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Central and Western Railways Schedule Weekend Maintenance Blocks PG.3



A Look Inside Karishma Tanna's Beautiful South Indian Baby Shower PG.6



Pat Cummins Appreciates Team Bowlers After a Major Victory Against Bengaluru PG.7



Piyush Goyal to lead business delegation to Canada to boost trade, CEPA talks PG.8

Fuel prices hiked again as global crude surge continues amid West Asia tensions

New Delhi : Petrol and diesel prices were increased once again across the country on Saturday, marking the third hike this month as rising tensions in West Asia continued to push global crude oil prices upward.

State-run oil marketing companies increased petrol prices by up to 87 paise per litre and diesel prices by up to 91 paise per litre, further adding pressure on household budgets and transportation costs.

In Delhi, petrol prices rose to around Rs 99.51 per litre, while diesel prices increased to nearly Rs 92.50 per litre.

With the latest revision, fuel prices have now risen by almost Rs 5 per litre during May after a Rs 3 hike earlier in the month followed by another increase of around 90 paise last week.

In Mumbai, petrol prices



crossed Rs 108 per litre, while diesel prices moved above Rs 95 per litre. Similar increases were recorded

in Kolkata, Chennai and other major cities, with state taxes continuing to impact final retail prices.

The latest hike comes amid sustained volatility in global crude oil markets due to escalating geopolit-

ical tensions in West Asia and concerns over disruptions in key international oil supply routes.

Brent crude prices have remained elevated in recent weeks, prompting oil companies to pass on part of the rising import burden to consumers.

India, which depends heavily on crude oil imports, has so far witnessed gradual revisions despite sharp movements in global energy markets.

However, rising fuel costs are expected to add pressure on inflation, transportation and logistics expenses, potentially impacting prices of essential commodities.

Industry experts believe fuel prices may remain under pressure if global crude prices continue to stay elevated and geopolitical uncertainty persists in the coming weeks.

World wants to join India's growth journey - PM Modi

PM Distributes 51,000 Job Letters at 19th Rozgar Mela

New Delhi : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday distributed more than 51,000 appointment letters to newly recruited youth across various government departments and organizations during the 19th edition of the Rozgar Mela. Addressing the new recruits via video conferencing, the Prime Minister asserted that India's young population is actively driving the nation's march toward becoming a developed country, or Viksit Bharat, by the year 2047. He emphasized that the Rozgar Mela reflects his government's steady commitment to empowering the Yuva Shakti by providing new employment opportunities and strengthening their specific role in nation-building.

Modi highlighted the growing global confidence in India, noting that the world is eager to partner with the country because



of its young talent and rapid technological advancements. He mentioned that sectors such as clean energy, critical minerals, green hydrogen, and sustainable manufacturing are seeing massive expansion, which opens doors to a new economy. Furthermore, the Prime Minister pointed to visible transformations in rural India, where improved connectivity is creating fresh avenues for farmers, small traders, and students. He called upon the recruits to view public service as an instrument of national service and bring their global energy into

governance. Modi also referenced agreements signed during his recent visits to the United Arab Emirates, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, and Italy, stating that these partnerships come with a guarantee of a bright future for Indian youth. The mega recruitment drive took place at 47 locations across India, placing candidates in the ministries of railways, home affairs, health, financial services, and higher education, bringing the total appointment letters distributed under this initiative close to 12 lakh since its launch.

India-US Partnership Strengthens as PM Modi Meets Secy Rubio



New Delhi : Prime Minister Narendra Modi held extensive and productive talks on Saturday with the visiting US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, reaffirming their commitment to strengthening the India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership. The high-level meeting focused on deepening collaboration in defense, trade, emerging technologies, energy security, and regional stability. Rubio briefed the Prime Minister on progress across strategic sectors and shared Washington's perspective on regional and global issues, including the evolving situation in West Asia. Prime Minister Modi reiterated India's longstanding position favoring dialogue and diplomacy to resolve international conflicts peacefully, while conveying his warm greetings to US President Donald Trump.

US Ambassador to India Sergio Gorrion joined the meeting and described the inter-

actions as constructive and forward-looking, noting that India is a vital partner for advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific. Rubio arrived in the national capital after visiting Kolkata, where he paid his respects at the Missionaries of Charity's Mother House. During his stay in New Delhi, the Secretary of State is scheduled to meet External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, attend the dedication ceremony of the new US Embassy Support Annex Building, and participate in a reception at Roosevelt House hosted by Ambassador Sergio Gor. This high-profile visit carries additional significance ahead of the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting scheduled in New Delhi on May 26, where foreign ministers from India, the United States, Japan, and Australia will deliberate on maritime cooperation, regional security, and the West Asia conflict.

Cockroach Party website shut down, cops posted outside CJP founder's house

Mumbai : Hingoli district Deputy Commissioner of Police Pankaj Atulkar today said that policemen have been posted outside the residence of Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) founder Abhijit Dipke, who is still in the United States, where he is a student.

The development has come after the CJP's website, Instagram account and X account were found to be disabled after around 10 lakh followers signed up in just a few days.

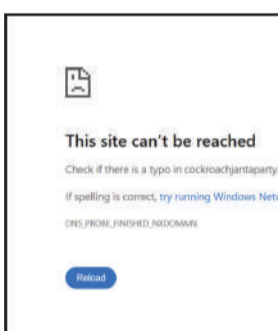
Earlier, CJP founder Abhijit Dipke had revealed online that he had received a death threat. Dipke, who is still in the United States where he is studying, had tweeted a screenshot of a threatening message on X.

Confirming that policemen have been deployed outside the Dipke residence, Deputy Commissioner of Police Pankaj Atulkar told media persons today, "People are very curious about Abhijit Dipke and his Cockroach Janata Party. Policemen have been deployed near his residence to prevent anything from happening. The police deployment will continue at his house for the next few days".

Significantly, after the CJP website, Instagram and X accounts of the political outfit was shut down, its supporters had warned of protests.

However, CJP founder Abhijit Dipke had advised his supporters to avoid any

such mistake. He also clarified that if any such protests take place, he has no connection with it.



peaceful and careful. Supporters should not take any wrong decision in a hurry which will affect our move-



"The Cockroach Janta Party has not given any such call. The government is just waiting for one mishap to demonise the entire movement. We request all cockroaches to remain

ment. The government wants us to make mistakes. But you can't get rid of us that easily. We're working on a new home right now. Cockroaches never die," CJP founder Abhijit Dipke had posted online.

"The government has taken down our iconic website <http://cockroachjantaparty.org>. 10 lakh cockroaches have signed up on our website as members. Six lakh cockroaches had signed a petition to demand the resignation of Dharmendra Pradhan. Why is the government so scared of cockroaches? But this dictatorial behaviour is opening the eyes of India's youth. Our only crime is we were demanding a better future for ourselves. But you can't get rid of us that easily. We're working on a new home right now. Cockroaches never die," CJP founder Abhijit Dipke posted online.

Dipke also linked the action against his platform

to its campaign against union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

"Action should have been taken against the Education Minister for the paper leak. For the student who lost his life due to the government's failure. But in new India, action is being taken against the Cockroach Janta Party for demanding accountability," Abhijit Dipke had posted online.

"Cockroach is back. We have reached the milestone of one million registered Cockroaches on our website in less than a week. The movement keeps getting bigger despite all the crackdown, on a back-up account.

Whoever tampers voters' list to go to jail, says Harshwardhan Sapkal

Mumbai : Maharashtra State Congress Committee President Harshwardhan Sapkal on Saturday said that anyone attempting to "kill democracy" by tampering with voter lists would have to go to jail in the future.

Speaking to the media after a Congress meeting at Tilak Bhavan in Dadar, Sapkal alleged that the BJP had come to power in Maharashtra by "stealing votes" with the help of the Election Commission, and also made similar allegations regarding elections in Bihar and Bengal. He claimed that voter list revisions were being used to influence the electoral process and warned of legal consequences for such actions.

Sapkal's remarks came a day after an opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi dele-

gation met Maharashtra Chief Electoral Officer S Chokalingam to raise objections over the Special Intensive Revi-



sion (SIR) process. A resolution was passed at the Congress meeting congratulating AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge on the party's performance in

the Kerala Assembly elections, and also acknowledging Kerala in-charge Ramesh Chennithala and newly appointed district presidents. Congress Legislature Party leader Vijay Wadettiwar, who also attended the meeting, criticised the state government, alleging multiple scams and inaction against those in power. He also attacked the government over farmer distress, calling it "anti-farmer" and accusing it of diverting attention from core issues through emotional and communal narratives.

He further said that the Congress would continue to intensify its agitation both inside and outside the legislature on issues related to electoral integrity, farmers' distress and alleged corruption in the state administration.

Trump Holds Security Meeting and Considers Renewing Iran Strikes

Washington : US President Donald Trump held an urgent meeting with senior national security officials on Friday, amid growing indications that Washington is considering military action against Tehran if ongoing diplomatic negotiations fail.

According to administration sources, Trump has expressed frustration over the slow progress in talks, prompting a high-level briefing attended by top officials including the Vice President, Defence Secretary and CIA Director. Following the meeting, Trump reportedly revised his weekend sched-

ule to remain at the White House. Meanwhile, Iran has said that no breakthrough is imminent in the negotiations, while reaffirming its position on ending hostilities before addressing broader global issues. International observers have warned that any escalation could destabilise the West Asian region and have serious implications for global energy security and regional stability. Diplomatic efforts are expected to continue over the coming days as regional and global stakeholders push for de-escalation and a negotiated resolution.

Army Cheetah helicopter crash-lands near Leh; three officers escape with minor injuries

New Delhi : Three Indian Army officers, including a senior commander, escaped with minor injuries after a Cheetah helicopter crash-landed in the high-altitude Tangtse sector of eastern Ladakh near Leh.

The incident took place on May 20 during an operational flight in the rugged mountainous terrain of Ladakh, one of the most challenging flying environments in the world. However, details of the mishap emerged only on Friday. According to officials, the helicopter was carrying Major General Sachin Mehta, General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Army's 3 Infantry Division, while a Lieutenant Colonel and a Major were piloting the aircraft. All three occupants survived the crash and were able to walk away with only minor injuries.

The Army has ordered a Court of Inquiry to ascertain the circumstances that led to the crash. Preliminary assessments are underway,



though the exact cause of the incident has not yet been determined.

The Cheetah helicopter, a lightweight utility aircraft, has long been regarded as the backbone of India's high-altitude aviation operations. Capable of operating at some of the world's high-

est landing grounds and remote forward posts, the helicopter has played a critical role in troop transportation, casualty evacuation, recon-

naissance missions and logistics support in areas such as Ladakh, Siachen Glacier and the Northeast. Derived from the French-designed Aérospatiale SA 315B Lama and manufactured in India by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, the Cheetah en-

tered service decades ago and earned a reputation for reliability under extreme weather and terrain conditions. Despite its proven operational record, the ageing fleet has increasingly faced maintenance and serviceability challenges, prompting efforts to replace it with newer-generation helicopters. The latest incident has once again drawn attention to the operational risks faced by Army Aviation pilots flying in extreme Himalayan conditions, where sudden weather changes, thin air and narrow valleys make helicopter operations particularly hazardous. Defence experts have repeatedly stressed the need for accelerated induction of modern light utility helicopters to gradually replace the ageing Cheetah fleet and enhance safety as well as operational capability in high-altitude

Fadnavis instructs officials to make diesel available to farmers

Mumbai : Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said he has instructed district officials to ensure adequate diesel supply for farmers ahead of the Kharif sowing season, amid reports of rising fuel demand in parts of the state.

Speaking at Shirdi, Fadnavis said demand for petrol and diesel has reportedly increased by around 30 per cent in some areas, adding that district collectors and divisional commissioners have been asked to make arrangements so that farmers do not face shortages. He also warned of strict action against anyone found hoarding fuel in the name of farmers.

His statement came after Food & Civil Supplies Minister Chhagan Bhujbal clarified that there is no fuel



shortage in Maharashtra and urged citizens not to panic or hoard fuel.

In a related development, Indian Oil Corporation stated that there is no overall shortage of petrol and diesel in the country, describing reported outages at some outlets as temporary



and highly localised, caused by regional demand-supply mismatches and seasonal factors.

The IOC said that only a small number of outlets in its network of over 42,000 retail stations faced disruptions, while supplies at most pumps remained nor-

mal and adequate. It added that higher diesel demand during the harvesting season and shifting customer preferences had contributed to temporary pressure at select outlets. Meanwhile, farmers in several districts including Washim, Buldhana, Jalgaon and Hingoli have reported long queues and delays in diesel availability, with some areas witnessing continued strain on fuel supply for the past several days.

Authorities further said that coordination between oil companies, district administrations and transporters has been intensified to stabilise supply, and assured that additional fuel stocks are being diverted to affected regions to prevent any disruption to agricultural operations during the crucial sowing period.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Launches Major Reforms for Workers and Employment

Lucknow : Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has announced a series of major decisions to improve worker welfare, boost skill development, and create better job opportunities across the state. Under these new directives, a special educational and financial assistance program for working children will be expanded to all 75 districts. The Chief Minister emphasized that workers are the greatest strength behind the economy and that the government is fully committed to ensuring they receive quality education, safe working environments, and a dignified life. The government is also upgrading its digital platform, which connects citizens with local skilled service providers like plumbers and electricians, making it more efficient and useful for government departments. Additionally, new structured support hubs and housing facilities will be built in major industrial cities to help migrant workers, alongside a new training institute and hostel in Kanpur for teaching construction trades.

The state's employment mission has also successfully secured a license to help young people find jobs both locally and internationally, with training programs already being set up for lan-



guages like Japanese and German. The administration of Uttar Pradesh has unveiled a comprehensive suite of policy decisions aimed at structurally upgrading worker welfare ecosystems, amplifying vocational skill development paradigms, and expanding global employment pipelines for its youth demographic. Presiding over a high-level review meeting in Lucknow, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath announced the universal expansion of a specialized educational and financial assistance program, designed to support vulnerable working children, across all seventy-five districts of the state. The policy intervention seeks to systemati-

cally remove young demographics from hazardous or informal labor environments by substituting economic hardship with structured educational stipends. The leadership emphasized that the state's economic output is fundamentally anchored to the stability of its workforce, making the provision of dignified living standards, occupational safety, and academic access a primary governmental mandate. Simultaneously, the state is executing a major technical upgrade of its localized digital marketplace infrastructure, which functions to bridge the gap between ordinary citizens and certified, skilled service providers such as

plumbers, electricians, and carpenters. The modernized digital interface is being structurally integrated into the operational framework of various state government departments, mandates, and civic bodies to streamline public works procurement at the municipal level. By creating a transparent, verified repository of skilled domestic technicians, the platform aims to simultaneously regularize freelance artisanal wages and reduce transaction friction for consumers. This digital intervention represents a broader push toward formalizing the state's extensive unorganized service sector through robust data management.

To address the unique vulnerabilities faced by the massive internal migrant worker population, the state has authorized the construction of dedicated welfare transit hubs and subsidized rental housing facilities within primary industrial corridors. These incoming residential complexes will serve as centralized support centers, offering migrant laborers immediate access to legal aid, healthcare registries, and basic civic identification services under one roof. In tandem with these housing initiatives, the government has finalized blueprints for a premier construction trades training institute alongside an expansive residential hostel facility in the industrial manufacturing hub of Kanpur. This specialized academy will focus heavily on advanced civil engineering trades, modern masonry, structural steel fabrication, and mechanized construction technologies to elevate the competitiveness of local labor. In a major breakthrough for external labor mobility, the Uttar Pradesh State Skill Development Mission has successfully secured an official recruitment license from central authorities, enabling the body to act as a direct placement agency for international employment markets.

Two Individuals Arrested After Missing Young Girl is Found Dead in Tamil Nadu

Chennai : A tragic incident has come to light near Sulur in the Coimbatore district, where a 10-year-old girl who went missing on Thursday was found dead in a local pond on Friday evening. The young girl had left her home to visit a nearby shop but never returned, prompting her family and local villagers to launch an intense search. After a long search operation, her body was recovered from the water, and authorities suspect she was killed elsewhere before being dumped into the pond.

Local residents and family members staged intense protests through the night, demanding immediate justice and refusing to take the body until action was taken. By reviewing local security camera footage, the police discovered that the girl was last seen with a neighbor named Kartik on a two-wheeler, leading to his arrest along with an accomplice named Mohanraj. Government officials and top police chiefs have rushed to the area to oversee the investigation and comfort the family, promising that the culprits will receive strict and speedy punishment once the final medical reports confirm the exact cause of death.

This tragic incident, which has deeply shocked the community near Sulur in the Coimbatore district, has drawn urgent intervention

from law enforcement and senior government officials. Following the discovery of the young girl's body in a local pond, police personnel immediately cordoned off the area to collect forensic evidence and preserve the integrity of the scene. Given the suspicious circumstances surrounding the timeline of her disappearance and subsequent recovery, the investigation was immediately escalated to a high-priority status under the direct supervision of senior district police chiefs.

The swift breakthrough in the case came after dedicated investigative teams systematically mapped out and reviewed closed-circuit television camera footage from commercial establishments and residential buildings along the route the victim was believed to have taken. The video evidence provided critical timestamps that pointed directly toward a local neighbor, identified as Kartik, who was spotted transporting the young girl on a two-wheeler shortly after she left her residence. Acting on this crucial lead, specialized police units tracked down and arrested Kartik, alongside an alleged accomplice identified as Mohanraj, to initiate formal custodial interrogation.

As the legal proceedings and questioning began, a tense situation unfolded out-

side as local residents and grieving family members gathered to voice their collective outrage and demand absolute accountability. The late-night demonstrations reflected the deep sorrow of the neighborhood, with protesters initially refusing to allow the body to be moved for further medical examinations until explicit assurances of strict judicial action were made by the state. To de-escalate the tension, senior administrative officials and top police commanders arrived at the site to personally engage with the family, extend their deepest condolences, and guarantee that the investigation would be conducted with absolute transparency and speed.

The case is now heavily dependent on the definitive findings of the comprehensive post-mortem examination, which is being conducted by a specialized team of forensic medical experts. This medical report is critical for establishing the exact cause, timing, and nature of death, which will form the legal foundation for the charges filed in court. Authorities have re-emphasized their commitment to building an airtight legal case against the accused, promising the public that no effort will be spared in ensuring a speedy trial and the strictest possible punishment under the framework of the law.

Odisha Government Assures Farmers of Plentiful Fertilizer Supply Amid Panic

Bhubaneswar : The Odisha government has assured farmers that there is an adequate stock of agricultural fertilizers available across the state, dismissing rumors of shortages and price hikes. Officials stated that despite ongoing political tensions in the Middle East, the monthly supply of essential fertilizers from the central government has remained completely smooth. To keep the distribution fair and honest, manufacturing companies have been told to send more than half of their stock directly to local cooperative societies.

To prevent any illegal activities, the state government has set up special block and district-level teams to inspect storage facilities and stop any black marketing or hoarding. Strict orders have been given to local authorities to ensure that agricultural-grade fertilizer is not illegally diverted for industrial uses like making plywood or animal feed, especially during non-cropping seasons. Furthermore, a new field program has been launched to encourage farmers to reduce their reliance on chemical products and explore organic farming methods instead.

The administration of Odisha has issued a comprehensive and highly definitive

reassessment regarding the availability of essential agricultural inputs, explicitly guaranteeing to the state's vast farming community that there is an entirely adequate and robust buffer stock of agricultural fertilizers positioned across all regional distribution nodes.

This critical announcement was intentionally designed by senior state administrators to swiftly counter and dismiss a growing wave of unsubstantiated rumors regarding imminent market shortages and artificial price hikes that had begun creating visible anxiety within rural communities. By taking a highly proactive public stance, the agricultural department successfully neutralized speculative panic-buying patterns, ensuring that the critical seasonal sowing schedules of local cultivators remain entirely unhindered by false marketplace anxieties or manipulated supply scares.

In a detailed breakdown of the macroeconomic factors influencing the domestic agricultural landscape, senior state officials explicitly clarified that despite the highly volatile and ongoing geopolitical tensions currently unfolding across the Middle East, the vital monthly supply pipelines of essen-

tial fertilizers flowing from the central government have remained completely smooth, unhindered, and predictable. The central allocation mechanisms have continued to function at peak operational efficiency, systematically delivering the required quantities of chemical compounds to state reservoirs without a single logistical delay or maritime interruption.

This consistent inflow of raw materials and finished products has allowed the state to maintain its strategic reserves at optimal levels, proving that global supply chain disruptions have failed to impact the local agrarian economy.

To guarantee that the incoming wave of essential agricultural resources is managed with the absolute highest standards of administrative fairness, equity, and transparency, the state government has issued legally binding directives to all fertilizer manufacturing corporations operating within its jurisdiction.

These manufacturing entities have been explicitly instructed and mandated to dispatch more than fifty percent of their entire monthly production and storage stock directly to local agricultural cooperative societies scat-

tered across the rural hinterlands. This deliberate supply-chain intervention effectively bypasses the traditional network of private wholesale distributors, ensuring that grassroots agrarian institutions possess direct, unimpeded, and prioritized access to the vital chemical inputs required by small and marginal farmers.

By shifting the primary distribution weight heavily toward state-backed cooperative networks, the administration is actively minimizing the structural opportunities for private market manipulation, price gouging, and artificial scarcity creation.

These local cooperative societies operate under strict state oversight, ensuring that every bag of fertilizer is sold precisely at the government-mandated maximum retail price, thereby insulating resource-poor farmers from exploitative economic practices.

This strategic reallocation of stock not only fortifies the financial security of vulnerable rural households but also strengthens the operational relevance and community trust of cooperative farming networks, which form the socio-economic backbone of Odisha's agrarian framework.

Uttar Pradesh Set to Build Massive New Government Office Complex in Lucknow

Lucknow : The path has been cleared for the construction of a new Uttar Pradesh legislature complex on a massive piece of land in the Gomti Nagar area of the state capital. The Lucknow Development Authority has officially issued a tender to select a consultant and an architect to handle the design and planning of this grand project. Companies interested in the project can submit their applications from May 23 until June 21, after which a detailed project report will be created to determine the final cost and the time needed for completion. The proposed site covers a total area of 245 acres, which includes 170 acres belonging to the Municipal Corporation and 75 acres owned by the development authority. This entire plot was previously leased to Sahara India, but the local government took back possession after the lease ended and terms were violated. The state government plans to build not just the Legislative Assembly here, but also the Secretariat, the Chief Minister's office, and various other government departments, which is why it is being called a complete complex. The location was chosen due to its excellent connectivity, and the state government has already set aside 50 crore ru-



pees in its recent budget to kickstart the project.

The urban landscape of Uttar Pradesh's capital is on the verge of a historic transformation as the administrative infrastructure undergoes a massive modernization phase. The long-anticipated path has been officially cleared for the design and construction of a brand-new, state-of-the-art Uttar Pradesh legislature and administrative complex on an expansive tract of land in the premium Gomti Nagar area of Lucknow. This monumental development project represents a significant shift in the state's governance blueprint, aiming to consolidate scattered bureaucratic operations

into a highly unified, efficient, and technologically advanced civic hub. The initiative reflects the state's growing economic ambitions and the pressing need for modern, high-capacity infrastructure to support its rapidly expanding administrative machinery. Taking the first major executive step toward turning this grand vision into reality, the Lucknow Development Authority has officially issued a high-profile global tender to select an expert consultant and a master architect. The chosen entities will be handed the profound responsibility of managing the intricate conceptual design, structural planning, and

environmental blueprints of this landmark project. According to the official notification, highly qualified infrastructure companies and architectural firms interested in bidding for the project can submit their formal applications from May 23 until June 21.

Following the rigorous evaluation of these competitive submissions, the selected firm will create a detailed project report to lock down the finalized cost projections and construction timelines. The physical scale of the proposed project is truly staggering, with the designated construction site covering a total continuous area of 245 acres of prime real estate.

Intense Heatwave Grabs Uttar Pradesh with High Temperatures and Power Cuts

Lucknow : Severe heatwave conditions continue to affect normal life across Uttar Pradesh, with nearly two-thirds of the state suffering from extreme sunshine, hot winds, and uncomfortable humidity.

The weather department has issued a top-level alert for extreme heat in several districts, including Banda and Prayagraj, where temperatures soared well past 46 degrees Celsius. The extreme weather has left streets and marketplaces completely empty during the afternoon as people struggle to stay safe.

The situation has become more challenging due to frequent power outages caused by overloaded electrical lines and transformer failures, leading to public protests in some neighborhoods. Even though the state government reported supplying a record amount of electricity, the intense heat makes it difficult to maintain steady power.

Weather experts have explained that humid winds



are making the outdoors feel even hotter than the actual recorded temperatures, and they warn that there will be no relief from this extreme heat for the next few days.

The administrative framework of Uttar Pradesh is currently confronting a profound civic and environmental challenge as an extraordinarily severe heatwave continues to heavily disrupt normal life across the vast territories of the state. According to recent meteo-

rological observations, nearly two-thirds of the province is currently suffering under a punishing combination of extreme, unobstructed sunshine, blistering hot winds, and exceptionally uncomfortable indoor and outdoor humidity levels.

This intense atmospheric combination has transformed the daily routines of millions of citizens, presenting a complex public health scenario that tests the limits of municipal resilience, ur-

ban planning, and emergency medical response systems across both urban and rural zones.

To formally warn the public and local administrative bodies of the escalating atmospheric dangers, the state weather department has officially issued its highest-level emergency alert for extreme heat across several highly vulnerable districts.

This top-tier meteorological warning has been focused with particular urgen-

cy on regions such as Banda and Prayagraj, where localized ambient temperature readings have recently soared well past the critical threshold of 46 degrees Celsius.

Such extreme thermal measurements represent an acute environmental hazard, prompting regional authorities to activate specialized disaster response protocols, coordinate with public health networks, and issue urgent advisory notices to help citizens minimize their direct exposure to the sun.

The immediate and highly visible consequence of this prolonged thermal onslaught has been the complete and eerie evacuation of public spaces during the peak hours of solar radiation.

Throughout the late morning and entire afternoon, normally bustling city streets, highly active commercial marketplaces, and dense transit hubs across the state are being left completely empty as people struggle to remain indoors to protect their physical well-being.

Over One Lakh Students in Odisha Gain Real-World Work Experience Under New Policy

Bhubaneswar : As part of the practical learning approach introduced by the National Education Policy, the Odisha government has successfully connected more than 1.18 lakh undergraduate students with internships and community service programs. This initiative is designed to give college students real-world exposure and a clear understanding of how public services and government bodies operate at the grassroots level. The six-week program is mandatory for students during their fourth semester and provides them with hands-on field training. Students are being placed across a wide range of fields, including government offices, local banks, health centers, schools, and non-profit organizations. Their performance, attendance, and weekly reports will earn them academic credits that count toward their final degrees. Education officials believe that these placements in both government and private sectors will help students understand how to apply their classroom knowledge to practical situations, significantly improving their future employment and business

potential. The higher education landscape in Odisha is undergoing a massive transformation, driven by the structural and pedagogical shifts introduced under the National Education Policy. In a bid to move away from purely theoretical, rote-learning models, the state government has launched a massive experiential learning drive that has already successfully connected more than 1.18 lakh undergraduate students with internships and community service programs. This ambitious initiative represents a major milestone in the state's efforts to modernize its academic framework, ensuring that young graduates are not just degree holders but are also equipped with practical, real-world skills that make them highly competitive in the modern job market. By integrating field-based learning directly into the mainstream college curriculum, Odisha is actively bridging the traditional gap that has long existed between academic theory and professional reality. For decades, traditional undergraduate education focused primarily on classroom lectures and textbook examina-

tions, leaving many students unprepared for the complexities of actual working environments. The state's new approach ensures that students are pushed out of their academic comfort zones and into the dynamic sectors of society, where they can observe firsthand the nuances, challenges, and mechanisms of various professional fields before they even graduate. At the core of this initiative is a deep commitment to providing undergraduate students with comprehensive real-world exposure and a crystal-clear understanding of how public services, governance, and grassroots administrative bodies operate. Higher education officials emphasize that textbook descriptions of public administration or corporate operations cannot replicate the learning that happens when a student stands on the ground and observes these systems in real time. Through this immersive strategy, the government aims to demystify public processes and help students comprehend the intricate logistics, policy implementations, and community dynamics that define everyday governance in India.

Central and Western Railways Schedule Weekend Maintenance Blocks

Mumbai: Local train commuters in Mumbai should prepare for travel delays as Central Railway announced a five-hour mega block on Sunday, May 24, to carry out essential infrastructure maintenance and safety work. The disruptions will impact both the Main Line and Harbour Line corridors. On the Main Line, slow tracks between Matunga and Mulund stations will be closed from 11:05 am to 3:55 pm, forcing slow trains to run on the fast lines. Diverted services will make special stops at Sion, Kurla, Ghatkopar, Vikhroli, and Bhandup, arriving roughly 15 minutes



behind schedule. Simultaneously, Western Railway scheduled a midnight jumbo block between Vasai Road and Virar stations for track maintenance and signaling updates, avoiding daytime disruptions on its corridor. On the Central Harbour Line, several suburban services face cancellations during the active block hours. Passengers have been advised to check altered timetables before starting their journeys. The lifeline of India's financial capital is gearing up for a major operational overhaul this weekend,

as railway authorities finalize plans for extensive maintenance work across the city's sprawling network. Local train commuters who rely on the Mumbai suburban railway system are being advised to brace themselves for significant travel delays and altered schedules on Sunday, May 24. This disruption comes as Central Railway officially announces a comprehensive five-hour mega block, a necessary administrative step aimed at modernizing the aging transit infrastructure and reinforcing the safety parameters of the tracks that carry millions of passengers daily.

Low Reservoir Levels Prompt BMC to Request Additional Water Stock Until August

Mumbai: Despite a 10% water cut implemented on May 15, the combined water storage across Mumbai's seven supply lakes remains critically low at 19.22% of total capacity. Civic data shows the reservoirs hold 2,78,199 million litres against a maximum capacity of over 14.4 lakh million litres. In response to the shortage, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) scaled back daily water distribution from its standard 4,000 million litres down to approximately 3,600 million litres to preserve existing resources. The proactive re-

strictions were initiated due to weather forecasts indicating a potentially weaker southwest monsoon. Local authorities noted that without the ongoing supply cuts, the current reserves would likely run dry by early July. To ensure the city remains supplied through August 17, the BMC formally requested the allocation of an extra 237 million cubic metres of emergency water from the Vaitarna and Bhatsa reservoirs through the Urban Development Department. The critical depletion of Mumbai's primary water sources has driven the Bri-

hanmumbai Municipal Corporation to take emergency measures, highlighting the growing vulnerability of the city's seasonal supply network. Despite a ten percent water cut implemented across the metropolitan area on May fifteen, the combined water storage across Mumbai's seven supply lakes remains dangerously low, dropping to nineteen point twenty-two percent of total capacity. Official civic data reveals that the reservoirs currently hold just two lakh, seventy-eight thousand, one hundred and ninety-nine million litres of

water, a stark contrast to the maximum capacity of over fourteen point four lakh million litres required to keep the city running smoothly without restrictions. In direct response to this intensifying shortage, the municipal body has scaled back daily water distribution from its standard four thousand million litres down to approximately three thousand, six hundred million litres. This aggressive reduction is designed to stretch existing resources as far as possible amid rising summer temperatures and soaring evaporation rates.

Second Massive Tunnel Boring Machine Assembly Begins for Bullet Train Project

Mumbai: Construction on the underground portion of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train project advanced further as the cutterhead for the second Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) was successfully lowered at Sawli near Ghansoli. This milestone comes shortly after identical equipment was positioned at the Vikhroli site earlier in the week. The heavy machinery will excavate a single large tunnel designed to accommodate both transit lines for the upcoming high-speed rail corridor.

The cutterhead measures 13.6 meters in diameter and weighs approximately

350 tonnes. To slice through tough underground material and clear out debris, the massive front plate is fitted with 84 cutter discs, 124 scrapers, and 16 bucket lips. Engineering teams will spend the next several weeks conducting final assemblies and system testing, with initial excavation work moving from Ghansoli toward Vikhroli scheduled to commence in July 2026. The National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited has achieved another monumental milestone in the development of India's first high-speed rail corridor, signaling a major leap forward for infrastructure engineering in the

country. The Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train project, which promises to revolutionize transit between the two major economic hubs, has officially entered its next critical phase of underground construction. Engineering teams have successfully initiated the complex assembly process for the second massive Tunnel Boring Machine assigned to this mega-project. This development marks a pivotal moment in the timeline of the high-speed rail network, demonstrating the rapid pace at which subterranean works are now progressing. The latest engineering feat took place at the designated construction site

in Sawli, located near the bustling node of Ghansoli in Navi Mumbai. Amid strict safety protocols and precise technical coordination, the massive cutterhead for the second Tunnel Boring Machine was lowered successfully into the launching shaft. The lowering of a cutterhead is widely considered one of the most challenging and critical phases of setting up a mega-bore transit system, requiring absolute precision to ensure the structural integrity of the machine. The arrival and placement of this giant component at Ghansoli have injected fresh momentum into the specialized subterranean segment of the

bullet train corridor. This successful operation follows closely on the heels of another major breakthrough achieved just days earlier at a separate location. Earlier in the exact same week, identical heavy equipment was successfully positioned and lowered at the Vikhroli construction site, showcasing a synchronized multi-front approach by the engineering teams. By launching operations from multiple shafts simultaneously, the project executioners are effectively optimizing the construction timeline and preparing for concurrent drilling operations.

Heatwave Triggers Transformer Failures and Power Outages Across South Mumbai

Mumbai: Severe heatwave conditions and record-breaking electricity consumption exceeding 4,500 MW have placed extreme strain on the BEST supply network, causing multiple power outages across the city. On Friday night, residents in Dadar, Wadala, Parsi Colony, and Girgaon experienced sudden blackouts following major technical faults at both the Kingsway Receiving Station and the Girgaon Chowpatty station. The disruptions began around 9:25 pm when automated safety switches tripped on two primary transformers in Dadar.

The persistent outages during high night temperatures triggered widespread public frustration, with many residents using social media to highlight grid vulnerabilities. Local electricity officials stated that

the combination of intense atmospheric heat and surging demand for air conditioning overloaded regional feeders and transformers, resulting in hardware malfunctions. Emergency technical teams worked through the night to replace damaged components and stabilize power delivery to the affected residential zones. The punishing heatwave conditions gripping Mumbai, coupled with record-breaking electricity consumption exceeding 4,500 MW, have placed an unprecedented strain on the Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) network, triggering widespread power outages across South and Central Mumbai. On Friday night, residents across several major neighborhoods—including Dadar, Wadala, Parsi Colony, and Girgaon—were

plunged into sudden darkness following significant technical faults at two critical hubs: the Kingsway Receiving Station and the Girgaon Chowpatty station. The disruptions began rolling in around 9:25 pm, initiated by the automated safety switches tripping on two primary transformers in the Dadar area to prevent catastrophic equipment failure.

Police Personnel Arrested in Vasai for Accepting Bribes to Aid Convict Escape

Vasai: Three police constables attached to the local security detail were arrested for allegedly helping a murder accused escape custody outside the Vasai Court premises. Investigators revealed that the officers accepted a bribe of ₹45,000 from the family of the accused, Vinod Soni, to coordinate the escape. Instead of using untraceable cash, the police personnel reportedly accepted the funds digitally through Google Pay via multiple smaller installments of ₹5,000.

The security lapse occurred as the group approached a parked prison van. The compromised constables allegedly loosened Soni's handcuffs, allowing him to flee on the pretext of using the restroom. Following a rapid internal inquiry, the local department placed the three constables under arrest. Police also took the fugitive's wife and son into custody for



actively financing the bribe and participating in the escape plot.

The local law enforcement apparatus has faced a severe breach of integrity following the arrest of three police

constables attached to a local security detail in Vasai. The personnel were taken into custody for their alleged involvement in facilitating the escape of a high-profile murder accused right outside the Vasai

Court premises. The incident has raised serious concerns regarding security protocols and internal corruption within the local transit detail. Investigators quickly uncovered that the officers had actively

compromised their official duties in exchange for a financial payoff.

According to detailed reports from the investigating team, the arrested constables accepted a bribe totaling ₹45,000 from the family of the fugitive, who has been identified as Vinod Soni. In an unusual turn for illicit transactions, the compromised personnel did not demand untraceable cash to execute the plan. Instead, they reportedly opted to receive the funds digitally through Google Pay, creating a direct electronic trail for investigators. The total bribe amount was transferred in multiple smaller installments of ₹5,000 each to avoid triggering immediate financial fraud alerts.

The planned security lapse was executed just as the police detail and the accused were approaching a parked prison transport van outside the court.

Passenger Intrusion in Ladies' Train Compartment Raises Safety Concerns at Bandra

Mumbai: Commuters raised serious safety concerns after an unidentified man forcefully entered a ladies' compartment on a local train at Bandra station and refused to leave. Despite persistent protests from female passengers inside the coach and male commuters shouting from adjacent compartments, the man remained aggressive and defensive, claiming he would exit at a later stop. Witnesses noted that the individual eventually pushed past a female passenger while jumping off the train at King's Circle station.

The mid-train confrontation was captured on video and shared widely on social media platforms. Passengers involved in the incident reported that multiple attempts to contact emergency railway support failed in real-time. Commuters stated that calls to the railway help-

line went completely unanswered, while the built-in emergency talkback system inside the ladies' coach was broken and non-functional during the crisis, prompting calls for stricter security monitoring on suburban networks. A severe breach of commuter security has sparked widespread outrage and raised serious safety concerns after an unidentified man forcefully entered a ladies' compartment on a Mumbai suburban local train at Bandra station.

The individual boarded the designated women's coach and steadfastly refused to leave despite immediate and persistent protests from the female passengers inside. Even as male commuters in adjacent compartments noticed the intrusion and shouted at the individual to exit, the man

remained aggressive and defensive, dismissively claiming he would only get off the train at a later destination. The mid-train confrontation escalated as the local train continued its journey along the suburban network, causing panic and distress among the passengers trapped inside the coach. According to eyewitness accounts, the tense standoff finally came to an end when the train slowed down at King's Circle station.

The unidentified intruder forcefully pushed past a female passenger near the doorway before jumping off the train onto the platform and fleeing the scene, leaving commuters deeply shaken by the lack of immediate intervention. The entire distressing incident was captured on video by a passenger inside the compartment, and the

footage was subsequently shared widely across various social media platforms. The viral video quickly triggered intense public debate regarding the vulnerability of women travelers during off-peak and peak hours alike. Citizens and commuter advocacy groups have utilized the footage to demand immediate accountability from railway authorities, highlighting the blatant disregard for dedicated safe spaces on public transit. In the aftermath of the event, passengers involved in the crisis revealed an alarming breakdown of the emergency infrastructure installed inside the train. Commuters reported that multiple frantic attempts to contact emergency railway support failed in real-time as the situation unfolded. Phone calls placed to the official railway helpline went completely unan-

swered, leaving the passengers without an immediate line of communication to security personnel on the platform or at upcoming stations. Furthermore, the situation was severely compounded by a critical hardware failure inside the suburban coach itself. Passengers attempted to alert the train guard and motorman using the built-in emergency talkback system inside the ladies' compartment, only to discover that the vital communication device was entirely broken and non-functional.

The failure of both the digital helpline and the physical emergency systems has prompted urgent calls from the public for stricter security monitoring, routine maintenance of safety gear, and an increased presence of security personnel on the suburban rail network.



A New Pandemic Warning!

Even as the world has yet to fully recover from the horrific crisis of COVID-19, a new outbreak of Ebola in Africa has once again shattered the global health system's sense of security. The warning issued by the World Health Organization declaring this crisis an international health emergency serves not merely as an alert for Africa, but as a wake-up call for all of humanity. With the lessons learned from the COVID-19 era still fresh in memory, fears are mounting that the world may once again be standing on the brink of a potential pandemic.

Acting without haste or hesitation and without waiting for the formal advice of an expert committee the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the Ebola outbreak in Central Africa a 'Public Health Emergency of International Concern' (PHEIC). While global health experts have welcomed this unprecedented and swift action by the organization, the underlying reality behind this urgency is deeply concerning and unsettling. This is because the current outbreak is not caused by the usual 'Zaire' strain of the Ebola virus, but rather by a new strain known as 'Bundibugyo' a variant considered to be extremely rare and highly lethal. The historical record regarding this specific strain is extremely limited, and the scientific community currently lacks any concrete evidence to determine the extent to which existing vaccines and medical treatments will prove effective against this novel virus. Amidst this fog of uncertainty, merely issuing a warning of danger is insufficient; the global community must now unite and take action on a war footing otherwise, it will not take long for the framework of international health security to collapse.

As the current situation stands, the disease is spreading rapidly across the border regions shared by two nations: the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda. According to official statistics as of May 16, 2026, the Ituri province of Congo has recorded 8 laboratory-confirmed cases, 246 suspected cases, and 80 suspected deaths. Even more concerning is the fact that two confirmed cases have been identified in Kampala, the capital of Uganda, with no apparent direct link between them. The fact that 8 out of the initial 13 samples tested positive combined with a rising mortality rate and the geographical spread of cases strongly suggests that the actual scale of the outbreak is likely many times larger than the reported figures. Ebola is a highly contagious and deadly disease that spreads rapidly through contact with a patient's bodily fluids or contaminated surfaces. With a mortality rate ranging between 25% and 50%, the Ebola epidemic that ravaged Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone between 2014 and 2016 infected over 28,600 people and claimed the lives of 11,325 innocent victims. With this tragic history looming large, the highly cautious and protective stance adopted by the World Health Organization must be deemed entirely appropriate.

However, this health emergency has a second and deeply distressing dimension inextricably linked to global politics and economic power struggles. This border region of Africa is already reeling under the impact of internal warfare, armed conflicts, and the mass displacement of civilians. Amidst such chaotic conditions, health workers face immense difficulties in reaching patients, creating a significant risk that numerous cases will go undetected and undiagnosed. The even greater tragedy is that precisely when the world is in dire need of the World Health Organization's robust support, this international institution is facing a severe financial squeeze. Due to the United States' withdrawal from the organization in January followed by significant funding cuts from powerful nations such as Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Britain the World Health Organization has been compelled to slash its 2026-2027 budget by approximately 8 percent. This financial drain has severely weakened disease diagnostic and surveillance systems in conflict-ridden regions like the Congo and Uganda, making it increasingly difficult to curb the undetected spread of viruses.

In light of these developments, the question of what lessons the world has truly learned from the COVID-19 crisis has once again come to the forefront. A glimmer of hope had emerged last May with the adoption of the 'Global Pandemic Treaty,' which was expected to bolster the world's health security architecture. However, due to U.S. opposition to the agreement and the parochial attitudes of wealthy nations, the treaty is now in jeopardy even before it has been implemented. During times of crisis, the world's affluent nations are refusing to provide poorer countries with medical resources, vaccines, and advanced technology or to engage in mandatory technology transfer. The deep-seated mistrust among developing nations persists, stemming from the inequitable distribution of vaccines during the COVID-19 pandemic and the manner in which poorer countries were left to fend for themselves. In their latest report, the World Bank and the World Health Organization's 'Global Preparedness Monitoring Board' have articulated a stark and bitter truth: "The world remains unprepared to confront any future major pandemic."

This new outbreak of Ebola is not merely a crisis confined to Africa; it serves as a grave warning to the entire world. In today's era of global connectivity, any virus can travel from one country to another in a matter of just a few hours. Consequently, investment in the healthcare sector, scientific collaboration, and international partnerships are no longer merely moral obligations; they have become essential means for the very survival of every nation. At this critical juncture, preventing the spread of the disease requires effective patient-tracing campaigns, adequate protection for healthcare workers, safe and dignified burial practices, and raising public awareness grounded in a scientific perspective. Until global disparities in healthcare facilities are eradicated and international organizations receive adequate funding, humanity will remain trapped in the snares of such insidious viruses.

To emerge from this crisis, the world must transcend its mind-set of parochial nationalism and narrow economic self-interest.

If, while boasting of progress and technological prowess, we fail to safeguard basic healthcare facilities and the sanctity of human life, it would constitute a resounding defeat for the entire scientific community. If the world still fails to heed this lesson in time, future pandemics could prove far more catastrophic. If we are to save humanity, the time has truly come to prioritize concrete action over mere rhetoric. If we wish to bequeath a safe and healthy planet to future generations, the world must take a serious look right now at the scorching heat of this crisis burning in Africa and the looming threat of Ebola. Merely declaring a state of emergency or remaining passive observers will not suffice; we must forge a chain of decisive action by immediately providing funds and accelerating research into treatments and cures. For nature and viruses recognize no national borders; when a crisis strikes, it imperils the very existence of us all. If we do not learn this lesson even now, it is absolutely certain that the entire human race will have to pay the price for future pandemics.

'Million Minds Tech Park' and 'GREMI City Campus' in Ahmedabad

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah, today inaugurated the newly built 'Million Minds Tech Park' and 'GREMI City Campus' in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Gujarat Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel, Deputy Chief Minister Shri Harsh Sanghavi and several other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Amit Shah said that the event marks a major milestone in fulfilling Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision for the future of India. He said that PM Modi's vision is that technology, innovation, knowledge, entrepreneurship, and high-skill based industries should also come to Gujarat. Shri Shah said Gujarat, which has led the country in several sectors since Independence, will also lead in the field of emerging technologies. He said that whenever Gujarat enters any sector with determination, it rapidly reaches the top ranks, and expressed confidence that the state would repeat the same success in this sector as well.

Shri Amit Shah said Gujarat has made an immense contribution to India's industrial development since Independence. He said that after Shri Narendra Modi became the Chief Minister of Gujarat, he consistently worked to give industrial growth a structured framework. He said Gujarat's journey since 2002 in areas such as industrial development, infrastructure, ease of doing business and entrepreneurship-led growth has successfully established the state's global identity.

Union Home Minister said many states have achieved industrial progress, but Gujarat stands apart because of its structured development model. He said He stated that the fundamental reason for this is that the Gujarati people have traditionally advanced with the qualities of entrepreneurship and courage, and the government, under the leadership of PM Modi, has



played a significant role in creating an infrastructure conducive to this. Shri Shah said infrastructure does not only mean physical infrastructure, but also policy support, financial arrangements, proactive governance and initiatives such as Vibrant Gujarat, which have earned global recognition.

Shri Amit Shah said Gujarat has performed exceptionally well in sectors such as manufacturing, engineering, pharmaceuticals, ports, logistics, green energy, industrial infrastructure and investments. He said the next objective is to bring Gujarat among the top three states in the service sector as well. For this, he added, tech parks like the newly inaugurated facility are essential to position Ahmedabad alongside Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune and Gurugram.

Union Home Minister said Prime Minister Modi has been giving major emphasis to tech parks and Global Capability Centres (GCCs) over the past few years as India's economic activities are undergoing rapid transformation. He said the 'Million Minds Tech Park', developed across 13.5 lakh square feet at a cost of nearly Rs. 1,100 crore, will in its first phase provide a state-of-the-art work environ-

ment for 9,000 highly skilled professionals. Shri Shah said that over



seven phases, with an investment of around Rs. 15,000 crore, the project is expected to generate more than 63,000 high-value jobs

over the next five years. This 65-acre tract of land will make a significant contribution to promoting high-skill jobs in Gujarat. He said that the project has allocated 50 per cent space for commercial use and also includes malls, hotels and residential spaces, reflecting the vision of a fully integrated tech park ecosystem.

Shri Amit Shah also inaugurated the Ganesh Real Estate Management Institute (GREMI) Campus. He said the institute is an important initiative for the country as the real estate sector has rarely been approached in a comprehensive manner. He said that environment, planning and town planning are closely linked with real estate development and emphasised that good cities cannot be developed without proper planning. The Modi Government's urban planning re-

batch, while the main campus near Thol Lake will be developed over 100 acres at an estimated cost of Rs. 500 crore. He said the institute will provide modern thinking and efficient leadership to the real estate sector across the country.

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah said that AI and Deep Tech represent the economy of the future. He said that under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, India is emerging as a founder in several emerging sectors globally. Shri Shah added that youth working in areas such as robotics, quantum computing, semiconductors, AI, automation systems, cybersecurity, defence and space technology must be provided with the right ecosystem, infrastructure and opportunities. He said that both these

initiatives will make a major contribution towards taking Gujarat several steps ahead in the field of advanced technologies.

NID will now expand its reach to high-tech design sectors, including semiconductor chips



Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah today inaugurated the Innovation & Incubation Centre (IIC) at the National Institute of Design (NID) in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Shri Piyush Goyal, Gujarat Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel, Deputy Chief Minister Shri Harsh Sanghavi and several other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

Addressing the gather-

ing, Shri Amit Shah said that NID is an institution that connects creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. Shri Shah said that traditionally, design is considered a discipline, but beyond that, it is also an art that presents things in a refined and meaningful manner. Shri Shah said that NID was established with the understanding that every individual possesses some degree of design sensibility, but due to the pressures of daily life, many people with the poten-

tial to excel in design are unable to pursue it seriously. He said one of the objectives behind establishing NID was to provide a platform to people who possess an inherent inclination towards design and help bring their potential before society. Shri Shah said that in order to fully explore the potential of any field from a national perspective, it has to be accepted as a career. Whether it is songwriting, music or design, all these are forms of art, but they ultimately also

need to be accepted as professions. Shri Shah said NID was established in Gujarat so that the commercial potential of design and art could be explored to its fullest extent.

Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah said that NID must encourage refinement in the design sector. He said that while the establishment of the Innovation & Incubation Centre is a commendable initiative, it is equally important to connect youth choosing design as a career with opportunities that address their professional concerns and aspirations. He said a separate vertical would have to be created for this purpose because designers are experts in creativity, not necessarily in commercialization. Shri Shah said that in the coming years, NID will have to bring together professionals from both fields. Only then will India be able to fully explore the country's design potential and encourage young people to adopt design as a career without hesitation.

Shri Amit Shah said that design has importance in every sector. Even in the construction of a large industrial

park, there is a need for design. The discipline of design already exists in India; it only needs to be recognized and explored. We must move forward in the field of high-tech design, whether it is semiconductors or chips. All those areas where the quality, nature, and interest in de-



sign exist must be explored. The National Institute of Design should take up the task of connecting these areas with careers. A dedicated vertical should be created in all campuses to take this forward.

Shri Amit Shah said that significant efforts are also needed to ensure that design becomes an integral part of

every sector of society and daily life. Referring to Patan Patola, he said that those who have seen the traditional textile art would understand the extraordinary precision, detailing and scientific approach involved in its design, especially in the blending of colours. He said that

India already possesses such rich traditions of design and craftsmanship, but these need to be explored further. For this to happen, more young people must adopt design as a career. Shri Shah said that efforts should also be made to create awareness about the utility of design and to expand the sector further.

Cabinet approves Ship Repair Facility at Vadinar, Gujarat

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the development of a modern Ship Repair Facility at Vadinar in Gujarat, a move expected to significantly strengthen India's maritime infrastructure and ship repair capabilities. The ambitious project will be jointly implemented by Deendayal Port Authority and Cochin Shipyard Limited with a combined investment of Rs 1,570 crore.

The proposed facility is being developed as a brownfield project and will feature world-class infrastructure, including a 650-metre-long jetty, two large floating dry docks, workshops, storage areas, and other associated marine facilities. The project is aimed at transforming Vadinar into a major ship repair hub on India's western coast.

Officials said Vadinar has emerged as a strategically advantageous location because of its natural deep draft, excellent maritime connectivity, and proximity to some of India's busiest commercial ports, including

Mundra Port and Kandla Port. Its location along key international shipping routes is expected to attract both domestic and foreign-flagged vessels for repair and maintenance operations.

The project is expected to fill a major gap in India's existing ship repair ecosystem. At present, the country lacks sufficient domestic infrastructure to undertake repairs of large vessels measuring over 230 metres in length. Due to this limitation, many large ships currently depend on foreign shipyards for repair and maintenance services.

Once operational, the Vadinar facility will be capable of handling vessels up to 300 metres in length, enabling India to undertake high-value repairs for large commercial ships within the country itself. This development is expected to substantially reduce dependence on overseas ship repair yards and help curb significant foreign exchange outflow.

The government believes the facility will improve the efficiency and turnaround time of ship repair operations along the western

coast, thereby enhancing the overall competitiveness of Indian ports and maritime trade infrastructure. Faster repair services closer to key trade routes could also reduce downtime for shipping companies.

Apart from strengthening strategic maritime capabilities, the project is also expected to generate large-scale employment opportunities. According to official estimates, the facility is likely to create around 290 direct jobs and nearly 1,100 indirect employment opportunities across sectors such as logistics, engineering support, fabrication, marine services, and ancillary industries.

The initiative is also expected to encourage the growth of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the surrounding region. Ancillary industries involved in ship components, steel fabrication, electrical systems, painting, marine equipment supply, and technical services are expected to benefit from increased economic activity generated by the project.

The government highlighted that the

project would contribute significantly to skill development in the maritime sector. Specialised technical training and workforce development programmes are expected to emerge around ship repair and marine engineering operations, creating a skilled talent pool for the industry.

Industry experts view the project as an important step towards positioning India as a global maritime services destination. With international shipping traffic steadily increasing in the Indian Ocean region, the creation of advanced repair facilities is expected to strengthen India's role in global shipping and trade networks.

The partnership between Deendayal Port Authority and Cochin Shipyard Limited is being seen as a strategic collaboration that combines port infrastructure expertise with extensive shipbuilding and ship repair experience. CSL is already one of India's leading shipbuilding and maintenance companies with experience in handling complex marine projects.

MAHARASHTRA

Aryan Age | 05

Maha CM Fadnavis travels from Mumbai to Shirdi on Vande Bharat Express

Mumbai : Following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal urging citizens to conserve fuel amid energy concerns linked to the West Asia conflict, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis travelled from Mumbai to Shirdi on Saturday by Vande Bharat Express.

Fadnavis made the journey to attend the inauguration of the Nibe Defence Production Complex, an event also attended by union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. During the train ride, the Chief Minister was engaged in official work and reviewed several government files.

The development comes after the state government, in line with the Prime Minister's call to reduce fuel consumption and



promote sustainable practices, directed ministers to halve the size of their official convoys during outstation visits.

It had also restricted foreign tours for tourism

department officials and advised greater use of electric vehicles and virtual meetings to minimise travel and fuel usage.

The Chief Secretary has asked the officials to

prepare a comprehensive fuel-saving plan for the Cabinet and to start using electric vehicles for government work, along with conducting more online meetings to avoid travel.

Women walk miles for water as crisis deepens in Maharashtra's Nashik district

Nashik : Women in several villages in Maharashtra's Nashik district are walking long distances and risking their lives to fetch drinking water as an acute water crisis worsens amid drying wells and poor rainfall.

In Kakadpana and nearby villages, residents gather around deep wells for hours each day to collect water, often standing precariously along narrow edges to lower buckets into shrinking water sources.

"We want clean water too," said a young girl from Kakadpana village. "Why do we receive such poor-quality water? Are we insects? We are human beings too."

Residents said the water available is muddy and yellowish, yet many families



have no alternative source for drinking water.

Despite the arrival of the monsoon season in Maharashtra, several parts of Nashik district continue to face severe shortages during the peak summer months. Villagers say the crisis has intensified in recent weeks as traditional

lives just to get a few pots of water."

Another resident, Chandrakala Budhar, said villagers have repeatedly appealed to authorities for a reliable drinking water supply, but little relief has reached the area.

Images from the affected villages show residents drawing discoloured water from deep wells under dangerous conditions.

Local residents blamed low rainfall, depleting groundwater levels and inadequate water infrastructure for the worsening crisis.

Villagers have urged the state government to arrange emergency water supply measures and long-term solutions to prevent recurring shortages every summer.

Mumbai Crime Branch busts illegal arms racket, arrest 3 people

Mumbai : The Mumbai Crime Branch has successfully dismantled an illegal arms racket operating in the city, leading to the arrest of three suspects. Alongside the apprehensions, law enforcement officials recovered three foreign-made pistols and 45 live cartridges, dealing a significant blow to the illicit weapons trade.

The operation was initiated after the Crime Branch received a specific tip-off indicating that three individuals were traveling to Mumbai with a cache of weapons, intending to sell them. Acting swiftly on this intelligence, a police team set up a tactical trap near St. George's Hospital on D'Mello Road in south Mumbai, where they in-

tercepted and detained the suspects.

The arrested individuals have been identified as Jashankreet Mangal Singh and Sukhwinder, both from Punjab, and Arbaaz, a resident of the Jhalawar district in Rajasthan. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime Branch) Raj Tilak Roushan confirmed the identities and noted that all three men have established criminal records.

The suspects' past criminal activities highlight their dangerous profiles. Singh and Sukhwinder are reportedly involved in a prior murder case in Punjab, while Arbaaz has an extensive history with 19 separate criminal cases registered against him across various police stations.

An interesting detail emerged during the inventory of the seized weapons, as all three pistols bear a "Made in China" inscription.

However, police officials clarified that this marking alone is not conclusive evidence of their geographic origin, and further analysis is required to determine where they were manufactured.

The Crime Branch is now expanding its investigation to trace the entire supply chain and uncover exactly how these foreign firearms entered Mumbai. Investigators are focused on identifying the intended buyers of the weapons and determining the financial details of the illicit transaction.

Maratha agitator Manoj Jarange-Patil issues May 28 ultimatum

Mumbai : Maratha reservation quota activist Manoj Jarange-Patil today announced at his Antarwali Sarati village that he will sit on a fast unto death from May 30 if his demands on behalf of the Maratha community are not met and said that he would do so for the demands of the Maratha community.

Meanwhile, BJP leader and MLC Prasad Lad met Jarange at his village on behalf of the Fadnavis government. Jarange-Patil conveyed to Lad, his ultimatum to the Fadnavis government until May 28. Jarange-Patil stated that he will hold a press conference on May 28 at 10 am to announce his final course



of action.

Speaking to media persons after meeting with Jarange-Patil, Lad said that he had a detailed two-hour discussion with him.

"I felt satisfied after

meeting Manoj Jarange. I have listened to everything he said. He said some things which made me also sad. But I do not think that Jarange Patil will need to go on a hunger strike again because

the government is serious about the demands he has made. The government has accepted most of them."

Another demand is that the validity of caste certificates provided must be is-

sued, stating that the Maratha subcommittee set up by the government is of no use.

He has demanded the establishment of separate ministries for the welfare of Kunbis and Marathas. Jarange-Patil also demanded that the Shinde committee appointed by the government must get an extension and it must check all caste related records.

"I do not blame Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. You issued a GR for Hyderabad but why did you withhold the caste certificate? Fadnavis, the Marathas made you a minister. Fadnavis Saheb is responsible for the officials not issuing certificates," Jarange-Patil added.

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"I do not blame Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. You issued a GR for Hyderabad but why did you withhold the caste certificate? Fadnavis, the Marathas made you a minister. Fadnavis Saheb is responsible for the officials not issuing certificates," Jarange-Patil added.

Onion and green auctions will be indefinitely suspended at Lasalgaon APMC from Monday

Nashik : Indefinite suspensions will halt onion and grain auctions at the Lasalgaon Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) starting Monday.

The sudden shutdown comes after the local Traders' Association formally notified the market committee that its members would not participate in the daily auction process, a move that has immediately escalated anxieties across the region's agricultural sector.

The association explained that the suspension is a forced and unfortunate consequence of a severe diesel shortage gripping Nashik district and neighboring areas. This fuel crisis has completely disrupted regional transportation services, leaving traders without the trucks required to transport purchased agricultural produce to distribution hubs.

This halt pushes onion growers into a deeply troubling "triple crisis," as farmers are already battling

a heavily depressed market.

Export channels have severely collapsed, with shipments disrupted by conflicts in Gulf countries, while traditional exports to Bangladesh have remained largely stagnant for the past year to a year and a half.

Compounding the lack of export demand, market prices for onions have plummeted to a meager ₹6 to ₹10 per kilogram. To make matters worse, an ongoing severe heatwave has triggered large-scale spoilage of onions kept in storage, causing mounting, irreversible financial losses for vulnerable growers.

With the largest onion market in Asia now freezing its auctions indefinitely, farmers are left in complete uncertainty regarding how or where they will sell their latest harvests.

The development threatens to severely intensify the ongoing agrarian distress throughout Maharashtra's farming belt.

Maharashtra Govt invokes MCOCA against cattle smugglers

Mumbai : The Maharashtra government has issued a major directive aimed at completely eradicating the illegal cattle trade within its borders. Law enforcement authorities across the state have been strictly ordered to invoke the highly stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) against repeat offenders and syndicates.

This tough legal framework will now be actively applied against individuals and organized groups involved in cattle smuggling. Additionally, the act will target those running unauthorized slaughter activities, significantly escalating the legal consequences for these offenses.

To provide a clear and effective framework for this legal crackdown, the state Home Department has formulated and released a fresh set of comprehen-

sive guidelines. These new protocols are specifically designed to reinforce Maharashtra's existing cow protection laws and systematically disrupt trafficking networks.

Among the key security upgrades mandated by the government is the immediate establishment of joint check posts. Located strategically along Maharashtra's state borders, these outposts will combine the resources of both the police force and the transport department to actively intercept illegal transit.

In a move to increase public participation, the state has fully integrated cattle crime reporting into its central emergency infrastructure. Citizens are now being actively encouraged to flag illegal slaughterhouses or active smuggling operations directly through the "Dial 112" emergency helpline.

Once a citizen lodges a complaint through this emergency channel, local police units are legally required to initiate immediate, on-ground action. This mandate ensures that community-led tips are addressed in real time, preventing actionable intelligence from being delayed.

To guarantee that these guidelines are strictly executed, the state government has placed ultimate administrative accountability directly upon regional leadership. District collectors and police commissioners across Maharashtra have been tasked with the direct implementation and continuous monitoring of the rules.

The state originally passed its landmark cow slaughter prohibition law back in 2015. However, a recent and noticeable uptick in clandestine cattle transportation and illegal

backyard slaughter prompted the government to seek much harsher legal remedies to maintain a strong level of deterrence.

By introducing MCOCA into the equation, the legal landscape changes significantly for violators. The act, which is typically reserved for breaking up violent underworld syndicates, allows for tougher detentions, stiffer penalties, and far broader investigative powers for the police.

This decisive policy shift follows numerous formal representations submitted by several Hindu organizations demanding stricter action against cattle smuggling. The government maintained that the new directives are vital for upholding public law and order, while ensuring the protection and conservation of cattle in accordance with constitutional provisions.

BJP MLA Prasad Lad Receives Threat Calls

Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar : BJP MLA Prasad Lad, who arrived in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar late Wednesday night to meet Maratha reservation activist Manoj Jarange Patil, allegedly received two to three threat calls since yesterday, creating a major stir in political circles.

According to police, the callers threatened to storm the hotel and assault Lad. The threats reportedly came in response to Lad's earlier criticism of Jarange Patil during the Maratha reservation agitation. The accused allegedly questioned why Lad was now seeking a meeting with the activist.

Police immediately launched an investigation and arrested two youths identified as Yogesh Shitole Patil and Ganesh Ugale in connection with the threats. Heavy police security was deployed at Hotel Rama International, where Lad was staying.

On Thursday morning, Prasad Lad left for Antar-

wali Sarati to meet Manoj Jarange Patil.

However, Jarange Patil had already made it clear that he would remain firm on his decision regarding the ongoing hunger strike, regardless of the outcome of the discussions.

Reacting to the incident, Prasad Lad said state minister Uday Samant shares a good rapport with Jarange Patil and often acts as a mediator on behalf of the government. Lad clarified that he was not blaming Samant for the lack of progress in previous talks.

Speaking on the threat case, Lad said the arrested youths may have had doubts or misunderstandings, which he was willing to address through dialogue.

He also stated that he would request the police not to take excessively strict action against them. Lad further revealed that he had come to meet Jarange Patil following a request from the activist himself.

Maharashtra Power Contract Workers' union Extends Support to Historic Odisha Electricity Workers' Protest

Pune : The Maharashtra Power Contract Workers' union has officially extended its solidarity and support to an ongoing, large-scale agitation in Odisha. The mass movement features contract, outsourcing, and technical power sector workers demonstrating against sweeping layoffs implemented under Tata Power distribution companies (DISCOMS).

Led by workers affiliated with the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), the continuous sit-in protest recently entered its fifth day. More than 10,000 electricity employees have actively joined the demonstration across Odisha to openly fight against what they term a sudden, unjust mass-layoff policy.

The protesting employees have rallied under the defiant slogan: "Fight for livelihood, fight for dignity — we may

sacrifice ourselves, but we will never surrender our rights." Through this movement, they are demanding definitive job security, comprehensive social protection, fair wages, and the immediate reinstatement of all terminated personnel.

Union representatives emphasize that the agitation has evolved beyond saving immediate jobs, escalating into a fundamental fight for the survival of thousands of dependent families. The workers have raised serious allegations against the management, including the sudden termination of long-serving staff, vast wage disparities, and a total lack of social security benefits.

Recognizing the gravity of the crisis, the All India Contract Workers' Federation has formally transitioned its local opposition into a coordinated national



push.

The federation has submitted written representations directly to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Labor and

Employment Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, and Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi.

Federation President Kandi Srinivas and General Secretary

Sachin Mengale have urged authorities to take swift executive action. They are demanding that the government immediately reinstate all terminated workers,

ensure long-term employment stability, and initiate open discussions with Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh representatives to reach a fair resolution.

The federation has issued a stark warning that if the layoffs are not withdrawn and bilateral talks fail to commence, they will escalate the issue. The labor body is fully prepared to launch a nationwide agitation, bringing the grievances of power sector contract employees to a countrywide platform.

Union leaders state that the issue reflects a broader, systemic struggle for outsourcing workers across India rather than an isolated local incident. They fear that if such corporate actions are allowed to succeed in Odisha unchallenged, similar mass contract terminations could soon follow in neighboring states.

Echoing this sentiment, Maharashtra Power Contract Workers' union President Nilesh Kharat publicly questioned why the very laborers whose hard work sustains these vital utility industries are consistently being pushed into financial insecurity. He announced that organizational representatives from Maharashtra would soon travel to Bhubaneswar to participate directly in the ground protests.

Compounding the union's stance, General Secretary Sachin Mengale strongly criticized the management's stalling tactics, reiterating that delaying justice to aggrieved workers effectively amounts to a complete denial of justice itself. The collective unions continue to demand immediate round-table negotiations to resolve the dispute.

A Look Inside Karishma Tanna's Beautiful South Indian Baby Shower

Mumbai : Famous actress Karishma Tanna recently enjoyed a traditional South Indian baby shower ceremony, known as a godh bharai, with her husband Varun Bangera. The event followed special Tulu customs and was filled with holy rituals, prayers, and blessings from family members. To celebrate the occasion, she chose to wear a stunning gold saree designed by Gulati Editions, which she complemented with layers of royal gold jewelry, emeralds, and fresh flowers in her hair.

The couple shared beautiful pictures from the celebration on social media to give fans a peek into their happy moments as they get ready to become parents. The actress expressed immense happiness, describing the traditional function as an absolute dream come true and a highly magical experience for her family.

The Indian entertainment industry and fans across the nation are currently basking in the joyful news surrounding one of television and film's most beloved personalities. Celebrated actress Karishma Tanna recently marked a monumental milestone in her personal life by hosting a deeply traditional and visually spectacular South Indian baby shower ceremony.

Better known contextually across various Indian cultures as a godh bharai, this intimate yet radiant event was organized alongside her husband, businessman Varun Bangera. The gorgeous celebration served as a beautiful testament to the couple's respect for cultural heritage and family traditions as they prepare to embark on the profound journey of parenthood together.

Set against the bustling backdrop of Mumbai, the auspicious event was far from a standard contemporary gathering, choosing instead to anchor itself deeply in authentic regional customs. The ceremony specifically honored the rich, unique traditions of the Tulu community, reflecting Varun Bangera's cultural roots and ancestral heritage. By choosing to follow these specific rituals, the couple brought a deeply personal, sacred, and culturally significant atmosphere to the festivities, highlighting the beautiful blending of families. Every single aspect of the venue was mindfully curated to echo the warmth, spirituality, and timeless elegance inherent to traditional coastal Karnataka customs.

At the very heart of this grand celebration were

the sacred and holy rituals that define the essence of a traditional South Indian baby shower.

The afternoon was filled with the rhythmic chanting of Vedic mantras, the fragrant smoke of holy fire, and solemn prayers dedicated to ensuring the health, well-being, and longevity of both the expectant mother and her unborn child. Eldest family members took turns leading the holy procedures, showering the couple with sacred rice grains, vermilion, and profound words of wisdom. This spiritual grounding transformed the high-profile gathering into a deeply moving, transcendent experience that resonated heavily with everyone present in the room.

The emotional core of the evening was undeniably fueled by the overwhelming outpour of love, support, and blessings from close family members and intimate friends. In traditional Indian households, a godh bharai is fundamentally a celebration of the matriarchy and the continuation of the family lineage, a sentiment that was vibrantly felt throughout this event. Relatives from both sides of the family gathered closely around Karishma, offering heartfelt hugs, wiping away tears of joy, and whispering maternal blessings into her ear. This collective display of familial unity provided a strong, comforting foundation for the couple as they eagerly anticipate the arrival of their firstborn.

Visually, the actress was a vision of timeless grace, capturing the undivided attention of everyone in attendance and later, millions across social media platforms. For her special day, Karishma chose to completely immerse herself in the aesthetic of a classic South Indian bride, bypassing modern maternity gowns in favor of traditional attire. She wore a breath-taking, custom-crafted gold saree that perfectly caught the ambient light of the venue, making her radiate with an unmistakable maternal glow. The choice of attire not only paid direct homage to her husband's cultural background but also elevated the overall visual splendor of the sacred ceremony to entirely new heights.



Filmmaker Vasu Bhagnani Expresses Anger Over Huge Money Loss on Coolie No. 1

Mumbai : Well-known film producer Vasu Bhagnani claimed that he faced a huge financial loss of 27 crore rupees because of the movie Coolie No. 1 and stated that he had no real control over the project. He pointed out that director David Dhawan handled all the production decisions and expenses completely, even though the producer provided a massive budget of nearly 70 crore rupees for the project.

The filmmaker also mentioned that he felt let down by the director regarding a later project called Biwi No. 1. After waiting for months for a script that was never ready, he discovered that the director had secretly started making the project with another company and even used a song without his permission. He expressed sadness over how things turned out but realized he could not stop them from moving forward.

The Hindi film industry is currently witnessing a massive wave of tension following an explosive press conference hosted by veteran film producer Vasu Bhagnani. Speaking to selected media members from Dubai,

the seasoned filmmaker did not hold back as he expressed his profound anger and disappointment over the massive financial setbacks he encountered during a high-profile movie venture.

Bhagnani publicly alleged that he had to personally endure a staggering financial deficit of approximately 27 crore rupees as a direct consequence of backing the 2020 commercial comedy project, Coolie No. 1. The film, which starred Varun Dhawan and Sara Ali Khan, failed to achieve the anticipated financial success, leaving the veteran investor to absorb a heavy financial blow. During his candid interaction with the media, the producer revealed that he felt completely sidelined during the entire creation of the movie, describing his position as that of a mere namesake producer. He pointed out that he exercised virtually no active executive control or creative oversight over the daily production operations, budgeting, or logistical execution. Instead, the filmmaker claimed that the reins of the project were held entirely by the film's director,

David Dhawan. According to Bhagnani, the director took full command of all production-related choices and allocated expenses entirely at his own discretion, leaving the financing production house in a highly vulnerable financial position. What seems to aggravate the veteran producer's frustration further is the immense amount of money he willingly pumped into the project despite his lack of functional authority. Bhagnani stated that he provided a massive, unconditional production budget of nearly 70 crore rupees to ensure that the director had every single resource necessary to create a modern-day cinematic blockbuster. He candidly remarked that this exorbitant amount was far above the standard market valuation for the director at that time, making the subsequent financial failure even harder to process. The producer expressed deep regret over trusting the creative team with such an immense portion of his company's wealth without maintaining strict checks and balances over the spending. The fallout from this specific project appears

to have caused long-term damage to the professional and personal relationship between the veteran producer and the director's family. Bhagnani openly shared his deep-seated feelings of emotional betrayal, noting that neither David Dhawan nor the film's leading man, Varun Dhawan, showed the basic courtesy to reach out or check on his well-being after the massive 27 crore rupee loss was officially realized. He lamented the fact that despite his decades of support and willingness to finance major projects for them, he was met with total silence and indifference once the financial chips were down. The underlying bitterness regarding the financial deficit has now trickled down into a fresh, highly intense legal battle centered around another iconic cinematic property from their shared past. Bhagnani explained that during the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic, David Dhawan had explicitly reassured him that they would collaboratively recoup the heavy financial losses of Coolie No. 1 by launching a brand-new project.

Randeep Hooda Explains Why He Refused a Major Role in the Hit Movie Chhaava

Mumbai : Talented actor Randeep Hooda shared that he turned down the chance to play the historic ruler Aurangzeb in the successful film Chhaava, a role that was later given to actor Akshay Khanna. The movie, which tells the life story of the Maratha ruler Sambhaji, became a massive box office hit and one of the highest-earning movies in Hindi cinema. However, the actor decided not to join the project because he felt the storyline contained too many sensitive religious themes that he did not want to get involved with at that time.

He also explained that when the director approached him for the film, he was not in the right space physically or mentally. He had just finished filming another project where he had to lose a lot of weight and shave his head. Dealing with an ongoing legal court case and legal stress made him choose a different film project instead.

The Indian film industry is currently abuzz with insightful revelations from one of its most versatile contemporary performers. Renowned for his deep

commitment to character immersion and intense dramatic roles, actor Randeep Hooda recently shed light on a major career decision that has caught the attention of film enthusiasts and trade analysts alike. The actor candidly discussed the specific reasons behind his choice to pass on a high-profile role in the critically acclaimed historical epic Chhaava. The project, directed by Laxman Utekar, went on to become an monumental success at the box office, making it one of the highest-grossing films in recent Hindi cinema his-

tory and earning widespread praise for its scale and performances.

The specific character offered to Randeep was none other than the formidable Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, a pivotal and highly demanding antagonist role in the narrative. Following his decline, the challenging character was eventually portrayed by veteran actor Akshay Khanna, who received immense critical acclaim for his sharp and menacing interpretation on screen. The biographical drama, which intricately charts the hero-

ic life, battles, and legacy of the courageous Maratha ruler Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, struck a deeply resonant chord with audiences across the country. However, despite the massive scale and undeniable creative potential of the project, Randeep chose to step away due to a complex mixture of professional timing, mental headspace, and thematic caution.

Central to his decision-making process was a deliberate choice regarding the underlying cultural and historical themes woven into the script's narrative fabric. While the number reflects a steady stream of dedicated fans heading to the theaters, it ultimately fell short of the robust double-digit or mid-level openings that trade analysts usually project for widely promoted metropolitan releases. Entertainment business experts and trade analysts view these initial collection numbers as noticeably low for a film backed by such an established production house and extensive promotional campaign. In the competitive landscape of modern cinema, a major studio release is generally expected to command a stronger grip on its opening day, especially when targeting a prime youth demographic. The opening figure of 2.90 crore rupees suggests that the film will now need to rely heavily on incredibly strong word-of-mouth to recover its momentum. Cinema industry experts, trade pundits, and theater exhibitors are now closely monitoring the weekend box office numbers to determine the project's long-term financial trajectory. The subsequent Saturday and Sunday performance is considered absolutely critical for the survival of the film, as it will reveal whether a broader audience base will visit the theaters in the coming days.



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Actor Aayush Sharma Faces Mixed Reactions After Posting Gym Videos of His Kids

Mumbai : Bollywood actor Aayush Sharma, who is married to Salman Khan's sister, created a big discussion online after posting videos of his young children, Ahil and Ayat, working out at the gym with him. While many social media users loved the sweet bonding moments between the father and his children, others questioned whether it is safe for such young kids to exercise in a gym environment. Health experts mention that staying active is excellent for kids, but heavy weight training must be done carefully according to their age and with adult supervision.

In the popular videos, the actor acts as a friendly trainer for his children, guiding them through basic exercises and active games to promote a healthy lifestyle early in life. He wrote a caption online encouraging parents to teach children healthy habits when they are young so they can grow up wise and strong. The clips show the energetic children following their father's guidance closely while he leads the workout routine.

Bollywood actor Aayush Sharma, widely known within the Indian entertainment circuit and married to superstar Salman Khan's sister Arpita Khan, recently found himself at the center of a lively and extensive on-



line debate. The discussion was ignited after the actor took to his official social media handles to share a series of videos documenting his young children, Ahil and Ayat, spending active time with him inside a gym environment. The candid clips, which quickly captured the attention of both fans and critics, showcased the young family members engaging in various physical routines, generating a widespread conversation regarding parenting styles and modern lifestyle choices in the public eye.

As soon as the videos were uploaded across multiple digital platforms, they immediately triggered a deeply divided wave of reactions from a massive au-

dience base. On one side of the digital spectrum, a large number of social media users thoroughly loved the video snippets, praising the sweet, authentic bonding moments being shared between the dotting father and his energetic children. Fans of the actor pointed out that in an era increasingly dominated by screen time and digital distractions, seeing young children actively involved in physical movement alongside their parent was incredibly refreshing and commendable.

Conversely, the public post also invited a notable amount of skepticism and concern from other sections of the online community, who openly questioned the

appropriateness of the setting. Many protective netizens and concerned parents raised questions regarding whether it is entirely safe or medically advisable for such young, developing children to spend time exercising within a formalized gym environment. Critics expressed worry that exposure to heavy workout culture at such an impressionable age could place undue pressure on their fragile bodies, sparking a broader dialogue about the fine line between encouraging health and overexerting children.

The viral conversation eventually drew insights from fitness experts and pediatric health professionals, who offered a balanced, sci-

ence-backed perspective on the matter of early childhood exercise. Medical experts generally agree that staying physically active, developing motor skills, and participating in regular movement are absolutely excellent and necessary habits for growing kids. However, they strongly emphasize that rigorous training routines, especially heavy weight training or the premature use of complex fitness machinery, must be approached with extreme caution, tailored strictly to the child's specific age bracket, and conducted under constant, certified adult supervision to prevent any physical injuries.

In the highly popular videos shared by the actor, Aayush deliberately assumes the role of a supportive, friendly, and playful personal trainer for his enthusiastic little ones. Rather than subjecting them to standard adult workout regimens, he is seen carefully guiding them through a series of basic bodyweight exercises, stretching routines, and highly active agility games. The creative approach was clearly designed to seamlessly transform physical fitness into an engaging, joyful game, thereby promoting the foundational pillars of a healthy, active lifestyle from a very early phase in their lives.

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan Stuns in Beautiful Blue Gown at Cannes Fashion Event

Cannes : Top Indian star Aishwarya Rai Bachchan amazed fashion lovers at the Cannes Film Festival with a dramatic midnight-blue designer dress that reminded everyone of a style she wore twenty years ago. Her latest appearance featured a futuristic blue gown made by designer Amit Aggarwal, paired with a unique necklace shaped like a snake. This immediately made fans remember her legendary 2006 appearance at the same festival, where she wore a similar dark blue dress with a famous diamond snake choker.

Back in 2006, her elegant strapless gown designed by Elie Saab became one of the most talked-about fashion moments in the history of the festival. Her recent fashion choice brought back wonderful memories for fans, who quickly noticed how she brought back the iconic sapphire tones and bold jewelry style with a global twist.

The modern fashion arena and cinema enthusiasts are currently celebrating the return of an international icon to the famous French Riviera. Top Indian superstar Aishwarya Rai Bachchan completely captivated attendees and fashion critics alike at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival with a dramatic, jaw-dropping midnight-blue designer dress. Her arrival on the world stage instantly commanded the spotlight, ef-

fectively reminding everyone of her unparalleled legacy as a global brand ambassador and a true queen of the festival's red carpet. The spectacular appearance has quickly become one of the most talked-about events of the season, generating immense excitement across major international media outlets. The spectacular fashion presentation featured a highly futuristic, sculptural blue gown meticulously crafted by the visionary Indian designer Amit Aggarwal.

Titled "Luminara," the custom couture piece was built around the fascinating creative concept of capturing light in motion, translating illumination into a tangible force through engineered craftsmanship and structural design. The avant-garde outfit featured dramatic, wing-like structures emerging boldly from the shoulders, giving the ensemble an architectural sharpness that perfectly contoured her silhouette. The deep abyss-blue hue of the fabric was chosen intentionally to evoke cosmic depth and the infinite beauty of light traveling through space, making the actress look incredibly ethereal.

At the very core of this masterpiece was the designer's signature Crystal Vein embroidery technique, a painstaking process that reportedly required over 1,500 hours of meticulous hand-

work to complete. Thousands of crystalline linear embellishments were individually placed by hand across the garment to form an intricate, lattice-like structure that seamlessly bound the design together.

This advanced tailoring allowed the fabric to interact dynamically with the flashbulbs of the paparazzi, refracting light continuously to create the visual effect of glowing pathways moving across her body. The sheer technical dedication behind the dress elevated it from a mere garment into a living piece of wearable modern art.

To complete the dramatic ensemble, the actress wore a stunning, statement-making necklace that featured intricate craftsmanship with shimmering blue stones. The unique, high-end jewelry choice immediately caught the eye of onlookers and photographers, adding a perfect touch of royal sophistication to her plunging neckline. She paired the necklace with matching statement rings and chose a sophisticated hair aesthetic, letting her long waves fall open with rich burgundy tones and a classic side sweep.

Her makeup leaned into a soft, old-Hollywood glam space, utilizing a glowing base, sharply defined winged eyeliner, and a muted pinkish lipstick that let the gown do the talking.

SPORTS

Aryan Age | 07

Pat Cummins Appreciates Team Bowlers After a Major Victory Against Bengaluru

Mumbai: Sunrisers Hyderabad achieved a dominant 55-run victory over Royal Challengers Bengaluru in their final league match of the cricket season, leaving team captain Pat Cummins highly pleased with the performance. During the media interaction after the game, the captain praised his batsmen for setting a massive target and complimented his bowlers for executing their plans perfectly on a very good batting pitch. Even though Bengaluru tried their best to chase down the big score, Hyderabad used clever bowling changes to secure the massive win.

Although the captain himself gave away many runs and could not take any wickets during this particular match, he made sure to highly praise the rest of his bowling unit. He specifically highlighted the brilliant efforts of Sri Lankan bowler Eshan Malinga and a talented young Indian fast bowler named Sakib Hussain. Even though Bengaluru lost this match, they still finished at the top of the tournament table with 18 points, while Hyderabad finished in third place and will now move on to play the upcoming knockout match in New Chandigarh.



The domestic cricketing landscape witnessed an absolute masterclass of high-octane entertainment as Sunrisers Hyderabad locked horns with Royal Challengers Bengaluru at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium. The highly anticipated encounter, which served as the final league match of the season for both franchise heavyweights, lived up to its immense pre-game billing by delivering a spectacle filled with batting fireworks and clinical execution. Emerging from a sequence

of intensely contested matches, the Hyderabad squad stepped onto their home turf with a clear mandate to assert dominance and build vital momentum ahead of the high-stakes knockout stages. The electric atmosphere in the stands perfectly mirrored the urgency on the pitch, setting the stage for a classic encounter.

From the moment the coin landed in favor of Sunrisers Hyderabad, captain Pat Cummins made a decisive statement of intent by electing to bat first on a sur-

face that resembled a pristine highway. The decision paid immediate dividends as the Hyderabad opening combination launched a relentless, calculated assault on the Bengaluru bowling attack right from the Powerplay overs. Displaying a breathtaking array of modern cricketing shots, the top-order batsmen systematically dismantled the opposition's field placements, sending the ball sailing into the stands with remarkable consistency. The calculated aggression at the top of the order

laid an incredibly solid foundation, allowing the middle-order enforcers to maintain a relentless scoring rate throughout the initial phase.

The primary architect of this monumental batting display was explosive opener Ishan Kishan, who put on a spectacular exhibition of clean hitting to completely paralyze the Bengaluru bowling strategy. Walking off the field with a phenomenal 79 runs off just 46 deliveries, the dynamic left-hander showcased exactly why he is considered one of the most destructive forces in modern short-format cricket. His innings was beautifully punctuated by eight crisp boundaries and three towering sixes, forcing the opposition captain to continuously alter his field layouts in a desperate bid to stem the flow of runs. Kishan's ability to seamlessly anchor the innings while simultaneously accelerating the scoring rate provided his teammates with the ultimate cushion to play with absolute freedom.

Complementing Kishan's brilliance was the young sensation Abhishek Sharma, who provided an absolute lightning-fast start at the opposite end by blasting a fiery 56 runs off a mere 22 balls.

Exciting Mixed Martial Arts Matches Thrill the Audience in Mumbai

Mumbai: The ISF Amateur MMA Fight Night brought great excitement to a lively crowd of spectators during an event held in Borivali. The sports evening served as an important platform for upcoming local fighters to show off their physical strength, competitive spirit, and technical martial arts skills inside the cage. The opening fights set a very high energy for the rest of the night as the athletes competed fiercely.

In the initial matches, Neeraj Vishwakarma displayed a very disciplined and controlled performance to win his bout against Sushrut R. Salunkhe, which was quickly followed by Jashraj Gohil earning a victory over Atharve Tiwade using clever movements. Another highly competitive fight saw Akash Kharde defeat Nafes Shaikh by taking advantage of key moments in the ring. The exciting night came to a close with a fantastic final match where Sumit V. Kolekar defeated Harsh Singh, ending the sports event on a high note amid massive cheers from the crowd.

The Indian mixed martial arts landscape continues to witness a steady rise in popularity, providing an essential platform for grassroots talent to develop their skills. The recent ISF Ama-

teur MMA Fight Night, hosted in the bustling suburb of Borivali, Mumbai, served as a prime example of this growth, drawing a dedicated audience of martial arts enthusiasts.

The evening was designed to showcase the technical proficiency, physical conditioning, and competitive spirit of up-and-coming local athletes who are aiming to make their mark in the sport. Events of this nature are becoming increasingly crucial for establishing a structured pathway for amateur martial artists in the region.

The fight card kicked off with an energetic atmosphere, as the opening bouts set a highly competitive tone for the rest of the night. In the early matchups, the fighters demonstrated a strong understanding of fundamental disciplines, combining striking techniques with grappling and cage control.

The audience was treated to a display of tactical awareness as each athlete attempted to impose their preferred style of combat. These initial contests highlighted the rigorous training regimens that local academies are implementing to prepare their students for organized competition.

Among the standout performances of the preliminary

card, Neeraj Vishwakarma secured a well-earned victory over his opponent, Sushrut R. Salunkhe. Vishwakarma's approach was characterized by a highly disciplined defensive guard and measured counter-striking, which allowed him to control the distance and tempo of the bout. By refusing to rush into dangerous exchanges, he systematically accumulated points across the rounds, neutralizing Salunkhe's offensive bursts. The judges ultimately rewarded his tactical composure and precision, marking a successful outing for the young martial artist.

The momentum continued into the subsequent matchups, where Jashraj Gohil faced off against Atharve Tiwade in a contest that tested both fighters' agility and footwork. Gohil managed to distinguish himself by utilizing clever lateral movements and quick feints to create openings in his opponent's defense.

This fluid movement pattern made it difficult for Tiwade to establish a consistent rhythm or land clean combinations. Gohil's ability to slip strikes and immediately respond with accurate counters allowed him to walk away with a clear victory, earning praise for his ring generalship.

Major National Chess Tournament Begins with Top Players in Mumbai

Mumbai: The exciting fourth season of the All India Chess Masters has officially started at the Russian Centre for Science and Culture located on Pedder Road. This special classical chess tournament is recognized by the international chess federation and is scheduled to run for several days until May 28. Organized by the Mumbai Chess Centre, the competition follows a strict eight-round setup where players get 90 minutes each, along with an extra 30 seconds added for every single move they make.

The competitive event features some of the highest-rated chess players in the country, with Shreyansh Somaiya leading as the top-seeded player, followed closely by other talented competitors like Aditya Shardul Kadam, Reyaansh Venkat, Gaurang Bhandari, and Yash Kapadi. This championship has successfully brought together a great mix of highly experienced players and enthusiastic young talents from different states, proving that the popularity of competitive chess is growing rapidly across India.

The domestic chess

landscape in India continues to witness a spectacular era of growth, a phenomenon vividly illustrated by the launch of a highly prestigious intellectual battle in the financial capital. The exciting fourth season of the All India Chess Masters has officially commenced its itinerary, turning the focus of the national chess community directly toward South Mumbai. Hosted at the iconic Russian Centre for Science and Culture situated on the bustling Pedder Road, the venue has transformed into an arena of intense mental warfare. The tournament stands as a crucial fixture in the domestic circuit, drawing a massive amount of attention from grandmasters, enthusiasts, and media representatives who track the strategic evolution of the sport.

This special classical chess tournament is fully recognized and rated by the International Chess Federation, providing the participating athletes with a valuable opportunity to improve their official global standing and accumulate crucial rating points. The multi-day championship is scheduled

to run for several consecutive days of intense competition, with the grand finale and prize distribution set to take place on May 28. Because every single match directly impacts international rankings, the atmosphere inside the playing hall remains incredibly solemn and focused. The event stands as a testament to the structured development of classical chess, which requires a profound level of patience and endurance compared to shorter formats. The flawless execution of this major national event is handled by the Mumbai Chess Centre, an organization that has earned a stellar reputation for fostering competitive excellence and managing high-stakes tournaments. In alignment with international standards, the organizers have structured the competition around a strict and demanding eight-round setup, utilizing the Swiss-system format to ensure fair and competitive pairings across the days. This rigorous layout ensures that every player must maintain their absolute peak mental concentration over a prolonged period, as a single tactical miscalculation in

any round can completely derail their chances of securing the championship trophy.

To ensure the matches reflect the highest standards of deep strategic planning, the tournament utilizes a classic, demanding time control matrix for every game. Each player is allocated a base time of 90 minutes to complete all their moves, providing ample opportunity for deep calculation, positional maneuvering, and complex endgame planning. Furthermore, the modern digital chess clocks are programmed with an extra 30-second increment added automatically for every single move made from the very start of the game. This incremental setup prevents players from losing purely due to time panic during intense endgame scrambles, ensuring that pure merit and tactical superiority decide the ultimate outcome.

The competitive lineup for this fourth edition features some of the highest-rated and most formidable chess minds in the country, raising the overall standard of the competition to elite levels.

Indian Women's Cricket Team Heads to England for the World Cup Tournament

Mumbai: The Indian women's cricket team was recently seen at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport as they boarded their flight to the United Kingdom. The team is traveling to play a series against England, which will serve as their final preparation before the major ICC Women's T20 World Cup starts on June 12. The grand tournament is being organized by the England and Wales Cricket Board.

The official squad for this important tour was selected earlier in the month during a special meeting at the cricket headquarters, which included team captain Harmanpreet Kaur and head coach Amol Muzumdar. Before the main tournament begins, the Indian team will play three T20 matches against England from late May to early June, followed by official warm-up games starting on June 6. India faces a challenging road ahead in the tournament, as they have been placed in a tough competitive group alongside strong teams like Australia, South Africa, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the Netherlands.



The excitement surrounding women's cricket has reached an all-time high as the highly anticipated summer season officially kicks into gear on European soil. In a major logistical and competitive milestone, the Indian women's cricket team was recently spotted navigating the terminal gates at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport in Mumbai. Dressed in their official travel blazers and carrying the immense hopes of a cricket-crazy nation, the elite athletes boarded their long-haul flight destined for the United Kingdom. This high-profile departure marks

the initiation of a grueling, multi-month campaign that will test the physical and mental limits of the country's finest cricketing talents as they seek global glory.

The immediate purpose of this extensive overseas journey is to participate in a highly competitive bilateral white-ball series against a formidable England side on their home turf.

This upcoming bilateral contest is widely considered to be an absolute necessity, serving as the definitive final preparation matrix for the Indian squad before the pressures of the big stage take over. By playing in local

conditions ahead of time, the team management hopes to acclimate the players to the unique weather variables, outfield speeds, and pitches characteristic of the British Isles. Facing a top-tier opponent like England in their backyard provides the ultimate trial by fire for both seasoned veterans and newly integrated domestic prodigies.

All of this intense physical preparation is strategically pointed toward a singular monumental goal, which is the fast-approaching ICC Women's T20 World Cup, scheduled to officially commence on June 12.

Indian Railways Wins the Intense National Kabaddi Championship Title

Vadodara: The grand finale of the 72nd Senior National Kabaddi Championship concluded with high energy and dramatic matches as the best teams in the country competed for the top prize. In the first intense semi-final match, the team from Maharashtra showed great control and a solid defense to comfortably defeat Uttar Pradesh with a final score of 49 to 36. Maharashtra kept a steady lead throughout the entire game to earn their well-deserved spot in the final round. The second semi-final match between Indian Railways and Chandigarh became the most dramatic game of the tournament, ending in a perfect tie during regular time. The winner had to be decided through special extra raids, where Indian Railways managed to stay calm under immense pressure and narrowly won the tie-breaker. In the final match, Indian Railways put on a magnificent display of teamwork and powerful moves to defeat Maharashtra by 49 to 31, officially making them the new national champions of the tournament.

The domestic sports landscape in India recently bore witness to an incredibly



thrilling chapter as the grand finale of the prestigious 72nd Senior National Men's Kabaddi Championship officially concluded. The highly anticipated tournament, which brought together the absolute finest athletic talent from across the country, wrapped up its itinerary amidst an atmosphere of electric energy and high-stakes drama. Held at the

state-of-the-art Sama Indoor Complex located in the vibrant city of Vadodra, Gujarat, the multi-day sports event served as a true battleground where established veterans and hungry young prospects collided for the ultimate domestic crown. Every single fixture leading up to the final day added to the mounting excitement, keeping sports enthusiasts thoroughly glued

to the action. The final phase of the championship featured a spectacular lineup of top-tier teams, each having navigated a grueling series of group stages and highly competitive knockout matches to earn their place. Among the standout squads, the powerhouse teams representing Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh, and the formidable institutional side of the

Indian Railways managed to outlast their competitors to book their slots in the semi-final stage. The sheer concentration of star power on the mats ensured that the concluding matches would be nothing short of legendary, with multiple Pro Kabaddi League icons stepping up to represent their respective states and organizations. Fans packed the indoor stadium to maximum capacity, eagerly anticipating a masterclass in tactical raiding and robust defensive maneuvers. The competitive action on the final day kicked off with the first intense semi-final match, which pitted a heavily favored Maharashtra squad against a highly resilient and dangerous team from Uttar Pradesh. From the very moment the opening whistle blew, the athletes from Maharashtra demonstrated an exceptional level of mat control, dictating the overall pace and tempo of the game with absolute authority. Their raiding department fired on all cylinders, consistently breaking through the opposition's lines, while their defensive unit formed an impenetrable wall that left very little room for Uttar Pradesh's attackers to exploit.

This year, the event is doing something even more wonderful by inviting over 200 children with special needs, including 100 visually impaired students from the National Association for the Blind who will be accompanied by hearing buddies. Legendary cricket star Sachin Tendulkar spoke about the upcoming match, saying that playing in front of a stadium completely filled with cheering children is a deeply emotional experience that brings an incredible and unique energy to the players.

Wankhede Stadium to Welcome 20,000 Children for a Special Cricket Match

Mumbai: The famous Wankhede Stadium is getting ready to host a very special event this Sunday during the cricket match between Mumbai Indians and Rajasthan Royals. Through the Education and Sports for All initiative, which is run by the Reliance Foundation and led by Nita Ambani, more than 20,000 underprivileged children will get to watch the game live from the stands. These young fans are coming from various simple back-grounds, tribal areas, and small villages across Maharashtra and Gujarat, creating a beautiful message of hope and bringing people together through sports.

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Huge logistical planning has been put in place to make

sure all the children travel safely and enjoy a memorable day celebrating education and sports. The domestic cricketing calendar is gearing up for an emotionally charged and socially impactful spectacle at the iconic Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.

The historic venue is preparing to open its gates for a highly distinct initiative during the upcoming marquee clash between the Mumbai Indians and the Rajasthan Royals. Under the structural framework of the Education and Sports for All initiative, a massive crowd of more than 20,000 underprivileged children will fill the stands to watch the elite athletes compete live on the field.

This massive gathering is designed to use the profound popularity of franchise cricket to create a memorable, inspiring experience for youths who rarely get to witness such grand spectacles in person.

The sweeping community outreach program operates under the dedicated stewardship of the Reliance Foundation, an organization long championed by its visionary leader, Nita Ambani. For several consecutive seasons, the foundation has leveraged high-profile sports fixtures to advocate for holistic child development, equal educational

access, and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle among marginalized communities. By dedicating an entire stadium layout to young students, the initiative seeks to transcend the traditional commercial boundaries of modern sport, converting a standard league match into a profound vehicle for social inclusion.

The leadership group views this annual stadium takeover as a core component of their long-term philanthropic roadmap. The demographic profile of the young spectators traveling to South Mumbai reflects an incredibly diverse and extensive logistical network spanning multiple regions.

The invited children originate from simple socioeconomic backgrounds, remote tribal hamlets, and far-flung rural villages situated across the expansive territories of Maharashtra and Gujarat. For the vast majority of these rural students, traveling to a bustling metropolis like Mumbai and entering a world-class sporting facility represents an absolute first-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Bringing these geographically separated communities together under a unified sporting banner sends a powerful, beautiful message of national unity, collective hope, and shared joy.

Piyush Goyal to lead business delegation to Canada to boost trade, CEPA talks

New Delhi : Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will lead a senior Indian business delegation to Canada to strengthen bilateral trade, investment flows, and strategic cooperation across key sectors, while giving renewed momentum to ongoing Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) negotiations.

The engagements are scheduled in Ottawa on May 25 and a two-day programme in Toronto from May 26-27, a Commerce Ministry statement said here on Saturday.

The visit carries forward the mandate given by PM Modi and his Canadian counterpart during PM Mark Carney's visit to India in March 2026, and seeks to impart renewed momentum to bilateral engagement



across trade, investment, energy, technology, and people-to-people ties.

A central focus of the discussions is the India-Canada CEPA. The Terms of Reference for the agree-

ment were signed during the March 2026 leadership meetings, followed by two negotiation rounds, first held virtually in March and the second concluded on May 8, 2026. During this visit, a

further round of negotiations will be conducted in Ottawa from May 25 to 29, the statement said.

Both sides are working towards an early conclusion of a balanced and mutually

beneficial CEPA by end of 2026, with a shared ambition to expand bilateral trade to CAD 70 billion (approximately INR 4.65 lakh crore) by 2030. Bilateral trade stands at USD 8.5 billion in FY25, with significant potential for expansion across sectors.

The delegation will engage with Canadian counterparts on multiple sectors, including technology, artificial intelligence (AI), clean energy, critical minerals, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, aerospace and defence and food-processing and agritech.

In these areas, India and Canada possess highly complementary strengths and opportunities for joint investment, research and development (R&D), and supply chain partnerships are important.

Oben Electric plans 25 Telangana showrooms by FY27 as Hyderabad tops Rorr Evo bookings

Hyderabad : Oben Electric, on Friday announced plans to expand its footprint across Telangana with 25 showrooms by the end of FY27, driven by strong demand for its newly launched Rorr Evo electric motorcycle. The Bengaluru-based company said Hyderabad has emerged as the highest booking market in the country for the Rorr Evo since its launch on April 30, 2026, and is expected to contribute nearly 10 percent of the model's nationwide sales. As part of the expansion drive, Oben Electric showcased the Rorr Evo in Hyderabad on Friday.

The company currently operates five showrooms in Telangana located at Kondapur, Warangal, Secunderabad, Karimnagar and RC Puram. The company said the Rorr Evo has received over 25,000 bookings within 15 days of launch, making it one of the fastest-selling electric motorcycles in the country.

Speaking on the occasion, Harshvardhan Deshmukh, Vice President (Sales and Network Development), Oben Electric, said the motorcycle is being offered at an introductory price of ₹99,999 (ex-showroom) for the first 10,000 customers, after which it will be priced at ₹1,24,999. The model is available in four colours. Deliveries are scheduled to commence from June 2026, while the online booking portal remains open for customers to

avail the introductory pricing, he said.

The motorcycle is powered by a proprietary IPMSM motor delivering 9 kW peak power and 250 Nm of wheel torque. It features a 3.4 kWh LFP battery with an IDC-certified range of 180 km, acceleration from 0 to 40 kmph in three seconds and a top speed of 110 kmph. Additional features include fast charging from 0 to 80 per cent in 90 minutes, an eight-year battery warranty, a 5-inch TFT display, OTA software updates, navigation, geo-fencing, remote immobilisation and emergency SOS support. Deshmukh said the company has raised close to ₹300 crore so far and plans to raise another funding round under Series B during Q2 FY27. He said Oben Electric operates a vertically integrated 3.5-acre manufacturing facility in Bengaluru with an annual production capacity of one lakh units, where it manufactures motors, batteries and electronic management systems in-house. The company claimed its products have achieved 99 per cent localisation and highlighted its use of LFP battery technology aimed at improving safety, durability and operational efficiency in electric two-wheelers.

Deshmukh said motorcycles account for nearly 68 per cent of India's two-wheeler market, underlining the country's strong long-term demand for performance-oriented motorcycles.

JSW Paints unveils its protection-led campaign with JSW Halo

Mumbai : JSW Paints today unveiled its new campaign for JSW Halo, its luxury paint portfolio powered by Advanced Defense™ technology. The launch signals the brand's evolving vision for modern homes — from paints that not only beautify homes but also actively protect them, enabling consumers to live more freely and confidently.

Today's homes are more dynamic than ever — spac-

es that constantly adapt to work, family, celebrations and self-expression. Consumers today seek solutions that not only elevate aesthetics but also protect their homes from germs, stains, dirt and everyday wear.

Built on this insight, JSW Paints introduces its new protection-led platform, "Suraksha ke Sang Jiyo Apne Rang," reimagining paint as an invisible enabler that empowers people

to live freely within their homes.

At the heart of the platform is JSW Halo with Advanced Defense™ technology, combining luxury aesthetics with protection against 40 different types of germs to help create healthier, more beautiful living spaces. By seamlessly blending beautification with protection, JSW Halo redefines the role of paint for the modern Indian home.

The campaign film captures this philosophy through intimate, playful and beautifully imperfect moments of everyday life.

Speaking on the launch, Mr. Rohit Talwar, CMO, JSW Decorative Paints, said: "People want to live freely in their homes without constantly worrying about maintaining them. JSW Halo with Advanced Defense™ transforms paint from being a passive back-

drop into an active enabler of everyday living. This campaign reframes protection as a source of confidence - empowering more expressive, carefree and uninhibited living."

Russell Barrett Chief Creative Experience Officer - TBWA Lintas said "Most paint brands talk about walls. We chose to talk about the people between them. That's the disruption. When you feel truly safe,

you let your guard down. While life gets messy, playful and gloriously imperfect, JSW Paints keeps its guard up. Protecting homes from germs, fading, scuffs and everyday chaos."

With this launch, JSW Paints is redefining what paint means in consumers' lives, moving beyond aesthetics to create solutions that beautify, protect and enable people to live life to the fullest. Through JSW

Halo and its wider protection-led portfolio, the brand is shaping a more progressive and future-ready narrative for the category. Timed with the Indian Premier League season, the integrated campaign will be amplified across With this launch, JSW Paints is redefining what paint means in consumers' lives, moving beyond aesthetics to create solutions that beautify, protect and enable people to

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'We have many shared interests': Rubio highlights growing India-US convergence

Washington : US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Saturday underlined the strengthening ties between India and the United States, saying the two countries are closely connected through common democratic values and strategic interests.

In an interview with CNN-News18, Rubio said cooperation between New Delhi and Washington has continued to expand, especially under the Q u a d

framework. He noted that India is playing an increasingly important role on the global stage and will host the upcoming Quad foreign ministers' meeting in Delhi. Rubio, who arrived in India for a four-day visit, said the Quad remains a crucial platform for regional cooperation. He pointed out that the first major meeting he chaired as Secretary of State was also a Quad meeting, reflecting the importance Washington places on the grouping. According to him, India and the

US are working together on several regional and strategic matters due to their many shared priorities. Addressing an event at the US Embassy Support Annex in New Delhi, Rubio also praised the strong equation between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump.

He said the relationship between the two leaders began during Trump's first term and has continued to grow stronger during his second tenure. Rubio described both leaders as focused on long-term goals and said their personal understanding has helped strengthen bilateral relations. He added that while many developments may not always attract public attention, cooperation between the two countries has steadily expanded in meaningful and lasting ways over the past year.

Highlighting economic ties, Rubio said Indian companies have invested over \$20 billion in the United States, further deepening commercial engagement between the two nations. His remarks come as India and the US continue to enhance cooperation in areas such as trade, technology, investment and security.

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Ammann India Launches CPB36 Concrete Boom Pump Under Ammann Elba Brand

Mumbai : Construction equipment manufacturer Ammann India has launched the CPB36 truck mounted concrete boom pump under its Ammann Elba brand, marking the company's entry into the concrete boom pump segment in India.

Manufactured at the company's Gujarat facility, the CPB36 has been developed for Indian construction conditions and is aimed at infrastructure, industrial, commercial and residential projects. The equipment offers a vertical reach of 35.8 metres, horizontal reach of 32 metres and a maximum theoretical output of 100 cubic metres per hour.

Ammann India Managing Director Dheeraj Panda said the launch reflects the company's focus on bringing advanced concrete equipment solutions tailored for Indian jobsite requirements, helping con-



* Launch marks Ammann India's entry into the concrete boom pump segment, expands its concrete equipment portfolio
* CPB36 Truck Mounted Concrete Boom Pump with proven Elba European engineering

tractors improve productivity and reduce operational costs.

The CPB36 features a four-arm roll fold boom, intelligent PowerSense con-

rol system for fuel efficiency, IP68-rated wireless remote controls, X-frame outrigger system for compact urban sites and IoT-enabled telematics with re-

mote diagnostics support. The company said the pump is now commercially available through its nationwide network of 23 sales and service offices.

Declining FII ownership relates to India's evolving weight in MSCI emerging markets index of past years: N ArunaGiri

New Delhi : N ArunaGiri, CEO of TrustLine Holdings, said that to understand the sharp decline in Foreign Institutional Investor (FII) ownership, one has to look at the broader context and how India's weight has evolved in MSCI emerging markets in previous years.

ArunaGiri said that FII ownership in Indian-listed equities has fallen to a 14-year low of around 14.7 percent, compared with the 18 percent level seen a few years ago. But simultaneously, India's

weight in the MSCI emerging market index has declined from over 20 percent about two years ago to 12 percent (plus) currently.

The 'MSCI emerging market index' is the premier financial benchmark that measures the equity market performance of large- and mid-cap companies across 24 developing nations.

"Seen in the backdrop, the fall in FII ownership in blue-chip stock appears to be less about a shift from large blue-chip stocks to the broader market within India and more a

consequence of larger global allocation trade by foreign investors. This is a very important distinction to understand," said ArunaGiri.

He pointed toward the reallocation of FII capital away from India towards markets such as Taiwan and Korea, where compelling AI-led investment narratives emerged (especially semiconductor chip-based).

The changing weights within the MSCI EM index reflect this trend quite clearly, with Taiwan and Korea witnessing a meaning-

ful increase in index weights, even as India's share has steadily declined in the MSCI EM Index.

"With valuations turning increasingly attractive, there are early signs of foreign investors selectively returning to Indian markets, going by positive flows in the last three trading sessions despite worsening geopolitical tensions, currency and oil price pressure points."

India's valuation premium over other emerging markets, which at one point had widened to

nearly 100 percent, has now moderated to around 66percent.

Simultaneously, the rupee trading near all-time lows could also make Indian assets attractive from a currency appreciation perspective over the medium term.

"The recent inflows should therefore not be interpreted as a full-fledged comeback by FIIs, but more as the beginning of a tactical re-entry trade, driven by improving relative valuations and signs that the worst of the selling pressure may already be behind," he added.

Chennai, Kamarajar Ports achieves historic milestone in combined record cargo throughput

Chennai : The Chennai Port Authority and Kamarajar Port Limited (KPL) achieved an unprecedented milestone for the 2025-26 financial year, registering a combined record cargo throughput of 107 million metric tonnes (MMT).

Addressing a press conference here last evening, Chennai Port Authority Chairman S. Viswanathan and KPL Chairperson and Managing Director Irene Cynthia said the Chennai Port individually managed 57.90 MMT, achieving massive growth across its

'4C' categories, including an all-time high container traffic of 1.9 MMT and 204,165 automobile units.

Parallely, KPL handled 49.08 MMT, led robustly by 25.72 MMT of coal and an 18.86% surge in automobile handling to 191,825 units.

They said this phenomenal growth was heavily supported by operational excellence, with KPL completing Capital Dredging Phase VI

at Rs. 440 crore to become 'Cape Compliant'



with an 18-meter draft. Vessel turnaround times also saw stark structural upgrades under the 'One Nation One Port' process, slashing logistics delays and documentation com-

plexities across the EXIM trade ecosystem. Sting that financially the combined operating incomes soared past Rs. 2,400 crores, they said the Chennai Port secured a historical

operating income of Rs. 1,185.01 crore along with its best operating ratio in two decades (55.14%), while KPL generated an outstanding Profit After Tax of Rs. 596.03 crore and an operating ratio of 25.48%.

Demonstrating high commitment to future-readiness, the entities deployed a combined capital expenditure of Rs. 992 crores. Alongside modernization, both ports championed sustainability and social responsibility. Key eco-initiatives in-

cluded multi-megawatt shore-to-ship power infrastructure, STQC GIGW 3.0 website-quality certification for Chennai Port and massive CSR allocations totaling over Rs. 19 crores toward advanced healthcare, education and drinking water facilities.

Looking forward, the ports are scaling infrastructure via mega-projects like the Rs. 1,424-crore Multi-Modal Logistics Park at Mappedu and new DBFOT terminals to drive long-term maritime resilience.

Managing Director D. Ram Reddy said the project is an important step toward India's energy self-reliance. He noted that the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has recently introduced a new IS code allowing blending of up to 8 percent DME with LPG and urged public sector oil marketing companies to support implementation

Balaji Amines also said it is expanding its presence in the EV battery chemicals sector. The company currently produces Dimethyl Carbonate (DMC), used in EV battery electrolytes, with an annual capacity of 15,000 metric tonnes, and has also developed EV battery-grade N-Methyl Pyrrolidone (NMP) solvents for India's upcoming gigascale EV battery projects.