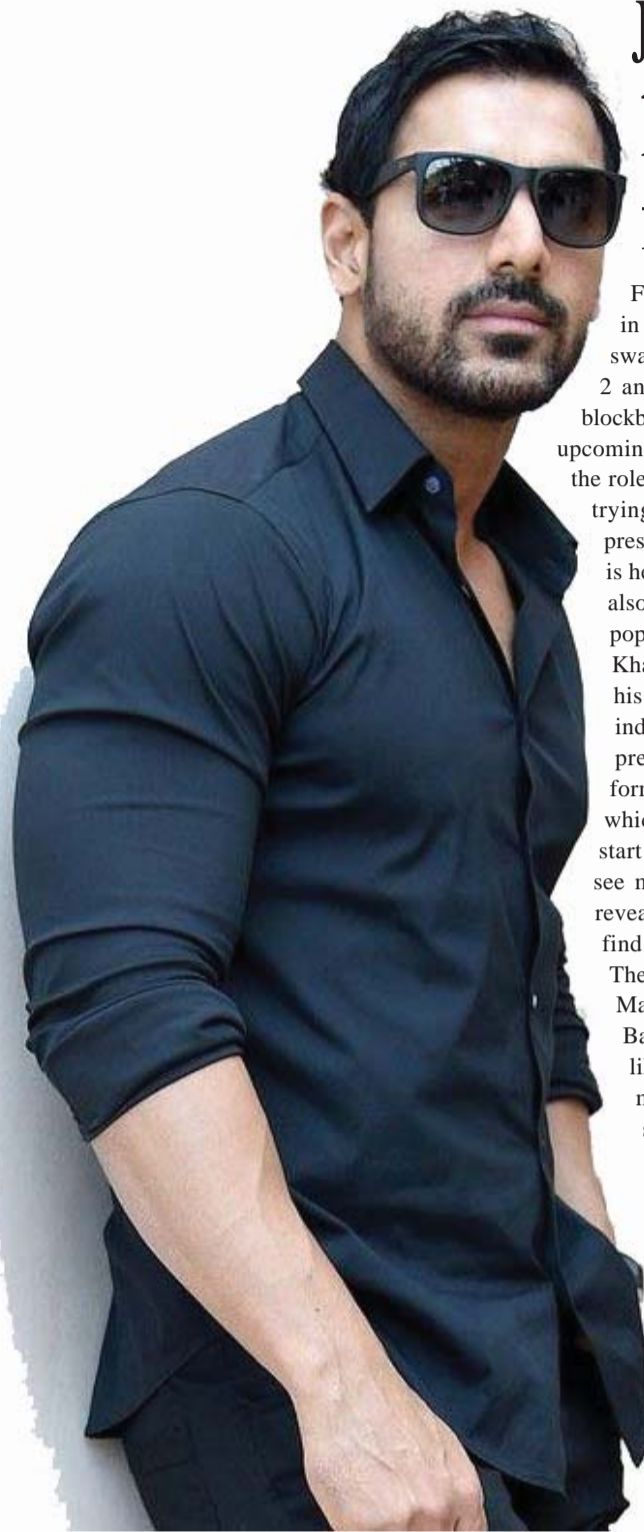
Vedanta Aluminium sets course as an independent entity

New Delhi, 23/6: Vedanta Aluminium Metal Limited (BSE: 544780 [NSE: VAML]) has officially commenced trading as an independent listed entity on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) from 15th June 2026, following the successful completion of Vedanta Group's historic demerger, which became effective on 1st May 2026. The listing marks a major milestone in the company's evolution, creating a focused, pure-play aluminium business with enhanced strategic flexibility and stronger long-term growth visibility. Vedanta Aluminium enters this next phase as India's largest aluminium producer and one of the world's leading integrated aluminium companies. The company is also poised to emerge as the largest aluminium producer across the US, Europe, the Middle East, Australia, and Africa. With its vision to



double the existing production capacity to 60 lakh tonnes per annum, deep backward integration and structural cost advantages, it is set to achieve among the lowest costs of production globally while upholding the highest standards of quality, serving demand across key global markets and benefiting from long-term tailwinds in infra, automotive, electrification, aerospace and advanced manufacturing. Commenting on the significance of the demerger, Rajesh Kumar, CEO, Vedanta Aluminium, said, "Becoming an independent listed entity

marks a significant milestone in the evolution of Vedanta Aluminium, accelerating our vision of building the leading metals company dedicated to unlocking the full potential of aluminium, the metal of the future. Our focus is on creating a resilient, technology-driven and cost-efficient business aligned with the needs of a rapidly transforming world. With aluminium at the core of the global energy transition and cutting-edge innovation, we are exceptionally well positioned to deliver long-term value while contributing to India's emergence as a manufacturing powerhouse.



John Abraham, The Diplomat, hails South Movie Makers, calls for need of 'Brave' Bollywood!

For the macho charm, he had the dynamic screen presence in B-town in early 2000s. John Abraham, the action hero of Bollywood held his sway over cinegoers with films like Satyamev Jayate, Batla House, Race 2 and Welcome back. John made debut in B-Town as a villain in the blockbuster film Dhoom, but soon emerged as the action star. John Abraham's upcoming movie The Diplomat is releasing on March 14. John will be seen in the role of a diplomat. The movie revolves around how an Indian diplomat trying hard to repatriate an Indian girl from Pakistan, where she was presumably forced and deceived into marrying against her will. The film is helmed by Shivam Nair. The story is written by Ritesh Shah. The film also stars Sadia Khateeb and Kumud Mishra. The Diplomat with 5.6% popular votes is ranked at 7th in the IMDb's trending movies, Salman Khan Sikandar with 13.1% is ranked at 4th spot. Before the release of his movie, The Diplomat, the action star revealed that despite in the industry for 2-decades, he struggled hard to sell his films. Speaking to press, John said, "My movies don't follow the typical commercial formula with song-and-dance sequences. I don't have a heroine dancing, which makes them harder to market. Most of the time my wife dies at the start of the film and I continue from thereon. It maybe that no one likes to see my face so much. I have a problem selling these films." The actor revealed that The Diplomat faced challenges in getting studio support. "I find it tough to convince producers to back my projects," he disclosed. The Diplomat marks his fourth film as a co-producer after Vicky Donor, Madras Café, and Parmanu – all considered risky before release. The Batla House actor said Bollywood need to emerge as a braver community, like the South. "South is very brave. They follow their conviction and make those films. We need to get braver," the star observed. The action star said, "As a producer, I fought to secure funds for my projects. I ensured that my own costs don't add pressure on a film's budget because storytelling assumes important for me. However, studios remain hesitant about films like The Diplomat." The star said, "If the film underperforms at the box office, he will make no profit." Notwithstanding, the grueling days of struggles, John says he is passionate about making meaningful films. His next project Tehran is inspired by real events. The story revolves around an attempt on an Israeli diplomat's life in 2013, at a time when India and Iran were building a gas pipeline. He shared, "My character goes to Tehran to find out what's happening. It's not just geo-political, but also a beautiful human story. That space is so exciting, and I want youngsters to really see that and understand that India is a cool country."

Arijit Singh to make directorial debut with Pan-India Film 'Jungle Adventure'

Renowned Bollywood playback singer Arijit Singh is all set to step into a new creative role as he gears up for his directorial debut. The acclaimed musician will be directing a pan-India film titled 'Jungle Adventure', which is being produced by Mahaveer Jain under the banner of Mahaveer Jain Films. According to a report by Pinkvilla, the film's story has been co-written by Arijit Singh and Koyel Singh. The project is currently in the pre-production phase, with casting efforts actively underway. The makers are expected to announce the film's title and lead actors soon. Arijit Singh, known for his soul-stirring voice and numerous chart-topping hits, has enjoyed immense success in the Indian music industry. He remains one of the most-followed Indian artists on Spotify and is a two-time recipient of the National Film Award. With 'Jungle Adventure', Singh is poised to bring a fresh perspective to filmmaking, marking a significant transition in his career and expanding his creative footprint in Bollywood.



Action King Sunny Deol Jaat Trailer Release March 24, fans call Gadar 2 historic, Jaat will be legendary!



On the day of blockbuster Sikandar trailer launch, the Mythrii movie makers have announced the new date of the trailer launch of Bollywood action king Sunny Deol's upcoming action thriller – JAAT. The Gadar star is coming again in a high-packed intense action avatar. The announcement of trailer has set the internet on flames. Fans go ecstatic. The Damini star has also made the big announcement on his Instagram. Fresh off with the massive success of Gadar 2, the action superstar Sunny Deol posted a cryptic yet thrilling message on his official social media handles, announcing the release of Jaat's trailer tomorrow on 24th March. Accompanied by a fierce poster featuring him in an intense look – sipping a drink, and holding a heavy hammer type object in his hand, his caption read: "His ACTION is RELENTLESS, RUTHLESS & UNSTOPPABLE. The MASS FEAST is all set to begin Jaat Trailer out on March 24th JAAT GRAND RELEASE WORLDWIDE ON APRIL 10th Baisakhi With Jaat On Saturday, Mythrii Movie Makers announced the change on social media and wrote, "#Jaat Trailer release stands postponed! A new date would be announced soon. The mass feast will be worth the wait." The makers assured fans that the delay is temporary and promised an action-packed experience. Directed by Gopichand Malineni, Jaat is being touted as a high-voltage action thriller, featuring Sunny Deol, Randeep Hooda, Vineet Kumar Singh, Saiyami Kher, and Regina Cassandra in key roles. The film is produced by Mythrii Movie Makers and People Media Factory, known for delivering blockbuster action films like Pushpa 1 and 2. The story revolves around a fearless warrior, played by Sunny Deol, who takes on powerful enemies in an intense battle for justice. With massive action sequences, gripping drama, and Sunny Deol's signature dialogues, Jaat is expected to be a crowd-puller.

SPORTS

Women's T20 WC: Devine, Tahuu Back As NZ Elect To Bowl Against Scotland In Must-Win Clash

Bristol, 23/6: New Zealand won the toss and elected to field against Scotland in what is a virtual knockout group game of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup here at the County Ground. The pressure could hardly be greater as the two sides lock horns in a contest that has all the makings of an early exit. With both sides needing a victory to keep their Women's T20 World Cup dreams alive, there is little room for error from here on. A defeat would spell the end of the road for either team, adding extra significance to every passage of play. While New Zealand entered the tournament as defending champions and one of the favourites, their campaign has never truly gathered momentum. Consecutive defeats after posting competitive totals left them with plenty of ground to make up, and even their first win of the tournament came only after surviving a late scare against Ireland. Questions remain over both departments: the batting has lacked a defining innings, while the bowling unit has struggled



to make regular breakthroughs, leaving them with the fewest wickets among all teams in the competition. Scotland, meanwhile, have shown enough to suggest they are capable of causing problems. After opening their account against Ireland, they pushed the West Indies deep before falling narrowly short and were tested by England in their last outing. Their top-order has consistently offered resistance, though sharper work in the field will be essential if they are to challenge a side desperate to stay in contention. Interestingly, these teams have never faced each other in this format before. Rankings may favour New Zealand, but with survival at stake,

reputations count for little in what promises to be a high-pressure encounter. Winning the toss, New Zealand skipper Amelia Kerr said, "We don't really have a reason to bowl, but apart from, yeah, it being a morning game, sometimes in England it does a little bit more earlier and also we know that run rate's gonna potentially play a part in our campaign, and I think the best way to do that is try keep them to a low total and then try chase it down quickly. I think we were better and it was nice to get a win and it was pleasing, I guess, how we turned it around in the field. There were some crucial moments there in the field that I think also won us the game.

But I think with this group, I think someone's got to step up with the bat and click on and if you get a start, make it a big one. Yeah, fresh start, change of venue. I think one is we work really hard on our fielding. Craig McMillan leads us so well in the fielding front and he really challenges us as well. So you see us in trainings and we're taking catches and doing some pretty spectacular things. And unfortunately, we just had a couple of bad days. Soph (Sophie Devine) comes back into the side and Georgia Plimmer misses out and Rocco's (Mair) got a minor rib injury, so Lea Tahuu comes in." Meanwhile, Scotland captain Kathryn Bryce said, "I think we've been really good at setting totals in the recent period, so yeah, looking forward to getting in there and having a bat. Yeah, absolutely. I think we've played some really good cricket against some good opposition in the last couple of games and just a couple of periods that have probably let us down a little bit. So I think we're trending in a really good direction and playing cricket that I think is good enough to win games.

2026 FIFA WC: Record-Breaking Messi Helps Argentina Reach Knockouts With 2-0 Win Over Austria

Dallas: Lionel Messi produced another magical display and nailed a few records, scoring a brace to help defending champions Argentina beat Austria 2-0 in a Group J match and advance to the knock-out stages of the FIFA World Cup 2026 at the Dallas Stadium in Dallas on Monday. Messi made

it to the record books by scoring his 17th and 18th goals in World Cups, setting the record for most individual goals in the history of the tournament. Two days before his 39th birthday, the Argentine talisman brushed aside missing a penalty early in the first half, to give his team the lead in the 38th minute and then doubled it seconds before

the end of the match to seal a memorable victory for the defending champions. With their second Group J win, Argentina secured their progress to the last 32. If Jordan fail to beat Algeria later in the day, they will be confirmed as group winners. The day belonged to Messi as he scored his first goal of the day in the 38th minute, setting the record for most individual

goals by any player in the tournament's history. This was Messi's 17th goal in the FIFA World Cup and also his fourth in the 2026 edition. Messi not only broke the tournament's scoring record, but he also joined Just Fontaine of France and Jairzinho of Brazil as the third man to score in six successive World Cup games.

Pushpa 2 The Rule hits Saudi Arabia Censor Board wall, Gangamma Jathra scene removed!



When the roaring show of Pushpa 2 The rule has been reverberating across the world theatres – from USA to India, South superstar Allu Arjun's movie Pushpa 2 had hit the Saudi Arabia censor wall. As per reports just received, the censor board in Saudi Arabia has trimmed the Mythrii Movie Makers film Pushpa 2 The Rule. Saudi Arabia's censor board had applied a total ban on the most popular scene of Pushpa 2 – the Gangamma Jathra episode where Allu Arjun is seen dressing like women sporting a blue saree with

female costumes. As per reports, Pushpa 2 The Rule will be released in Saudi Arabia sans the full scene of Gangamma Jathra. The report suggests some minor cuts in other song scenes, too. As a consequence, the run time of the movie in Saudi Arabia has got trimmed by about 19 minutes (Total length will be 3 hours 1 minute). The Allu Arjun starred film Pushpa 2 became the 1st south India film to make it into the top Day 1 advance booking ticket sale and gross collection in the realms of Hindi cinemas. As per the

reports, Pushpa 2 The rule has sold advance tickets for the release day totaling over 12.96 lakh in Hindi version and had grossed Rs 37.82 cr without block seats, which shows the popular demand. The SRK starred Jawan had the record of minting Rs 36.7 cr (including bloc ticket) via advance ticket sale for the opening day of its Hindi version. Ranbir Kapoor starred mega blockbuster Animal was second to SRK's Jawan in terms of Day 1 Advance booking gross and ticket sale.