



Aryan Age

The Age of Truth

Year 14, Issue 331 | Delhi, Monday, 1 June 2026 | 8 PAGES | ₹ 2.00



PG 02 Bihar CM Samrat urges people to shun tobacco, build a healthy society

PG 03 BJP's goal is to serve people through good governance: Delhi BJP chief Malhotra



PG 06 Rain Deficit Erased as Heavy Downpours Lashes Punjab and Haryana



PG 07 Gill backs traditional cricket over T20's boundary-hitting obsession



PG 08 IBC strengthened credit discipline, improved recoveries over past decade: NCLAT Chairperson

Mann Ki Baat: PM Modi celebrates sporting breakthroughs, cultural heritage and citizens driving change

New Delhi : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday used the 134th edition of his monthly radio programme Mann Ki Baat to showcase India's growing sporting achievements, celebrate the preservation of its cultural heritage, promote scientific curiosity among youth, and highlight inspiring examples of citizens contributing to nation-building through grassroots initiatives.

Beginning the programme with a focus on India's rising stature in athletics, the Prime Minister lauded athletes who created new national records at the National Senior Athletics Federation Competition held in Ranchi, Jharkhand. The event, which featured nearly 800 participants from across the country, witnessed four national records being broken.

Modi paid special tribute to sprinters Gurindervir Singh and Animesh Kujur, whose performances in the men's 100-metre race attracted national attention after the national record was shattered three times in just two days. During an interaction with the athletes, the Prime Minister described their rivalry as a "jugalbandi" that had pushed both competitors to achieve new heights.

"You both have achieved something remarkable. Together, you have created history," Modi said, noting that healthy competition and mutual encouragement had become the driving force behind their success. Gurindervir Singh, an officer in the Indian Navy and currently India's fastest sprinter, recalled his journey from a middle-class family to becoming the first Indian to run the 100 metres in under 10.1 seconds. He said he was inspired by his father, a former volleyball player, to pursue sprinting despite widespread perceptions that Indians could not excel in the discipline.

"People used to tell me that the 100 metres was not an event for Indians. But



Highlighting India's traditional wisdom in dealing with extreme summer temperatures, Modi spoke about a range of regional beverages including aam panna, lassi, chaas, sattu sherbet, kokum drinks, sol kadhi, panakam, neer mor and bel pana. He said these traditional refreshments reflected India's rich cultural heritage and close connection with local agriculture. The Prime Minister also celebrated the country's love for mangoes, describing varieties such as Alphonso, Kesar, Dasherri, Langra, Chausa, Himsagar and Banganapalli as symbols of India's diversity. He praised mango growers and noted that Indian mangoes were increasingly finding markets around the world. Turning to cultural heritage, Modi recalled his recent visit to the Netherlands, where ancient Chola-era copper plates were formally returned to India. "The rich history and culture of the Chola Empire are a matter of pride for every Indian," he said. The Prime Minister also referred to the discovery of rare copper plate inscriptions in Chhattisgarh under the Gyan Bharatam initiative, saying such findings help enrich understanding of India's ancient governance systems, culture and religious traditions.

my father and I decided we would prove them wrong," Singh said. Animesh Kujur, who hails from Chhattisgarh and now represents Odisha, spoke about his transition from football to athletics and his rise to international competition. He said recent performances had challenged long-standing assumptions about Indian sprinting. "People often said Indians could not run below 10 seconds or even 10.1 seconds. But now we have shown that Indians can do it," Kujur remarked. Encouraging young people to develop an interest in science,

Modi highlighted the growing popularity of astronomy clubs across the country. Referring to initiatives in Bengaluru, Kerala, Rajkot and other regions, he said students were increasingly engaging in observation camps, telescope-building workshops and stargazing programmes.

"Night-time observation of the sky is an extraordinary experience," he said, urging students to visit planetariums and participate in astronomy-related activities during their vacations. Among the inspiring

stories featured in the programme was the rescue of an endangered Gangetic dolphin in Uttar Pradesh. Modi praised the efforts of India's first Ganga Dolphin Rescue Ambulance, which successfully saved the animal after a challenging operation that lasted nearly 13 hours. The Prime Minister also highlighted the work of individuals making meaningful contributions to society at the grassroots level. He spoke about Saji Valasseril of Kerala, whose swimming initiative in Aluva has trained more than 15,000 people, including children with disabilities. The programme was inspired by a tragic boat accident that claimed the lives of several students. "Service does not require vast resources. What is needed is a noble intention and sustained effort," Modi observed. He also praised Akash Gupta of Uttar Pradesh's Basti district for spearheading efforts to clean the polluted Manorama River and raise awareness about environmental conservation. From Goa, he highlighted the work of retired teacher Balakrishna Aiyi, who helped improve access to water through community participation and local initiatives. Another story that drew attention was that of educationist Girija Amma from Tamil Nadu, who inspired students in her network of schools to contribute to the welfare of India's armed forces.

Motivated by a message of service conveyed through Mann Ki Baat, students donated one rupee each day and collectively raised nearly Rs 40 lakh for soldiers. Modi said the initiative demonstrated how small acts of patriotism and collective participation could instil a strong spirit of national service among young people. Wrapping up the programme, the Prime Minister said countless inspiring stories emerge daily from villages, towns and cities across the country, often without attracting public attention.

Japan fires back at China's 'new militarism' label, warns of Opaque military buildup

Singapore/New Delhi : Japan's Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi took the stage at the Shangri-La Dialogue on Sunday and delivered one of Tokyo's most pointed responses yet to Beijing, rejecting accusations of "new militarism" and turning the lens squarely on China's own military expansion, which he called a matter of "serious concern" for the entire region.

Speaking at the forum's 5th Plenary Session on "Managing Regional Tensions Amid Global Competition," Koizumi framed Japan's defence modernisation not as a deviation from its post-war pacifism but as a responsible, transparent update required by an increasingly dangerous environment— one shaped, in large part, by China's growing arsenal.

"There is a country that has a huge arsenal of nuclear weapons and strategic bombers. Japan has neither of these weapons. And yet Japan is labelled 'new militarism.' Isn't it strange?" Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi said.

The remark drew immediate attention in the room. It was a deliberate inversion of Beijing's framing, one that has grown louder in recent months as Japan has expanded its defence budget for a 12th consecutive year, with its latest allocation exceeding 9 trillion yen (approximately \$57 billion), pushing toward a target of 2 per cent of GDP.



China's defence ministry had earlier accused Japan of "remilitarisation," with an official spokesperson warning that a "grey rhino of a remilitarised Japan" was accelerating and calling on neighbouring countries to "contain Japan's neo-militarism."

During the question-and-answer session, a Chinese military representative pressed Koizumi on Japan's wartime responsibility and historical apologies, an exchange that underscored the depth of mistrust shaping bilateral relations.

Koizumi's critique of China centred on a single word that appeared repeatedly throughout his speech: transparency. He argued that opaque military buildups are themselves destabilising not merely because of what they suggest about intent, but because ambiguity breeds miscalculation.

"China continues to increase its defence spending at a high level and is rapidly expanding its military

capabilities across a wide range of areas without sufficient transparency. This is a matter of serious concern," Shinjiro Koizumi said.

By contrast, Koizumi pledged that Japan's own defence evolution would be conducted with full public accountability. He announced that a revision of Japan's three strategic documents is expected later this year, alongside continued investment in AI, unmanned systems, cyber capability, and space — framing each as a natural response to new forms of warfare rather than a break with Japan's pacifist tradition.

"It is only natural that every country, including Japan, updates its defences to meet new challenges and contribute to peace. Japan will carry out this update with a high degree of transparency, making a clear explanation to the international community of what we are developing these capabilities for, and based on what thinking," he said.

Army foils exfiltration bid in Uri, 3 held; PoK intruder also apprehended along LoC

Srinagar: Army troops deployed along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Uri sector of north Kashmir's Baramulla district apprehended three individuals, including a suspended Territorial Army (TA) personnel, allegedly attempting to exfiltrate to Pakistan, officials said on Sunday. In a separate incident, an intruder from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) was also detained.



In the first operation, the Army foiled an exfiltration attempt along the LoC and detained three individuals from Sopore sub-district during a joint search operation with police, following specific intelligence inputs.

"Based on specific intelligence input, a joint search operation was launched by #IndianArmy and @JmuKmrPolice in general area of Uri, Baramulla. Two individuals from Sopore apprehended by vigilant Chinar Warriors while attempting exfiltration in Uri Sector with inimical

intent along with their accomplice guide. Further probe underway," Army's Srinagar based Chinar Corps said on X. While the Army didn't disclose any identity of the trio, sources said one of them is a suspended Territorial Army personnel and a resident of Dangerpora Sopore. The trio was detained in the Hathlanga area of Uri.

Sources said all three are being questioned and further investigations are underway to ascertain the circumstances of the attempted exfiltration. In a separate incident, an intruder from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) was

apprehended by the Army along the LoC in the Uri sector.

The Chinar Corps said in a post on X that vigilant troops maintained restraint while challenging the intruder before apprehending him during the operation.

"A POJK intruder was apprehended, who was intercepted by alert Chinar Warriors while crossing the Line of Control in Uri Sector. The vigilant troops maintained restraint while challenging the intruder and surgically apprehended the individual. Intruder handed over to JKP for further legal proceedings," the post said.

Six arrested in connection with attack on Abhishek Banerjee in Sonarpur

Kolkata: Police have arrested six persons in connection with the attack on Trinamool Congress (TMC) national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee during his visit to Sonarpur in South 24 Parganas on Saturday. According to police sources, the accused were identified through video footage collected from the area. The arrests were made by Sonarpur Police Station after it registered a suo motu case in connection with the incident. No formal written complaint has yet been lodged either by Banerjee or by the Trinamool Congress.



Banerjee had travelled to Sonarpur to visit the family of a TMC worker who was allegedly killed in post-poll violence. Soon after reaching the area, he was confronted by a large crowd. Shoes, eggs and stones were allegedly hurled at him, while protesters raised slogans of "chor, chor" (thief, thief). The situation was out of control and Banerjee had to put on a helmet to protect

himself from the raging crowd. Despite that, his shirt was reportedly torn during the scuffle. He later met the bereaved family and spent a considerable amount of time at their residence before being escorted out of the area by police and central security personnel in the afternoon. The Diamond Harbour MP alleged that the attack was a planned operation by the BJP. He claimed that those involved had prior knowledge of his visit and were prepared in advance. Banerjee also warned of legal action against those responsible. Police

sources said a suo motu case had been registered immediately after the incident.

Investigators collected and examined video footage from the area, leading to the identification and arrest of six suspects. The accused are scheduled to be produced before the Baruiipur Sub-Divisional Court on Sunday.

The Trinamool Congress has accused the police of deliberately delaying their arrival at the spot and escalating the situation to allow. Following the incident, Banerjee was taken to a

hospital in south Kolkata, where TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee visited him. Mamata Banerjee later alleged that pressure was exerted on the hospital authorities. Claiming that proper treatment was not being provided, TMC leaders shifted Abhishek Banerjee to another hospital. However, he was not admitted there either, with hospital authorities reportedly stating that his condition did not require hospitalization. He was subsequently taken home later that night. The Chief Minister alleged that blood had clotted in Banerjee's chest as a result of the assault.

Since the incident, the TMC has been demanding the arrest of those involved. The party has also released video footage claiming that some of the alleged attackers have links with the BJP. The attack has drawn reactions from leaders of the INDIA bloc at the national level. Several opposition leaders, including Rahul Gandhi and Arvind Kejriwal, have condemned the assault on the TMC leader.

Women-Centric Industrial Park Opened in Karnataka

New Delhi/Dharmasthala: Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan on Sunday inaugurated the SIRI Mathrushree Industrial Park at Belthangady in Karnataka's Dakshina Kannada district, describing it as a model of women-led social transformation and inclusive development that aligns with India's vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047.

The industrial park, established by SIRI, was inaugurated from Dharmasthala in the presence of Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot, Rajya Sabha MP and SIRI President Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade, Lok Sabha MP Brijesh Chowta and SIRI founder Hemavathi V. Heggade. Addressing a gathering on the occasion, the Vice President said institutions such as SIRI demonstrate how rural India can achieve prosperity through entrepreneurship, livelihood generation and community

participation. "India's journey towards Viksit Bharat must be rooted in self-reliance and rural empowerment," he said, adding that true development must create dignity, opportunity and confidence among all sections of society. Highlighting the achievements of SIRI, he noted that the organisation directly supports the livelihoods of over 3,000 people and indirectly benefits more than 10,000 individuals, most of them women from economically weaker sections. Describing the initiative as "social transformation in its truest sense," he said the institution has become a catalyst for empowerment and economic independence. The Vice President praised Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade for his decades-long contribution to social development, saying that for nearly 60 years he has demonstrated how spirituality can be harnessed as a force for constructive social change.

Congress alleges massive CBSE Data breach, seeks answers on evaluation contract

New Delhi: Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Sunday alleged a major data breach involving Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Class 12 examination answer sheets, claiming that the answer scripts of nearly two million students had been made available in the public domain and raising fresh questions over the evaluation contract awarded by the board.



In a statement posted on social media platform X, Ramesh described the incident as a "data breach of monumental proportions" and said it had compromised the privacy of millions of students across the country. "In today's developments on Mantri Pradhan's Ministry of Scandals, the answer sheets

of 2 million CBSE Grade 12 students have been shown to be available in the public domain," Ramesh said. The Congress leader alleged that the development exposed what he termed the "incompetence and callousness" of COEMPT, the company entrusted with handling the answer sheet

evaluation process. He further claimed that the firm had received the contract after changes were made to the technical specifications in the Request for Proposal (RFP), which he suggested may have benefited the company. Questioning the quality of the digitisation process, Ramesh alleged that the answer sheets that

had surfaced online appeared to contain folds and drop shadows, features that he said were typically associated with scans captured through mobile phones rather than professional scanning equipment. "The answer sheets that have emerged also bear folds and drop shadows — which are associated with scans made via mobile phones rather than scanning machines," he said. Referring to earlier concerns raised by the Congress regarding the tendering process, Ramesh claimed that a subsequent version of the RFP had dropped the requirement for a robotic scanner. He questioned what kind of scanning equipment was eventually deployed and why the digitised answer

sheets appeared to be of poor quality. "We know that the third RFP dropped the specification for a robotic scanner. The question then is what kind of scanners did COEMPT eventually use? Why are the scans of such poor quality?" he asked.

The allegations come amid ongoing political scrutiny of examination management and data security practices in public institutions. Neither the CBSE nor the company named by Ramesh had immediately responded to the claims at the time of reporting. The Congress has demanded clarity on the alleged breach, the scanning process used for answer sheets, and the safeguards put in place to protect students' personal data.

Counting underway for 4 Himachal municipal corporations amid keen political contest

Shimla: Counting of votes for the Municipal Corporation elections in Mandi, Dharamshala, Palampur and Solan began on Sunday amid tight security arrangements, with the outcome expected to provide a key indicator of the political mood in Himachal Pradesh.

The elections to the four municipal corporations were held on May 17 along with polls to other urban local bodies across the state. A total of 64 wards went to the polls, witnessing keen contests between Congress-backed and BJP-backed candidates, though the elections were conducted on a non-party basis. More than 1.3 lakh voters were eligible to cast their ballots in the four civic bodies, with polling recording an average turnout of over 63 per cent. Palampur registered the highest voter participation, while Solan recorded the lowest turnout among the four corporations. Counting of votes that is underway commenced at 9.00 am.

Election officials said counting commenced at designated centres under strict security and monitoring arrangements. Adequate measures have been put in place to ensure a smooth and transparent counting process. The results are being closely watched by both the ruling Congress and the opposition BJP, as the verdict in the key urban centres is expected to have political significance ahead of future electoral battles in the state. Early trends show BJP leading in Mandi (15 wards) and Dharamshala (17 wards) while Congress has opened its tally in Palampur (15 wards).

Solan (17 wards) has so far not reported any specific ward-wise trend so far. The final results are likely to be declared by the afternoon.

Bihar CM Samrat urges people to shun tobacco, build a healthy society

Patna: Samrat Choudhary on Sunday appealed to citizens to stay away from tobacco and all forms of substance abuse, stressing the need for collective efforts to build a healthy, aware, empowered and addiction-free society. His message came on the occasion of World No Tobacco Day, observed annually to highlight the harmful effects of tobacco consumption and promote healthier lifestyles.



by staying away from tobacco and all forms of addiction," he said.

In his message, the Chief Minister underscored the serious challenges posed by tobacco use and addiction, describing them as major threats to public health and social well-being. He said reducing tobacco consumption requires not only individual commitment but also active participation from society as a whole.

The Chief Minister highlighted that good health forms the foundation of a prosperous and successful future. According to him, individuals who maintain a healthy lifestyle are better positioned to contribute positively to their families, communities and the nation.

Choudhary urged people to adopt healthier habits and make a conscious effort to avoid tobacco products and other addictive substances. He emphasised that a society free from addiction would be better equipped to achieve social progress, economic development and improved quality of life.

He stressed that awareness plays a crucial role in combating tobacco use and substance abuse. By educating people about the harmful effects of addiction, society can encourage healthier choices and reduce the prevalence of tobacco-related illnesses and social problems.

Sharing his message on the social media platform X, the Chief Minister called upon citizens to join the movement against addiction and contribute to creating a healthier future for coming generations.

Choudhary also called on citizens to become ambassadors of awareness by inspiring others to embrace a life free from addiction. He said community-led efforts can have a significant impact in changing attitudes and behaviours related to tobacco consumption.

"On World No Tobacco Day, let us resolve to actively participate in the creation of a healthy, aware, empowered and addiction-free society

the role of young people in building an addiction-free society. Choudhary urged the youth to stay away from tobacco and other harmful substances and instead focus on education, fitness and personal development.

He observed that adopting healthy habits at an early age can help individuals avoid long-term health risks while contributing to a more productive and responsible society. The Chief Minister further stressed the importance of creating supportive environments where people are encouraged to make positive lifestyle choices. Families, educational institutions and community organisations all have an important role to play in promoting awareness and prevention.

According to Choudhary, widespread awareness campaigns can help reduce misconceptions about tobacco use and encourage individuals to understand the serious consequences associated with addiction.

He reiterated that a healthy and informed society is essential for sustainable development. By choosing to stay away from tobacco and substance abuse, citizens can contribute to building stronger communities and improving overall public health outcomes. Concluding his message, the Chief Minister called for a collective pledge to promote wellness, spread awareness and support efforts aimed at creating a healthier, stronger and addiction-free Bihar and India.

Special emphasis was placed on

SP-Congress begin tough seat-sharing talks for Mission 2027

Lucknow: As preparations gather pace for the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections, the opposition alliance between the Samajwadi Party and the Indian National Congress is entering a crucial phase, with both parties engaged in intense negotiations over seat-sharing arrangements.

it as the dominant partner within the alliance.

According to senior party leaders, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav is adopting a significantly tougher position on seat-sharing than in previous elections. The SP leadership believes the party's performance in recent elections justifies a larger share of seats in the upcoming Assembly contest.

ing to party insiders, Akhilesh has repeatedly emphasised the importance of creating winning electoral equations capable of challenging the ruling party effectively.

On the other hand, the Congress is reluctant to accept a significant reduction in its seat share. As a national party seeking organisational revival in Uttar Pradesh, it views the Assembly elections as an important opportunity to rebuild its grassroots presence and strengthen its political relevance in the state.

The discussions are expected to shape the future of the alliance that delivered significant gains to the opposition in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

The alliance between the two parties proved highly successful during the 2024 parliamentary polls in Uttar Pradesh, where they managed to substantially reduce the BJP's dominance in the state. Encouraged by those results, both parties are keen to continue their partnership into the 2027 Assembly elections, although differences over seat allocation have begun to surface.

Sources indicate that the Samajwadi Party may offer the Congress at least 25 fewer seats than it did during the 2017 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections. Such a proposal would likely become a major point of contention between the two allies as negotiations progress.

To bolster its negotiating position, the Congress high command has reportedly instructed the state unit to identify strong candidates for approximately 100 to 125 Assembly constituencies. This exercise is intended to demonstrate the party's preparedness and seriousness ahead of seat-sharing discussions.

The central challenge stems from the changed political dynamics following the Lok Sabha elections. While the Congress has gained renewed confidence after improving its electoral performance, the Samajwadi Party believes its stronger showing has established

For Akhilesh Yadav, the 2024 Lok Sabha results have reinforced the perception that the SP has emerged as the principal opposition force in Uttar Pradesh. Party leaders argue that seat distribution should reflect the relative strength demonstrated by each alliance partner during recent elections. Despite the expected hard bargaining, SP leaders insist that the party's primary objective remains defeating the BJP rather than focusing solely on the number of seats allocated. Accord-

Simultaneously, the Congress has activated a contingency strategy. Under what party leaders describe as a "Plan B," the state unit has been directed to remain prepared for the possibility of contesting all 403 Assembly seats if alliance negotiations encounter major difficulties.

'Mann Ki Baat' inspires youth and promotes national values: Ramchander Rao

Hyderabad: Telangana BJP State President N Ramchander Rao on Sunday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi, through his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' programme, continues to inspire the youth and spread awareness on issues important to the nation.

Addressing the media later, the BJP leader said every episode of the programme contains valuable and inspiring messages for the people, particularly the younger generation.

ages such as Aam Panna, Sattu, and drinks made with Sabja seeds.

Ramchander Rao, along with party leaders, watched the 134th episode of 'Mann Ki Baat' at the residence of Perika Suresh at KMIT Lane in Himayat Nagar, Hyderabad.

He said the Prime Minister's remarks on the achievements of Indian athletes, their dedication, and success in sports serve as a major source of encouragement for the youth.

Appealing to the youth to regularly watch the programme, Ramchander Rao said each episode of 'Mann Ki Baat' offers fresh inspiration and new information.

He especially appreciated the outstanding performances of Indian athletes in

BJP Telangana State in-charge Abhay Patil, MLA Payal Shankar, BJP State General Secretary Veerender Goud, BJP State Secretary Bharat Prasad, and other party leaders were present on the occasion.

Kavitha alleges conspiracy behind 'Rythu DISCOM', warns of legal battle

Hyderabad: Telangana Rakshana Sena (TRS) President K Kavitha on Sunday alleged that there was a conspiracy to establish a separate 'Rythu DISCOM' for farmers while paving the way for privatisation of power distribution companies in Telangana.



Addressing a press conference at Banjara Hills, Kavitha demanded that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy formally assure farmers that 24-hour free power supply would continue and that meters would not be installed on agricultural motors.

She urged the Electricity Regulatory Commission (ERC) not to grant permission for the proposed DISCOM and demanded public hearings across Telangana. Kavitha said Telangana Jagruthi had already filed a legal case and warned that the issue would be

taken to the Supreme Court if necessary.

The TRS leader also criticised the government over the implementation of Rythu Bharosa, pending farm loan waivers, procurement issues, and alleged attempts to dilute the Rythu Bima scheme. Referring to the Khammam hospital incident in which an infant allegedly lost an arm due to inadequate treatment, she demanded Rs 25 lakh compensation for the child's family. She also demanded that the government begin reservoir works at Lakshmidhevipalli under the Palamuru project before Dasara, failing which she warned of launching a padayatra.

UP Skill mission will now enhance personality of rural youth, along with their skills

Lucknow: The Uttar Pradesh government has broadened the scope of its skill development initiatives by placing equal emphasis on personality development alongside technical training. The move aims to make rural youth not only job-ready but also better equipped to succeed in professional and corporate environments.

both professional and personal development. These include celebrations of national days, cultural activities, sports competitions, entrepreneurship sessions, digital literacy programmes and career-oriented workshops.

Under the revamped approach, the Uttar Pradesh Skill Development Mission has introduced a comprehensive year-long activity calendar for all residential training centres across the state. The initiative is designed to en-

The government believes that such activities will help trainees develop essential life skills that are often required by employers but are not typically covered under conventional vocational training programmes.

A key component of the initiative is career readiness training.

Kerala to launch south India's biggest anti-drug drive on June 2

Thiruvananthapuram: The Kerala Home Department will launch Operation Toofan: The Narco Hunt, described as South India's largest anti-drug enforcement campaign, on June 2 as part of an intensified effort to dismantle drug networks and curb the growing menace of narcotics across the state.

The campaign combines stringent law enforcement measures against drug syndicates with a mass public awareness and participation drive aimed at preventing substance abuse, particularly among young people.

low citizens to anonymously report drug-related activities. Innovative measures such as wastewater testing in educational institutions and residential areas to identify drug hotspots and drone-assisted smart patrolling are also being planned. The initiative further proposes the introduction of a special anti-drug curriculum in schools and the confiscation of assets acquired through drug trafficking. Officials say the objective is to transform the fight against narcotics into a

broad-based public movement involving students, parents, educational institutions and local communities. Kerala Police will also intensify action against groups accused of targeting children and youth with narcotics. Drug users, dealers, suppliers and promoters will be placed under enhanced surveillance. The operation will focus on dismantling interstate drug networks through coordinated action with police authorities in neighbouring states.

Modi's leadership brought transformative changes across India: Kishan Reddy

Hyderabad: Union Coal and Mines Minister G. Kishan Reddy on Sunday said that India has witnessed transformative changes in governance, infrastructure development and public welfare under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the past nearly 12 years. He said the country has achieved significant progress across multiple sectors through a combination of efficient administration, large-scale infrastructure projects and citizen participation.

issues while encouraging public involvement in nation-building initiatives.

Kishan Reddy stated that one of the defining features of the Modi government has been its emphasis on infrastructure development. He said the country has experienced rapid expansion in transportation networks, con-

introduced technologically advanced trains aimed at improving passenger convenience, safety and operational efficiency.

Kishan Reddy further noted that India's aviation sector has undergone substantial growth. He said the number of airports in the country has increased from around 70 to nearly 150 during the Modi government's tenure, improving regional connectivity and making air travel accessible to a larger section of the population.



nectivity projects and public infrastructure during the past decade.

Highlighting achievements in the road sector, he pointed to the extensive widening and upgrading of national highways across the country. According to him, improved road infrastructure has enhanced connectivity, reduced travel time and supported economic growth by facilitating the movement of goods and people. The Minister also cited significant progress in the railway sector. He said the government has expanded railway networks, modernised stations and

In addition to expanding airport infrastructure, several world-class airports and expressways have been developed across different states. He said these projects have strengthened economic activity, tourism and investment prospects in various regions of the country. The Minister also referred to the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, which has significantly improved road connectivity in remote and rural areas. He said the initiative has helped connect previously isolated villages to markets, healthcare facilities and educational institutions.

Kishan Reddy highlighted various welfare measures aimed at improving the lives of marginalised communities, including tribal populations. He said the government has focused on expanding access to education, healthcare and developmental opportunities in underserved regions.

State Government decides to give X-Category security to Abhishek Banerjee after Sonarpur incident

Kolkata: Hours after an alleged harassment incident involving Trinamool Congress national general secretary and Diamond Harbour MP Abhishek Banerjee in Sonarpur, the West Bengal government decided to strengthen his security arrangements by granting him X-category protection. The move came amid growing concerns over the adequacy of security provided to the senior Trinamool Congress leader during public engagements.



companied by two security guards under the security protocol assigned to him as a Member of Parliament.

At the time, government officials maintained that Banerjee would continue to receive security appropriate to his status as an elected Member of Parliament. Consequently, two security personnel were assigned to accompany him during official and public engagements.

The decision was reportedly taken on Saturday night following an incident in Sonarpur, where Banerjee allegedly faced harassment while visiting the residence of a party worker. The episode quickly sparked political reactions and raised questions about the level of protection available to one of the state's most prominent opposition figures.

The same security arrangement remained in force during his visit to Sonarpur on Saturday. It was during this visit that the alleged harassment incident occurred, prompting renewed scrutiny of the existing security measures.

According to officials, the revised security arrangement will ensure that three security personnel remain attached to Banerjee at all times. Previously, he was ac-

In the aftermath of the episode, authorities decided to upgrade Banerjee's protection by granting him X-category security. Under the new arrangement, three security personnel will remain attached to him around the clock to provide enhanced protection during travel and public appearances.

Government officials indicated that the decision was taken as a precautionary measure in light of the circumstances surrounding the Sonarpur incident.



BJP's goal is to serve people through good governance: Delhi BJP chief Malhotra

New Delhi: The training programme conducted for Delhi BJP workers under Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya Maha Prashikshan Abhiyan, covering all the 14 districts of the party's state unit, concluded on Sunday, where newly elected Delhi BJP chief Harsh Malhotra guided workers on BJP's working methodology.

Malhotra said that the BJP's goal is to serve the people through good governance and contribute towards making the country a developed nation.

Malhotra also discussed the upcoming programmes for the state unit during June, as the party is going to reach out to the public and take all the schemes of the Centre and the state government to the people of the national capital.

Addressing party workers, union Minister Harsh Malhotra said that with the BJP being the world's largest political party, having over 170 million members, it also has greater responsi-

bility.

He shared that the party has endured many hardships and challenges and presently is in power across 22 states. The Delhi BJP chief stated that party work-



ers are the medium through which the organization reaches out to the people, and therefore the party workers form the foundation of the organization. The outgoing Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva, who was present on the occasion, addressed sessions on worker development and

welfare.

Delhi BJP's media head Praveen Shankar Kapoor, while addressing the gathering of party workers, spoke on the importance and use of media in the cur-

rent political scenario. According to the state unit chief, discipline and training complement each other and remain integral parts of the BJP's organizational culture. He said that there should be a senior leader or public representative available across all the district offices of the party to hear

and help resolve public concerns.

Highlighting the party's working culture, Malhotra said BJP advances based on Panch Nishtha (five commitments).

The ideological commitment, putting the nation first, a spirit of dedication, family-like bonding, collective decision-making, and coordination with all stakeholders.

Meanwhile, Sachdeva stated that while a worker's conduct and behaviour should be transparent, the organization's leadership also has a responsibility to care for workers, provide them with opportunities, and stand with them in times of joy and hardship. Sachdeva further emphasized that a spirit of collective functioning is essential for strong workers and a strong organization, adding that adopting the three words, including "Thank You, Sorry, and Please," can make one's character more sensitive and considerate.

Saket building collapse: Death toll rises to 6, FIR registered, 2 MCD engineers suspended

New Delhi: The death toll in the collapse of a commercial building near Saket Metro station in south Delhi rose to six on Sunday, while several others were rescued from the debris and admitted to hospitals, officials said. Police sources said that some of the injured and deceased were preparing for the Foreign Medical Graduate (FMG) Examination.

The area in Saket where the building collapsed is a hub of coaching for students seeking admissions in Medical and Engineering studies in foreign countries.

An FIR has been regis-

tered under relevant sections, including culpable homicide, and teams have been constituted to investigate the circumstances that led to the collapse, officials said. The incident occurred on Saturday evening on Western Marg in the Saidulajab area when the multi-storey structure suddenly came crashing down.

The building housed a coaching institute, cafes and offices, while construction work was reportedly underway on its upper floor at the time of the collapse. According to the District Disaster Management Authority

(DDMA), an emergency call regarding the building collapse was received at the Emergency Operation Centre at 7.40 pm on Saturday.

"A Quick Response Vehicle was immediately dispatched to the site and rescue operations were launched in accordance with standard operating procedures," read the statement of the DDMA. Upon reaching the spot, authorities found that a five-to seven-storey building spread across approximately 300-400 square yards had completely collapsed. Residents informed rescue personnel that around

10 to 15 people were feared trapped beneath the debris. "A total of six people have died in the incident. Rescue operation is underway," Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Anant Mittal told. The deceased have been identified as Ravi (24), Kapil (28), Nalin Ray (23), Alok, Parvati (35) and Ekta (24). Officials said the building was reduced to rubble, with a large portion of the debris falling onto an adjoining tin-shed canteen, owned by Parvati, frequented by students preparing for medical entrance examinations.

Delhi Govt reconstitutes Kanwar Committee; Kapil Mishra appointed chairperson

New Delhi: Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Saturday reconstituted the high-level Kanwar Committee for the upcoming Kanwar Yatra, appointing Culture and Law Minister Kapil Mishra as its chairperson and announcing special assistance for Kanwar camps to ensure a smooth, safe and well-organised pilgrimage.

The Chief Minister said the Delhi Government was committed to providing improved facilities and services to lakhs of Shiva devotees expected to pass through the national capital during the holy month of Shraavan.

"This year too, devotion and service will set new benchmarks," Gupta said, adding that the government would extend special assistance to Kanwar camps to facilitate the pilgrimage.

According to the government, the newly constituted committee will be headed by Mishra and include MLAs Ajay Mahawar, Anil Sharma, Karnail Singh, Sanjay Goel and Umang Bajaj as members.

Describing the Kanwar Yatra as more than a religious tradition, Gupta said it represented India's cultural heritage, social harmony and collective faith. "The Kanwar Yatra is not merely a traditional religious event, but a

grand celebration of India's rich cultural heritage, social harmony and public faith," she said. "The large number of Shiva devotees who gather on the streets of Delhi during the month of Shraavan reflects the country's cultural unity."

"Our primary objective is to ensure that every Kanwariya entering Delhi is treated as an honoured guest and provided with the best possible facilities and services," she said.

Gupta said the reconstituted committee would soon hold review meetings with district magistrates, Delhi Police, the Public Works Department, Health Department and other concerned agencies to assess preparedness for the yatra.

She said the committee's focus would be on route management, installation of quality waterproof tents, availability of medical facilities, uninterrupted electricity and water supply, and comprehensive security arrangements.

"Under the leadership of Kapil Mishra, the committee will work closely with all stakeholders to ensure that this year's Kanwar Yatra is completed smoothly and successfully, as in the previous year," she said.

Highlighting the government's

initiatives for Kanwar devotees, Gupta said Delhi had witnessed a significant expansion in the number of approved camps over the past year.

While only 170 Kanwar camps were approved in 2024, the number rose to a record 374 registered camps in 2025 following the introduction of a simplified approval process, she said.

The Chief Minister also pointed to reforms in the financial assistance mechanism for camp organisers. The government replaced the earlier tender-based system with direct benefit transfers (DBT), enabling transparent financial support ranging from Rs 50,000 to Rs 11 lakh directly into beneficiaries' bank accounts.

She said 50 per cent of the sanctioned assistance was released in advance before the commencement of the yatra. In addition, registered camps were provided up to 1,200 units of free electricity and a 75 per cent concession on the security deposit for temporary power connections.

Gupta expressed confidence that the coordinated efforts of the committee and government departments would ensure a safe, comfortable and spiritually fulfilling experience for devotees participating in this year's Kanwar Yatra.

NEET re-test revives stress for aspirants

New Delhi: For thousands of NEET aspirants studying away from home in coaching hubs such as Delhi, Kota, Jaipur and Sikar, the announcement of a revised examination date after the cancellation of the earlier test has brought back long study hours, anxiety and emotional strain. Many students said they had mentally moved on after appearing for the examination earlier this month. With the re-test now scheduled for June 21, aspirants are once again trying to regain focus and motivation while dealing with uncertainty.

"I had completely switched off after the exam because I thought the difficult phase was finally over. Now, preparing again with the same intensity feels mentally exhausting," said Namanshu, a NEET aspirant in Kota.

The extended preparation period has also increased financial pressure on families already spending heavily on coaching, accommodation and study materials.

"Every extra month means more rent, food expenses and test series costs. My parents never complain, but I know it affects them," said Neetu Singh, another student preparing in Delhi. Harshita Gupta, an aspirant from Delhi, said students were now struggling more with emotional fatigue than academics. "Initially, we thought the extra time would help us improve, but now most students are simply trying to stay consistent and avoid burnout," she said.

As anxiety rises among students, coaching institutes have started additional academic and counselling support programmes.

Delhi Police holds interactive women safety awareness program at YWCA

New Delhi: Aimed at spreading awareness on women safety-related issues and giving information about initiatives undertaken by Delhi Police in this regard, the city police on Friday held a special outreach program at the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) campus in New Delhi.

The outreach was held by the Delhi Police's Perception Management and Media Cell (PMMC).

Addressing the gathering, Assistant Commissioner of Police Renu Lata, from the Special Police Unit for Women and Children (SPU-WAC), along with Inspector Adith Lily, elaborated on

important women safety laws, workplace safety measures, personal security practices, and legal protections available for women. As part of the awareness session, Sub Inspector Komal Sharma from Cyber Police Station, New Delhi, shared insightful information on cyber safety, with emphasis on the emerging cyber threats, including digital arrest scams, online financial frauds, and preventive measures to safeguard personal and financial information in the digital space. The programme commenced with an engaging performance by the Delhi Police Music Band, which presented a se-

lection of patriotic and motivational songs, creating an enthusiastic and inspiring atmosphere among the attendees. To further reinforce the key messages, the Delhi Police Jan Sampark Vahan screened multimedia awareness videos demonstrating practical safety protocols and preventive measures. The students engaged with the police officers, who shared information with the participants and also addressed various queries. YWCA's Deputy Director Dr. Vandana G. Masih, expressed gratitude to the police for the initiative, stating that such programs are very meaningful for the women, and help spread awareness.

Delhi High Court upholds TRAI's 12-minute TV advertisements cap

New Delhi: A Division Bench of the Delhi High Court has upheld the validity of regulations limiting television channels to a maximum of 12 minutes of advertisements per clock hour, dismissing a bunch of 17 petitions filed by general entertainment channels, news broadcasters and regional television channels.

The verdict means television channels will continue to be subject to restrictions on the amount of advertising they can carry in an hour. The court held that the framework is intended to protect viewers from excessive commercial interruptions and ensure a more satisfactory viewing experience.

The ruling came as the Bench of Justice Anil Kshetrapal and Justice Amit Mahajan upheld Rule 7(11) of the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994, and Regulation 3 of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Regulations, 2012, as amended in 2013.

The court ruled that TRAI acted within its statutory authority in imposing the "per clock hour" ceiling through the regulations

to operationalise the advertisement cap prescribed under the Rules. "The per clock hour advertisement cap is a valid exercise of its regulatory power relating to QoS (Quality of Service)," the Bench held, concluding that the framework struck "a proportionate balance between broadcaster rights and the public interest in efficient and fair use of broadcast spectrum".

The petitions had challenged the constitutional validity of the regime fixing a 10+2 minute ceiling per hour — 10 minutes for commercial advertisements and two minutes for self-promotional content.

The court noted that the principal challenge was not to the overall 12-minute limit itself, but to the requirement that the cap be calculated on a "per clock hour" basis rather than as an aggregate limit over a longer period. The broadcasters had contended that the framework violated their rights under Articles 14 and 19 of the Constitution and adversely affected their ability to schedule advertisements and maximise advertising revenue.

Editorial

A storm named Vaibhav Suryavanshi!

Due to the intense impact of El Niño, India along with the rest of the world is currently grappling with a severe and relentless heatwave. While this rise of at least 2 to 5 degrees Celsius in atmospheric temperature is leaving the common people reeling, on the cricket field, a young player shining as brightly as the sun itself is unleashing the full fury of his bat upon opposing teams. His aggressive, explosive, and whirlwind style of play has left even the world's most formidable bowlers and strategists feeling utterly helpless. This "wonder boy," who is merely 15 years old, goes by the name of Vaibhav Suryavanshi. In the nineteenth edition of this year's Indian Premier League (IPL), his blistering batting has left an indelible mark upon the cricketing world. At an age when most children are still simply enjoying their school days, 15-year-old Vaibhav Suryavanshi has emerged as the nation's newest hero. International coaches possessing a wealth of experience spanning 15 to 20 years are currently scrambling to devise strategies on how to contain this schoolboy sensation. Despite his tender age, he already has two explosive centuries to his name in the IPL tournament and holds the record for hitting the most sixes in a single season. Just a few days ago, he missed out on setting the record for the fastest century in the tournament by a mere handful of runs. As bowling attacks are being torn to shreds before his very eyes, even the sport's greatest legends have been left utterly bewildered. While there may undoubtedly be some technical flaws in his game, given his sheer dominance and swagger on the field, stopping him has at least for the time being become an almost impossible task.

Watching this 15-year-old boy and the sheer velocity of his strokeplay, sports enthusiasts have begun to wonder: is he playing cricket, or is he playing baseball? Currently, there is intense discussion not just across the nation, but globally regarding the dimensions of his bat, his bat-swing, and his aggressive technique. Cameras that would typically focus on big stars like Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, Hardik Pandya, and Suryakumar Yadav are now constantly trained on Vaibhav. At such a young age, he is already giving regular interviews. His true success lies in the fact that whenever he narrowly misses scoring a century, the entire nation expresses a collective sense of regret. Until now, the mere mention of Bihar would evoke discussions steeped in negativity, poverty, migrant labor, caste-based politics, the devastating floods of the Kosi River, 'Mafia Raj,' or young aspirants flocking to Delhi to prepare for the UPSC exams. However, thanks to Vaibhav Suryavanshi, Bihar has now acquired a new, proud, and sports-centric identity.

In the current season of the IPL, Vaibhav has left an indelible mark with his brilliant and unique performances. In particular, his explosive innings against Hyderabad where he smashed 97 runs off just 29 balls has left fans across the globe spellbound. Earlier in this very season, Vaibhav had already scored a magnificent century against Hyderabad and played an innings of 93 runs against Lucknow; yet, the sheer intensity and aura of this latest 97-run blitz were entirely distinct. Vaibhav fell just three runs short of breaking Chris Gayle's historic international record for the fastest century scored in the fewest deliveries. However, in that very same match, by smashing a staggering 12 towering sixes, he comfortably shattered Chris Gayle's long-standing record of hitting the most sixes (59) in a single IPL season. Vaibhav now has over 60 sixes to his name a tally that is undoubtedly set to rise in the upcoming matches.

Moreover, the prestigious 'Orange Cap' awarded to the season's highest run-scorer currently rests upon his head. According to cricket experts, this "wonder boy" is nothing short of a marvel on the Indian cricketing landscape. It was prior to last year's IPL season that cricket scouts from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) discovered Vaibhav. At the time, this thirteen-and-a-half to fourteen-year-old lad was giving bowlers twice his age a torrid time in club-level cricket.

Rahul Dravid former captain of the Indian cricket team and a shrewd mentor cast his discerning eye upon this extraordinary young talent hailing from a state like Bihar, which notably lacks established cricket infrastructure. Starting from a modest base price of just ₹30 lakhs in the IPL auction, the Rajasthan Royals secured his services by placing a substantial winning bid of ₹1.10 crore. Under Rahul Dravid's guidance, the Rajasthan team management meticulously honed his raw potential, transforming him into a world-class batsman. Since then, this explosive batsman has been making even the most formidable bowlers break into a sweat. In the previous IPL season, playing just seven matches, Vaibhav smashed one century and one half-century; however, at that time, some analysts criticized him as merely a 'slogger' someone who swings the bat wildly and indiscriminately, scoring runs solely on the strength of luck. Yet, just last year, Vaibhav played a pivotal and invaluable role in helping India clinch the Under-19 World Cup. During this same period, Vaibhav began playing domestic First-Class cricket, where he once again left a lasting impression with his high-caliber batting. Now, in the ongoing IPL season, by mercilessly thrashing the world's top-tier bowlers be they pacers or spinners he has effectively silenced his critics once and for all.

The moment Vaibhav Suryavanshi steps onto the field, it is as if a high-voltage drama begins. From the very first ball of the match, he displays an aggressive intent to dispatch the ball beyond the boundary ropes. Whether facing Australia's Pat Cummins, South Africa's Kagiso Rabada, or India's own world-class bowling arsenal such as Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, or Bhuvneshwar Kumar this young dynamo's bat has shown absolutely no mercy to anyone.

When the legendary cricketer Sachin Tendulkar made his debut in international cricket, he was just 16 years old. It is difficult to predict today just how illustrious Vaibhav's career will eventually become. Only time will tell whether he will be able to properly handle the immense wealth, name, and fame often acquired overnight that characterize the vast and glamorous world of cricket. Yet, this young man, who toils tirelessly on the field, is often seen touching the feet of senior stalwarts like Sachin Tendulkar, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, and Sunil Gavaskar once he steps off the pitch. It is precisely because of this humility and his deeply ingrained values that legendary players from Sachin himself to all the others never tire of singing his praises. Vaibhav, who has rapidly created a massive buzz around his name within the cricketing fraternity, now finds himself on the verge of donning the coveted blue jersey of the Indian national cricket team. Over the next few months, India is scheduled to play bilateral series against Ireland, England, Zimbabwe, and the West Indies; additionally, the Asian Games are set to take place in September. It is widely considered a certainty that Vaibhav Suryavanshi will make his national debut as part of the squad for one of these two significant tours.

BSNL's Revival Enables Fight Against Extremism in Remote Areas

Union Minister of State for Communications and Rural Development, Dr. Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani gave an interview to DD India. In the interview he talked about the transformation of BSNL.

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), once a struggling public sector enterprise, is scripting an impressive revival story under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, emerging as a key driver of digital inclusion and national development in just two years. Dr. Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani, described the transformation as both challenging and deeply satisfying. He highlighted the fixing of problem areas such as culture of work, the condition of towers, outdated infrastructure brought about this change.

Dr. Pemmasani added, "We approached the revival with systematic rigour and private-sector discipline. The results are now visible like stronger finances, indigenous technology, and connectivity reaching India's remotest corners."

While sharing BSNL's growth story, the Minister of State said that the financial turnaround is striking. BSNL's revenue has grown from ₹ 21,000 crore to ₹ 25,000 crore, a healthy 20-25% increase in two years. More significantly, EBITDA has jumped dramatically from just ₹ 50 crore to nearly ₹ 7,000 crore, reflecting improved operational efficiency and a clear path to profitability.

Dr. Pemmasani explained the



methodical approach behind this success. Dr. Pemmasani said that in states like Andhra Pradesh, tower uptime was only 75%. We set a target of 95%, replaced 50,000 batteries across 50,000 towers, upgraded power plants and replaced ageing cables. We then set systematic targets at every circle and state level for enterprise business and new mobile connections. Regular monitoring and accountability have been central to this effort.

A proud milestone has been the rapid rollout of indigenous 4G technology. Dr. Pemmasani said, "We launched indigenous 4G on

100,000 towers within a single year and have now perfected it to near-global standards. India is now only the fifth country in the world to develop such deep indigenous 4G technology."

On the critical issue of rebuilding public trust, the Minister was pragmatic yet optimistic. He said, "We know trust cannot return overnight. Our tariffs are much cheaper than those of private players. We are giving One Rupee SIM cards through India Post offices so people can try our service. We are also working with India Post to ensure doorstep awareness in rural areas,

where postal workers actively explain BSNL's improved services. In villages where BSNL is the only reliable option, people should definitely subscribe."

Dr. Pemmasani highlighted one of the most impactful outcomes has been in remote and tribal areas. Around 35,000 villages previously lacked proper connectivity due to techno-commercial challenges, difficult terrain, or left-wing extremism. "Prime Minister Modi ji's vision is to connect every village, no matter how remote. We monitor progress every week. We have already installed around 25,000 tow-

ers covering these villages, with another 10,000 in progress."

He highlighted how connectivity is directly contributing to national security and social stability. He noted that in areas like Narayanpur in Chhattisgarh, BSNL's towers have enabled people to contact the police and authorities quickly. This empowerment is helping reduce left-wing extremism. Once connectivity reaches these regions, development follows, and extremism fades.

Complementing BSNL's efforts is the ambitious BharatNet project. "We are investing nearly ₹ 1,40,000 crore to provide high-speed fibre to every Gram Panchayat. Learning from the shortcomings of BharatNet 1 and 2, we have fixed the issues and are executing with full accountability. Currently, only 15 lakh rural households are connected. Our target is 1.5 crore households in the first phase," Dr. Pemmasani said. He added that village-level entrepreneurs are being encouraged to expand last-mile usage.

Dr. Pemmasani emphasised, "Communication infrastructure is central to Prime Minister Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047. It is not just about towers and cables, it is about changing the mindset and culture of public institutions."

In the last part of his interview, the MoS summed up his vision for BSNL in the next five years in three words "Trustworthy, proud, and profitable."

'Janjati Sanskritik Samagam'

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah today addressed the 'Janjati Sanskritik Samagam' organised in New Delhi on the occasion of the 150th birth anniversary year of Bhagwan Birsa Munda as the Chief Guest. In his address, Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah said that this conclave will be remembered for many years to come as a Mahakumbh of tribal communities. He said that after Bhagwan Birsa Munda, this is the first tribal movement that unites the entire country. He said that this year marks the 150th birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda. He noted that the Ulgulan movement had humbled the British, and despite the lack of communication facilities at that time, Bhagwan Birsa Munda succeeded in spreading the message from Jharkhand to Gujarat and across India that our faith is the true faith and that no one can encroach upon our forests. He said that water, forests, and mountains are centre of faith for our tribal brothers and

sisters, sources of livelihood, and an impregnable fortress that protects their identity and culture. He added that today, the greatest sustainable model is the one created by tribal communities. Shri Amit Shah said that all tribal communities have exemplified the principle of unity in diversity and diversity in unity. He said that the makers of our Constitution granted every individual the right to live with dignity with their faith. No one can force or lure anyone into religious conversion through greed, temptation, or coercion. He said that if the tribal communities resolve today to protect their faith, this commitment will keep us connected to our culture and nation. Shri Shah added that those trying to create divisions among us do not realise that thousands of years ago, Lord Rama, by eating the tasted berries offered by Shabari, taught us that we are all one. He said that today's conference and the presence of tribal communities in lakhs send a strong message to those who seek to create divisions in society.

Union Home Minister,

Shri Amit Shah said that a conspiracy is now being spread claiming that the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) will deprive tribal communities of their culture, traditions, and right to live according to their customs. He said that as the Home Minister of the Narendra Modi government, he wants to make it clear that no provision of the UCC will be imposed on tribal communities, nor will it infringe upon any of their rights. He said that the Modi government has implemented the UCC in Gujarat and Uttarakhand while making special provisions to keep all tribal communities outside its purview. Shri Shah added that he wants to tell those trying to create divisions that the UCC will not interfere with the traditions of any tribal community. Shri Amit Shah said that the Modi government has eliminated the five-decade-old scourge of Naxalism, whose violence had claimed more than 40,000 tribal lives, and that today the country has become completely free from the Naxal problem. He said that those who had obstruct-

ed the development of tribal communities and forest dwellers have been eliminated. Shri Shah said that in places where security forces' camps were once set up to combat Naxalites, Modi government has converted 70 such camps into Shaheed Veer Gundadhar Seva Dera public service centres. He added that the time has now come to take development to the hills and forests of tribal regions. He said that his party has always given priority to tribal welfare. Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee initiated the development of tribal communities by creating the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, and Prime Minister Modi has carried this work forward. He said that in the recent West Bengal elections, his party won all 16 tribal reserved seats.

Shri Shah said that Prime Minister Modi has worked consistently to advance tribal welfare. During the previous central government's tenure, the total budget for tribal welfare was ₹28,000 crore, which Prime Minister Modi has increased to ₹1.5 lakh crore. He added that the Modi government is

fully committed to the welfare of tribal communities.

Shri Amit Shah said that Shri Narendra Modi elevated Smt. Droupadi Murmu, who comes from a poor Santal family, to the office of the President of India, thereby working for the welfare of the entire tribal community. He said that it was during the tenure of Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji that Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh became tribal-majority states, and today both Odisha and Chhattisgarh have tribal Chief Ministers. He said that for the implementation of the PESA Act, the Government of India has established a PESA Cell, trained more than one lakh master trainers, and translated the PESA rules into several tribal languages such as Santali, Gondi, Bhoili, and Mundari. He added that the government has also created the PESA Gram Panchayat Development Plan portal for real-time monitoring. Shri Shah said that Madhya Pradesh's PESA law model is an ideal model, and all governments led by his party are working to advance it further.

Shri Amit Shah said that Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has implemented several major development schemes, including 722 Eklavya Model Schools, and ensured housing, electricity, tap water, health insurance coverage of up to ₹5 lakh, and monthly food ration support for every tribal family. Shri Shah said that this movement of the tribal communities will not only preserve us in the coming days but also keep us connected to our land, culture, and faith. He added that this movement is laying a strong foundation for strengthening the entire country. He said with the mantra 'Tu aur Mai Ek Rakt Hai' the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram has carried out an unbroken mission of service to tribal communities as silent workers. He added that this Mahakumbh will play a major role in protecting our culture, our land, and our faith. He urged people to stay away from misconceptions, identify those who create divisions, and move forward united towards building a developed and prosperous India by 2047.

ISB Mohali brought together stakeholders to advance AI-powered solutions

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), in collaboration with the Bharti Institute of Public Policy at the Indian School of Business (ISB), organised the Governance Summit 2026: Inclusive AI for Viksit Bharat at the ISB campus in Mohali on May 23, 2026. The fourth edition of the summit brought together policymakers, industry leaders, academics, civil society representatives and technology experts to deliberate on the role of artificial intelligence in shaping India's future development trajectory. The summit was designed as a platform to explore how emerging AI technologies can be effectively integrated into governance systems while ensuring that the benefits reach all sections of society. Discussions throughout the day centred on making AI a tool for inclusive growth, better public service delivery and sustainable economic development.

Delivering the inaugural keynote address, MeitY Secretary S. Krishnan highlighted the transformative potential of artificial intelligence for India. He underlined the government's commitment to building an AI ecosystem that is accessible, responsible and capable of serving every citizen, including those who remain on the margins of the digital economy.

Krishnan said artificial intelligence presents India with a unique opportunity to significantly improve productivity and governance while expanding access to essential services. He noted that sectors such as healthcare, education, manufacturing and financial inclusion stand to benefit substantially from the adoption of AI-driven solutions.



Addressing concerns regarding the impact of AI on employment, particularly cognitive and knowledge-based jobs, Krishnan acknowledged that such apprehensions are understandable. However, he expressed confidence that India is uniquely positioned to harness AI in a manner that promotes inclusive growth and creates new opportunities rather than merely replacing existing roles.

He further stressed that the country's demographic strengths, digital infrastructure and growing innovation ecosystem provide a strong foundation for leveraging AI to solve complex social and economic challenges.

According to him, the focus should remain on ensuring that technological advancement complements human capabilities.

The day-long programme featured four major thematic panel discussions examining AI's role across a range of critical sectors. Experts explored how artificial intelligence can contribute to the growth of digital commerce, enhance online safety, improve healthcare accessibility and affordability, and generate employment opportunities through digital entrepreneurship.

One of the key themes discussed was the role of AI in strengthening India's digital

economy. Panellists examined how AI-powered tools can help businesses improve efficiency, personalise consumer experiences and expand access to digital markets, particularly for small enterprises and rural entrepreneurs.

Another significant discussion focused on online safety, especially for women and children. Experts deliberated on the use of AI-driven monitoring systems, content moderation tools and cybersecurity measures to create safer digital spaces while balancing concerns related to privacy and freedom of expression.

Healthcare emerged as another major area of focus during the summit. Participants discussed how artificial intelligence can help bridge healthcare gaps by enabling early diagnosis, improving treatment planning, supporting telemedicine services and reducing healthcare costs, especially in underserved regions. The summit also addressed the future of work in an AI-driven economy. Discussions examined how artificial intelligence can create new employment avenues, support entrepreneurship and facilitate skill development while helping workers adapt to rapidly changing technological environments. Alongside the panel discussions, a dedicated roundtable session explored the practical aspects of operationalising AI for last-mile public service delivery. Representatives from various levels of government discussed ways to deploy AI solutions effectively from state administrations down to district authorities and gram panchayats, ensuring that benefits reach citizens at the grassroots level.



Briefs :

Gurugram Public Schools Fall Behind Punjab's Lowest Performing District

Gurugram: A shocking new education report has shattered the image of Haryana's academic progress, revealing that public schools in Gurugram are performing worse than schools in Punjab's lowest-ranked district, Patiala. The official Performance Grading Index report released by the Union Ministry of Education highlights a major problem inside the state's public schooling system. While Gurugram is famous worldwide for housing some of the wealthiest, most expensive private international schools in India, the report exposes an alarming and massive gap when it comes to the quality of education provided in its government-run schools. This sharp division requires immediate intervention from the state government. The official data shows that Gurugram managed to get a low score of 375, falling behind Punjab's poorest-performing district, Patiala, which scored 383. This direct comparison proves that even the richest and most developed district in Haryana is failing to match the basic public school performance of Punjab's worst area. Looking closer at Haryana, Panchkula took the number one spot as the best-performing district with a score of 373, while the district of Nuh sat at the very bottom with just 275 points, showing a massive inequality in education across different regions of the state.

Jhajjar Authorities Ordered to Fix Accident Prone Road Entry and Exit Points

Jhajjar: In a major effort to cut down on traffic accidents, Jhajjar Deputy Commissioner Varsha Khangwal has ordered local departments to immediately install proper road signs and safety features at all entry and exit routes of the city. She instructed officials to use reflective cat's eyes and clear road paint, while also identifying dangerous sharp turns so they can plan both quick fixes and permanent solutions to save lives. These strict instructions were given during a district progress meeting focused on road safety, school transportation protection, and a dedicated mobile app used for reporting bad roads. The top official made it clear that all government branches must work as a team, warning that absolutely no laziness or delay will be tolerated when it comes to keeping the public safe on the roads. The leader reviewed the official reports submitted by various departments regarding unresolved traffic safety complaints. She demanded that all assigned safety upgrades be finished within a strict timeline. If a road has a bad design that causes crashes, the responsible department must write up a detailed report and fix the structure right away. Regarding the road complaint mobile app, the official ordered staff to double-check every single issue posted by citizens and hold specific officers responsible for fixing them quickly. She suggested sorting the complaints by how bad they are so the most dangerous road issues get fixed first. Furthermore, she ordered workers to trim down overgrown tree branches and wild bushes that block a driver's view around blind corners.

Haryana Chief Minister Meets Influential Spiritual Leader in Punjab

Chandigarh: Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini paid a special visit to Baba Gurinder Singh Dhillon, the head of the Radha Soami Satsang Beas, at the group's main headquarters in Amritsar. While the government officially described the high-profile meeting as a friendly courtesy call to seek spiritual blessings, political experts state that the visit carries massive political weight for the region. The meeting happened right after the ruling party's new state chief made a similar trip, highlighting a strategic push. The party is planning to contest the upcoming 2027 state elections in Punjab completely on its own, breaking away from its old local political allies. Historically, the party has only had strong support among city voters, meaning it desperately needs to win over rural and farming communities to succeed. The spiritual group has millions of dedicated fol-



lowers from all walks of life, including both rural and urban Hindus and Sikhs. By building a close relationship with the spiritual leader, the party hopes to calm down the anger it has faced from local farming unions since the major agricultural protests a few years ago. Because the spiritual center holds immense respect among these farming families, the con-

nection helps the party enter rural spaces without facing angry protests. Additionally, using the Haryana Chief Minister for this task is a calculated move. As a prominent leader from a backward caste group, he is frequently chosen by central party leaders to handle delicate regional diplomacy. His regular visits to local

temples and spiritual centers are meant to project a friendly and welcoming image to various community voters, helping to draw support away from rival political parties. This meeting follows a previous interaction in March when the spiritual leader visited the Chief Minister's official residence to discuss social issues. The political landscape

of Punjab is currently witnessing a fascinating shift in strategic maneuvering, as highlighted by the recent high-profile visit of Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini to the Radha Soami Satsang Beas headquarters in Amritsar. Officially categorized by government channels as a routine and friendly courtesy call intended solely to seek spiritual blessings, the interaction has nonetheless ignited intense speculation among regional political analysts. Such meetings between powerful elected officials and influential spiritual figures are rarely viewed through a single lens, especially in a region where social and political currents are so deeply intertwined. By traveling to the main headquarters of the spiritual group, the Chief Minister has effectively signaled the beginning of a sophisticated outreach campaign that extends far beyond the borders of his own state.

Hundreds of Haryana Government Dental Surgeons Trained in Quick Denture Making

Rohtak: The Post Graduate Institute of Dental Sciences in Rohtak is rapidly transforming into a major state-level training center for advanced dental methods, after conducting a workshop to train around 150 government dental surgeons in a fast procedure called "Denture in a Day." This specialized two-day training program was designed to teach doctors from across the state how to make high-quality false teeth in a fraction of the usual time. The principal of the institute explained that the core goal of the workshop is to share this advanced medical knowledge so that patients visiting local district and civil hospitals can get quick treatment close to home. She emphasized that medical experts have a duty to train government doctors so that elderly villagers do not have to travel long distances to big cities like Rohtak just to get their teeth treated. The training covered advanced modern technologies, including digital mouth

scanning, computerized teeth designing, specialized dental software, and highly precise jaw tracking tools. These modern systems have drastically improved how well the dentures fit and how comfortable they feel for the patient. In the past, traditional methods required multiple hospital visits and took several days to complete. Now, using computerized planning, a perfectly fitted set of false teeth can be created and given to a patient within just one or two days, saving them money, time, and physical pain. The institute is currently the only hospital in Haryana that provides complete false teeth to patients immediately without any waiting lists. The training coordinators mentioned that the workshop included practical hands-on sessions with real patients, digital design practice, and detailed lectures to ensure that every attending doctor feels fully confident to perform the fast procedures alone at their local hospitals.

Ambala Killer Receives Life Sentence for 2020 Shooting Case

Ambala: A local court has sentenced a man to spend the rest of his life in prison after finding him guilty of murdering a fellow villager in a shooting that took place six years ago. The Additional District and Sessions Judge gave out the harsh punishment to Harneep Kumar, also known as Neepu, and ordered him to pay a fine of 30,000 rupees for killing a man named Deepak Kumar. According to the prosecution lawyers, the tragic incident occurred on July 19, 2020, in Khanpur Brahmana village. The victim's cousin filed the original police complaint, stating that he was busy cutting grass in a field while the victim was working nearby. A short while later, the victim started walking home with a heavy bundle of animal fodder on his head. Moments later, a loud gunshot rang out, and the victim was found with a bullet

wound in his chest. He was rushed to the local hospital but was immediately pronounced dead by doctors. The police eventually tracked down and arrested six individuals in connection with the murder, recovering the murder weapon along with live and spent bullets. During the long court trial, one of the co-accused individuals passed away, so the charges against him were dropped. The official investigation revealed that the victim had gotten into a physical fight with Harneep a few months prior to the shooting. To get revenge for the beating, Harneep teamed up with his friends to hatch a deadly plan. The final court order explained that the entire group conspired together, but Harneep was the one who pulled the trigger while riding on a two-wheeler with a friend. Two other accomplices acted as lookouts to

track the victim's movements, while another pair handled getting the illegal gun. The court sentenced Harneep to life in prison for murder and gave him an additional three-year sentence under weapons laws, with both punishments running at the same time. An Ambala local court has sentenced a man to life imprisonment after convicting him of murdering a fellow villager in a shooting incident that occurred six years prior. The Additional District and Sessions Judge handed down the sentence to Harneep Kumar, also known as Neepu, and ordered him to pay a fine of 30,000 rupees for the murder of Deepak Kumar. According to the prosecution, the incident took place on July 19, 2020, in Khanpur Brahmana village. The victim's cousin, who filed the initial police com-

plaint, stated that he was cutting grass in a field while the victim worked nearby. Shortly after the victim began walking home with a bundle of animal fodder, a gunshot was heard, and the victim was discovered with a bullet wound to his chest. He was transported to a local hospital, where doctors pronounced him dead. Following an investigation, the police arrested six individuals in connection with the case and recovered the weapon used in the crime alongside live and spent ammunition. During the course of the trial, one of the co-accused individuals passed away, leading to the abatement of charges against him. The official investigation established that the shooting was motivated by a physical altercation that had occurred between the victim and Harneep a few months prior to the incident.

Yamunanagar College Student Wins Silver Medal at National Sports Games

Yamunanagar: Guru Nanak Khalsa College in Yamunanagar is celebrating an impressive athletic milestone after one of its senior students won a silver medal at a prestigious national university sports event. The young athlete secured the second-place prize in the team sword-fighting event at the Khelo India University Games, which took place in Jaipur. The winner, Nitesh, is currently finishing his final year of a Bachelor of Science degree. His impressive achievement has brought immense pride to the entire college community and has boosted the school's reputation for producing top-tier athletes for university competitions. The president of the college's governing board publicly congratulated the young student for his hard work, stating that his national success serves as an incredible example for other young sports enthusiasts to



follow their dreams with discipline, confidence, and focus. The college principal also praised the student and thanked him for showing true dedication to his sport. Guru Nanak Khalsa College in Yamunanagar is celebrating an athletic milestone after one of its senior students won a silver medal at a prestigious national university sports event. The young athlete secured the second-

place prize in the team sword-fighting event at the Khelo India University Games, which took place in Jaipur. The winner, Nitesh, is currently finishing his final year of a Bachelor of Science degree. His achievement has brought pride to the entire college community and has boosted the school's reputation for producing top-tier athletes for university competitions.

Minister Orders Urgent Completion of Rainwater Pump Station Before Monsoon

Yamunanagar: State Energy and Transport Minister Anil Vij has ordered city officials to prioritize and finish a major rainwater drainage project immediately to save local businesses from heavy flooding during the upcoming rainy season. The instructions were given after a group of business leaders from the Haryana Chamber of Commerce and Industry met with the minister to explain their worries. The head of the local business group told the minister that a critical water pump station meant to drain out heavy rain from the commercial area was still not finished. Because of this construction delay, factory owners were terrified that their properties would submerge under water once the

monsoon rains arrived. Responding immediately to their fears, the minister called the local mayor and municipal commissioner on the phone, ordering them to finish the pump house construction on an urgent basis. He also promised the business owners that he will personally visit the industrial area to check on the construction progress during his next official trip to the city. The business leaders thanked the minister, noting that factories are the true backbone of the local economy and that getting quick solutions to infrastructure problems is essential for survival. The upcoming monsoon season has triggered a wave of proactive governance in Yamunanagar, as State Energy and Trans-



port Minister Anil Vij issued a decisive directive to local administrative authorities regarding critical urban infrastructure. Recognizing the

imminent threat that seasonal downturns pose to commercial zones, the minister has ordered city officials to prioritize and accelerate the

completion of a major rainwater drainage project without any further delays. This high-level intervention underscores the state govern-

ment's commitment to safeguarding economic hubs from the devastating impacts of urban flooding, which routinely disrupts commerce and inflicts severe financial losses. By demanding immediate action, the leadership aims to preempt the chaotic disruptions that typically characterize the arrival of heavy rains in industrial corridors. The minister's urgent directive was catalyzed by a crucial meeting with a delegation of concerned business leaders representing the Haryana Chamber of Commerce and Industry. This influential group of industry stakeholders approached the minister to articulate their deep anxieties regarding the vulnerable state of local in-

dustrial infrastructure. They presented a detailed account of how recurrent waterlogging and inadequate drainage systems have historically crippled business operations, damaged expensive machinery, and ruined raw materials. The delegation emphasized that without immediate government intervention, the local manufacturing sector would face another cycle of preventable economic distress, threatening both productivity and employment within the region. During the course of the meeting, the head of the local business collective specifically identified a critical water pump station that remains unfinished despite the fast-approaching monsoon deadline.

Haryana Leader Praises the Brave History and Sacrifices of the Sikh Community

Chandigarh: Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini praised the Sikh community during a special event, stating that their historic legacy of immense bravery, personal sacrifice, and fighting to protect religious freedom serves as a beautiful inspiration for all generations. He spoke during a thanksgiving event organized by community members at the state guest house in Chandigarh. The leader explained that throughout history, the community has provided incredible examples of courage. He noted that from the very first spiritual founder down to the final living guru, the community's spiritual teachers have always shown humanity how to live with equality, service, and bravery. He specifically highlighted the ultimate sacrifices made by historical figures

who gave up their lives to protect the spiritual and cultural values of the nation against oppressive rulers. The Chief Minister also shared that the national tourism department has officially approved a major historical travel route connecting several famous holy sites and heritage locations under a special regional development plan. He added that the central government has successfully opened up dedicated travel corridors to holy sites across borders and launched direct commercial flights connecting major historical cities to make it easier for pilgrims to travel and pray. The rich historical legacy and profound spiritual contributions of the Sikh community were the central focus of a high-profile gathering in Chandigarh, where Haryana Chief Minister

Nayab Singh Saini paid a resounding tribute to their enduring spirit. Speaking at a special thanksgiving event organized by prominent community members at the state guest house, the Chief Minister emphasized that the community's history is an invaluable cornerstone of the nation's cultural identity. He stated that the historic legacy of immense bravery, personal sacrifice, and an unwavering commitment to protecting religious freedom serves as a beautiful and timeless inspiration for all generations. By hosting the event within the formal corridors of the state apparatus, the administration sought to give institutional recognition to the community's deep-rooted impact on regional and national history. During his address, the leader explained that

throughout the centuries, the community has consistently provided incredible examples of courage and moral fortitude in the face of severe adversity. He noted that from the very first spiritual founder, Guru Nanak Dev Ji, down to the final living guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the community's spiritual teachers have always shown humanity how to live with absolute equality, selfless service, and unmatched bravery. This spiritual lineage, he remarked, did not merely preach philosophical ideals but actively manifested them through a lifestyle dedicated to social justice and the protection of the oppressed. The teachings of the gurus continue to act as a moral compass, guiding modern governance and community relations toward inclusivity and mutual respect.

Armed Criminal Gang Caught by Police After Wild Vehicle Chase in Palwal

Palwal: Four dangerous members of an out-of-state criminal network were arrested after a dramatic shootout with the police in Palwal district. During the violent confrontation, a brave police constable and one of the armed criminals sustained bullet wounds to their legs before the rest of the gang was captured. The police recovered a rifle, two handguns, and a massive stash of live bullets from the suspects. Officials stated that the group was actively planning to carry out a major violent crime in the area, such as a targeted murder or a large-scale armed robbery. Acting on an anonymous tip that a car full of armed men from Uttar Pradesh was driving into the district to meet local criminals, an anti-theft police unit set up a trap near the expressway on Friday evening.

When the officers spotted the suspicious car and tried to pull it over, the driver stepped on the gas and tried to escape toward another town. During the high-speed chase, the car temporarily stopped at a crossroads. As a constable walked up to the vehicle, one of the hidden gang members rolled down the window and shot him in the leg. The criminals then smashed through a police barricade and sped down a rural road, starting a second chase. The wild pursuit finally ended when one of the gang's car tires exploded and blew out. The criminals jumped out of the disabled vehicle and started firing blindly at the police cars, causing heavy damage to the police transport. The officers returned fire in self-defense, hitting one of

the shooters in the leg. While one suspect managed to run away into the dark fields, the police successfully tackled and arrested the other four men. The injured criminal and the shot constable were both rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment. Investigators later discovered that the gang members have long criminal histories in neighboring states, with the lead shooter facing 25 separate criminal cases for gang activity. Police have identified the runner and are searching the region to arrest him. An out-of-state criminal network was dismantled in Palwal district following a high-speed vehicle pursuit and a violent shootout with law enforcement. The operation resulted in the arrest of four gang members, while a police constable and one of the suspects sustained gunshot wounds to their legs during the confrontation.

Rain Deficit Erased as Heavy Downpours Lashes Punjab and Haryana

Chandigarh: A powerful four-day spell of rain across northwest India has completely wiped out the water shortage in Punjab for the month of May. Just a few days ago, the state was facing a huge rain deficit of 37 percent. However, after heavy showers over the final weekend of the month, Punjab ended up with 25 percent more rain than its long-term average.

The India Meteorological Department announced that this wet weather is not over yet. Punjab and Haryana are expected to see continuous rainy conditions until June 6, with scattered showers likely in several areas. This changes an earlier weather forecast which predicted a dry period during the first week of June. Most places in both states have experienced light to moderate rainfall, while a few spots faced heavy storms and strong, gusty winds. Looking at the numbers, Punjab received 21.6 mm of rain from May 1 to May 31, which is well above the normal average of 17.3 mm for this month. If we look at the entire season starting from March 1, the total rainfall in



the state is 22 percent above normal. Almost every district in Punjab received good rainfall over the weekend, except for Moga. Nawanshahar recorded the highest rainfall at 33.7 mm, followed closely by Ludhiana and Gurdaspur. Other areas like Fatehgarh Sahib, Jalandhar, Patiala, and Ropar also received significant showers.

Even with these heavy weekend rains, seven districts in Punjab are still facing a seasonal water shortage ranging from 9 to 61 percent, including Patiala, Hoshiarpur, and Mansa. In neighbor-

ing Haryana, Panchkula, Kurukshetra, and Karnal were the wettest areas over the weekend, while Palwal and Charkhi Dadri stayed dry. Overall, Haryana's rainfall for May was just two percent above normal, but its total seasonal rainfall is at a comfortable 17 percent surplus. However, eight districts in Haryana have still not received their usual amount of rain for the season. Because of the continuous rain and cloudy skies, temperatures across both states dropped significantly below normal. The highest

temperature recorded in Punjab was 34.5 degrees Celsius in Bathinda, which also recorded the lowest night temperature at 18 degrees Celsius. In Haryana, Hisar saw the highest temperature at 36.9 degrees Celsius, while Ambala recorded the lowest at 18 degrees Celsius. The agrarian states of Punjab and Haryana have witnessed a dramatic and highly consequential transformation in their weather patterns over the closing days of the month. A powerful and persistent four-day spell of widespread precipi-

tation sweeping across northwest India has completely erased the severe water anxieties that had been building up throughout the region. Prior to this unexpected meteorological shift, large parts of Punjab were grappling with a profound moisture deficit that threatened to complicate early agricultural planning and strain local irrigation infrastructure. The sudden arrival of these heavy, rejuvenating showers over the final weekend of May successfully reversed the downward trend, transforming an alarming environmental deficit into a highly encouraging surplus. The statistical turnaround has been nothing short of remarkable for agricultural observers who closely monitor the region's climate data. Just a few days before the final weekend, official meteorological records indicated that Punjab was facing a staggering rain deficit of approximately 37 percent for the month of May.

This substantial shortage had raised concerns about rising soil temperatures and increased power demand for groundwater pumping.

Haryana Launches Special Scheme to Help Traders Clear Old Tax Dues

Rohtak: The Haryana Government has announced a new One-Time Settlement Scheme for 2026 to help business owners easily clear their long-pending tax debts. This special program will run for 120 days, starting from June 1 and ending on September 28. Local officials mentioned that a similar scheme launched last year was incredibly popular, helping over 115,000 traders settle their issues, which encouraged the government to bring it back.

The current relief scheme covers unpaid taxes across seven different old tax laws. In a major relief for small businesses, any taxpayer who owes up to 1 lakh rupees for any financial year will not even need to apply for the scheme. The government will automatically forgive their unpaid taxes, interest, and penalties.

For businesses that owe more than 1 lakh rupees under the old Haryana General Sales Tax Act of 1973, the government is offering a massive tax discount of up to 70 percent. There are also special rules to solve old cases that have been stuck simply because traders could not submit certain official tax

forms in the past.

The scheme offers a complete 100 percent waiver on all accumulated interest and penalties, while the discount on the actual tax amount depends on the category of the case. To make things even easier for taxpayers, the government will allow businesses to pay their settled amounts in smaller installments rather than all at once. The ultimate goal of this initiative is to resolve old legal disputes, clear out pending court cases, and create a friendlier relationship between tax authorities and local traders. Once a case is settled under this scheme, the government will stop all legal actions and recovery processes against that taxpayer. The Haryana Government has announced a new One-Time Settlement Scheme for 2026, designed to help business owners easily clear their long-pending tax debts.

This special amnesty program will run for a specific window of 120 days, officially kicking off on June 1 and wrapping up on September 28. According to local financial officials, a similar tax relief initiative launched during the previous fiscal cycle proved to be incredibly

popular, successfully helping more than 115,000 traders settle their outstanding compliance issues. This high level of community participation and economic success directly encouraged the state administration to bring the program back for another round.

The current relief scheme is broad in scope, covering unpaid liabilities across seven different legacy tax laws that existed prior to modern tax frameworks. In a major move to assist small-scale enterprises and local shopkeepers, any taxpayer whose total outstanding dues amount to 1 lakh rupees or less for any given financial year will be exempted from the paperwork entirely. For these specific micro-cases, business owners will not even need to file a formal application for the scheme; instead, the government will automatically forgive their entire unpaid tax amount, along with all associated interest and penalties.

For larger businesses that owe more than 1 lakh rupees under the old Haryana General Sales Tax Act of 1973, the state is offering a massive financial discount that slashes up to 70 percent off the principal tax liability.

Haryana Faces Scorching Heatwaves Despite Normal Rainfall in May

Chandigarh: Haryana ended the month of May with almost the exact amount of rainfall it usually gets historically. Data from the weather department shows that the state received 20.7 mm of rain, which is just a tiny three percent increase over the normal average of 20.1 mm. However, this rain was not shared equally across the region, as some districts received record-breaking downpours while others suffered through extreme dry spells.

Kurukshetra and Nuh experienced the highest amount of excess rain, receiving more than double their usual rainfall for the month. Other areas like Panipat, Palwal, Karnal, Mahendragarh, and Charkhi Dadri also got a lot of extra rain. On the other hand, Rohtak faced the worst dry spell, missing out on 67 percent of its usual rainfall, while Kaithal, Bhiwani, Hisar, and Jhajjar also faced notable shortages. Fatehabad was the only district that received exactly its nor-

mal amount of rain.

Even though the overall rain numbers looked normal, the state had to deal with intense, punishing heatwaves during the month. Major cities saw temperatures rise to dangerous levels. Ambala recorded a maximum temperature of 45.8 degrees Celsius on May 21, marking its hottest May day in at least ten years. Hisar followed closely at 45.4 degrees Celsius on the same day, and Karnal touched 44.6 degrees Celsius, matching its own ten-year heat record. This year's weather is very different from May of last year, which saw massive rainfall that was nearly triple the normal average. Looking at weather records from the last 26 years, Haryana's May weather changes drastically from year to year; the highest rainfall ever recorded was in 2008, while the driest May happened in 2013 when the state received almost no rain at all. City records show a similar drop from last year's historic rains to this year's normal, dry, and hot condi-

tions. The state of Haryana concluded the month of May with a total rainfall accumulation that almost perfectly aligned with its historical baseline averages. According to official data released by the regional meteorological department, the state recorded an overall cumulative rainfall of 20.7 mm over the course of the month. This final figure represents a marginal three percent increase when measured against the long-term historical norm of 20.1 mm, indicating an ostensibly balanced seasonal performance on paper. However, this statistical equilibrium masks a highly fragmented geographical distribution across the state, as specific districts were inundated with near-record precipitation while several neighboring territories grappled with severe moisture deficits. A deeper analysis of the district-wise records reveals the stark climatic contrasts that characterized the state's weather patterns throughout May. The districts of Kurukshetra and

Nuh emerged as the wettest pockets in the state, experiencing an extraordinary deluge that delivered more than double their respective long-term historical averages for the month. This localized bounty of precipitation extended across several other regions as well, with Panipat, Palwal, Karnal, Mahendragarh, and Charkhi Dadri all registering substantial volumes of surplus rainfall. Conversely, the district of Rohtak endured the most severe dry spell in the region, missing out on a staggering 67 percent of its typical monthly moisture, while Kaithal, Bhiwani, Hisar, and Jhajjar also logged significant rainfall shortages. Amid these extreme variations, Fatehabad stood out as the sole territory to receive exactly its statistically normal quota of rain. Despite the fact that the aggregated statewide rainfall numbers hovered around the normal mark, the populace had to endure periods of intense, punishing heatwaves that dominated large portions of the month.

Huge Fire Destroys Chemical Plant in Gurugram

Gurugram: A massive fire broke out at a chemical factory in the Pataudi area of Gurugram late Saturday night, destroying the entire building. It took a large team of firefighters and around 12 fire engines from different parts of the district to fight the flames throughout the night. Fortunately, nobody was hurt or killed in the incident. Officials stated that a major tragedy was avoided because the factory was completely closed for the weekend, meaning no workers were inside when the fire started.

The emergency began at the Om Sairam Industry plant, located near Mushepur-Khursampur village, just after midnight. High flames and thick black smoke quickly covered the property, causing local police, fire departments, and civil defense teams to rush to the scene. The first emergency call was made at 1:40 am, and the arriving firefighters quickly realized the fire was



too large to handle alone, asking for immediate backup from nearby stations. Because the factory contained dangerous chemicals and raw materials, fire engines had to be called in from multiple areas including Manesar, Bhim Nagar, Sector 37, and Sector 29. Firefighters surrounded the burning factory from all sides to make sure the fire did not spread to

neighboring buildings. The trucks had to make multiple trips to refill their water tanks before the fire could finally be controlled. Once the main flames were put out, the emergency teams started spraying water on the hot ruins to cool down the area. Authorities have mentioned that they will perform a complete search inside the destroyed factory once it is safe

and cool enough to enter. The exact cause of the fire and the total financial loss are still unknown, and a proper investigation will begin after teams examine the damaged site. A major fire broke out at a chemical manufacturing plant in the Pataudi region of Gurugram late Saturday night, resulting in the complete destruction of the facility's structural infrastructure.

Chief Minister Promises to Complete All Government Pledges by 2029

Chandigarh: Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini announced that his administration is fully focused on protecting the respect, rights, and future of the Dhanak community. He emphasized that helping the community grow and ensuring a better life for their children are among the highest goals of his current government. The leader announced that a major cultural festival celebrating Sant Kabir will be held in Bhiwani on June

29, and he plans to travel to neighboring states to participate in similar community celebrations. He proudly stated that the government will fulfill every single one of its official development promises by the year 2029. Out of their total list, 63 development goals have already been completed, while intense work is currently being done to finish 153 other projects ahead of schedule. The Chief Minister praised the community, stat-

ing that their long history is filled with stories of self-respect, personal sacrifice, and helping build the nation. He noted that community members have always been at the frontline of history, whether fighting for India's freedom in the past or working toward modern development today. He concluded by saying that the time has come to amplify the community's voice regarding social justice, describing them as the true keepers of ancient spiritual

legacies. The historical contributions, social rights, and future growth of the Dhanak community took center stage during a significant state address in Chandigarh, where Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini affirmed his administration's unwavering commitment to their welfare. The Chief Minister emphasized that his government is fully focused on protecting the respect, rights, and long-term future of the

Dhanak community. He highlighted that fostering robust socio-economic growth within the community and ensuring a prosperous, opportunity-filled life for their children stand among the highest priorities of his current governance agenda. By prioritizing inclusive development, the state aims to bring marginalized segments into the mainstream of regional progress. In line with honoring the cultural anchors of the com-

munity, the Chief Minister announced that a major state-level cultural festival celebrating the timeless legacy of Sant Kabir is scheduled to be held in Bhiwani on June 29. Recognizing that spiritual and cultural identity transcends state boundaries, he also expressed his intention to travel to neighboring states to actively participate in similar community-led celebrations. These initiatives are designed to strengthen social cohesion

and provide a platform for celebrating the shared ethical values, equality, and spiritual teachings that Sant Kabir championed, which continue to inspire modern social justice frameworks. On the administrative front, the Chief Minister proudly stated that his government is operating on a highly disciplined timeline, promising to fulfill every single one of its official development pledges by the year 2029. He provided a transparent break-

down of the administration's progress, revealing that 63 critical development goals have already been successfully completed and delivered to the public. Furthermore, he noted that intense, round-the-clock work is currently being executed across various departments to finish 153 other pending infrastructure and welfare projects well ahead of their initial schedules, demonstrating a proactive approach to state governance.

Haryana Chief Minister to Address Public Issues Directly in Morni

Panchkula: Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini is scheduled to host a live public grievance hearing at the Government Polytechnic College in Morni on June 3.

The Chief Minister will listen directly to the problems faced by local citizens and will issue immediate orders to government officials right on the spot to ensure that the complaints are resolved without any delay.

The residents of the hilly Morni area have been struggling with a severe shortage of clean drinking water during the hot summer months. They also face highly unpredictable electricity cuts, and local citizens have complained that the power company's helpline call centers are completely useless and



do not respond to their complaints.

Furthermore, many isolated villages in the area have terrible road access, leading to demands for a strong steel

bridge to prevent communities from being cut off during the heavy monsoon season. The local administration is busy setting up the venue to make sure the event goes

smoothly. Aside from solving civic complaints, the Chief Minister will also spend time talking to local farmers and agricultural organizations.

The goal of this interaction is to push for organic and natural farming techniques, as the Haryana Government is actively trying to get farmers to drop chemical fertilizers to increase their income, lower their farming expenses, and save the health of the soil.

The hilly region of Morni is preparing for a direct administrative intervention as Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini is scheduled to host a live public grievance hearing at the local Government Polytechnic College on June 3.

This high-profile event is designed to bypass standard bureaucratic delays, allowing local citizens to present their daily struggles directly to the head of the state government.

Big Business Summit in Gurugram to Launch New Manufacturing Initiatives

Gurugram: The Haryana Government is set to introduce a major development plan called the "Make in Haryana" policy on Monday, along with nine other specialized industrial guidelines, during a massive business convention in Gurugram. The grand event is aimed at bringing fresh investments into the state and speeding up factory growth.

The event will feature top state leaders, including Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini and Industries Minister Rao Narbir Singh, alongside global business executives, small business owners, and foreign delegates. Government representatives explained that the new economic layout is specifically created to make Haryana a prime spot for global manufacturing companies. The goals are to scale up businesses, support small factories, create thousands of new jobs, and make it much

easier for companies to operate smoothly.

During the summit, the state government is also scheduled to sign several official business agreements with top-tier corporations, proving that investors remain highly confident in the region's financial future. Officials noted that the new policies emphasize fast government approvals, strong ties between businesses and authorities, and a highly competitive global market. The meeting will likely include several new announcements regarding infrastructure upgrades for factories.

Haryana has rapidly become a favorite spot for massive corporate investments due to its close proximity to the national capital, excellent highway and train systems, and large shipping networks. The state has seen booming growth in multiple modern sectors, including car manu-

facturing, electronics, food production, data storage centers, pharmaceutical labs, and information technology. The launch of this new policy is seen as a major milestone to keep the state ahead of its economic rivals and turn it into a future-ready industrial hub.

The Haryana Government is set to introduce a major development plan called the "Make in Haryana" policy on Monday, along with nine other specialized industrial guidelines, during a massive business convention in Gurugram. The grand event is aimed at bringing fresh investments into the state and speeding up factory growth. The event will feature top state leaders, including Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini and Industries Minister Rao Narbir Singh, alongside global business executives, small business owners, and foreign delegates.



Gill backs traditional cricket over T20's boundary-hitting obsession

Ahmedabad: Gujarat Titans captain Shubman Gill has challenged the prevailing T20 batting philosophy ahead of the IPL final, insisting that success in the format is not solely built on explosive power-hitting but on consistently "getting the job done."

At a time when most teams have embraced an ultra-aggressive approach from the outset, Gujarat Titans have carved out a contrasting path, relying on measured starts, strike rotation and preserving wickets before accelerating later in the innings.

Defending his side's method, Gill said results mattered more than the manner in which they were achieved.

"I think it's all about getting the job done, isn't it? It doesn't matter how you get it done, as long as you keep getting the job done," Gill told reporters ahead of the title clash against Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

Gujarat's approach has been exemplified by the opening partnership of Gill and Sai Sudharsan, who have combined traditional accumulation with timely aggression to emerge as one of the most productive batting pairs of the season.

Gill argued that reducing dot balls and keeping the scoreboard moving through singles and doubles remained the foundation of successful batting, even in an era dominated by six-hitting.

"The wickets have been really good, but sometimes the wicket



tends to be a bit on the slower side. Then it's important to find gaps and run well because that's the foundation of any format you're playing," he said.

"The team that plays fewer dot balls has a better chance of getting a better score."

His remarks come amid growing discussions over whether modern T20 teams have become overly reliant on boundary-hitting at the expense of conventional batting principles. Gujarat's consistent performances this season have offered a counterpoint to that trend, with the franchise often prioritising partnerships and game awareness over relentless attacking intent.

Gill's comments also reflected

the broader philosophy that has underpinned Gujarat's campaign — efficiency over spectacle, and execution over aggression.

With the IPL final looming, the Gujarat skipper's endorsement of a more balanced batting template has added another layer to the debate over whether the shortest format still has room for old-school cricketing values in an increasingly power-driven game.

Gill's defence of a more traditional batting model was mirrored in his explanation of Gujarat's bowling philosophy. He said the Titans' pace attack had benefited from sticking to conventional Test-match lengths with the new ball, arguing that good-length deliveries remained the hard-

est balls for batters to attack regardless of the format.

"As a batsman I know the hardest ball to hit is the good-length ball. There's a reason why Test-match length works because it is the hardest ball to hit as a batsman with the new ball," he said.

The 26-year-old also pointed to Gujarat's successful use of short-pitched bowling against Rajasthan Royals in Qualifier 2, where teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Suryavanshi was repeatedly challenged with bouncers despite scoring a blistering 96.

Beyond tactics, Gill dismissed suggestions that Gujarat's hectic travel schedule could prove a disadvantage in the final. While acknowledging that RCB may enjoy a physical edge after a longer break, he maintained that the title would ultimately be decided by mentality rather than fitness.

"Physically they might have an advantage. But finals are all about mental strength, so the team that is mentally up there for the challenge is the one that's going to win," he said.

Gill also viewed Ahmedabad as a potential advantage for Gujarat because of their familiarity with local conditions.

Taken together, Gill's remarks presented a clear picture of Gujarat's cricketing identity — a side that continues to trust traditional batting accumulation, classical bowling lengths and mental resilience in an era increasingly dominated by power-hitting and high-risk cricket.

4th PAFI National Armwrestling & Para Armwrestling Championship commences in Gandhinagar

Gandhinagar: The 4th National Armwrestling & Para Armwrestling Championship has officially commenced at Rashtriya Raksha University, Gandhinagar, bringing together more than 1,800 athletes from across India in one of the country's largest armwrestling competitions.

Organised by the Armwrestling Sports Association Gujarat under the leadership of President Rajendrasinh Parmar and Treasurer Mayank Patel, and conducted under the aegis of the People's Armwrestling Federation India (PAFI), the four-day event is being held from May 30 to June 1.

The championship features competitions across multiple categories, including sub-junior, junior, senior, youth, para and master divisions for both men and women. Athletes from various states have gathered at the university campus, where full accommodation arrangements have been made for participants throughout the event.

The scale of participation highlights the growing popularity of armwrestling in India, with the championship emerging as a key national-level platform for identifying and nurturing talent across age groups and categories.

One of the major highlights of the tournament is

the participation of several prominent athletes from the Pro Panja League, who are representing their respective states and competing for national honours. Their presence has significantly raised the competitive intensity of the championship.

The top two finishers in each category will qualify for the upcoming World Armwrestling & Para Armwrestling Championship, scheduled to be held in New Delhi from October 29 to November 7, 2026, making this event a crucial stepping stone for international representation.

The most competitive category so far has been the senior men's 90 kg division, which has attracted several well-known Pro Panja League athletes, including Denic Lalruatlunanga, Tawheed Shaikh, Dara Singh Handa, Asker Ali, Pranjit Saikia, Satnam Singh, and Pramod Mukhi, all vying for podium finishes and world championship qualification.

The opening ceremony was attended by renowned strength athlete Vispy Kharradi, popularly known as the "Steel Man of India," along with his wife, who graced the occasion as special guests.

Adding to the excitement, actor Suniel Shetty extended a special message wishing success to all participating athletes, organisers and officials, further boost-

ing morale at the event.

Speaking at the ceremony, Preeti Jhangiani, President of the People's Armwrestling Federation India (PAFI) and Vice President of the Asian Armwrestling Federation (AAF), highlighted the rapid growth of armwrestling in India.

She noted that the participation of over 1,800 athletes under one roof reflects the increasing passion, discipline and development of the sport across the country. She also expressed optimism about witnessing strong performances throughout the championship.

According to her, the event serves as an important pathway for athletes aiming to represent India at the world level, with top performers earning direct qualification for the global championship in New Delhi later this year.

Co-founder of the Pro Panja League, Parvinn Dabass, also emphasised the importance of the national championship in developing the sport's ecosystem in India.

He said that the event plays a crucial role in identifying emerging talent and providing a platform for athletes who aspire to compete professionally. Many participants, he added, have already been part of the Pro Panja League, and several new talents are expected to emerge from this edition.

Khadse praises NorthEast United FC' talent development model

Shillong: Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs & Sports, Raksha Khadse, visited NorthEast United FC and interacted with the club's management, coaching staff and young footballers, appreciating the club's efforts towards identifying and nurturing football talent from across the country, particularly from the North East region.

The visit was attended by Mandar Tamhane, Chief Executive Officer, North-East United FC; Rohit Thorat; Naushad Moosa, Technical Director and Reserve Team Head Coach; along with members of the club's management team, coaching

staff and young footballers.

During the interaction, the club's leadership briefed Raksha Khadse on North-East United FC's youth development philosophy, talent identification framework and long-term vision for creating a sustainable pathway for young footballers.

The Minister was informed about the club's extensive talent scouting initiative led by Naushad Moosa, under which coaches travelled across various parts of the country to identify promising young footballers. Players were scouted through the club's network of coaches and former players, youth competitions or-

ganised by the All India Football Federation, and continuous monitoring of players representing India at youth national team levels.

As part of the selection process, nearly 60 promising young players were invited to Guwahati for final selection trials. The selected players are expected to form the core of the club's Under-18 and Reserve Team setup, further strengthening North-East United FC's long-term player development pathway.

Raksha Khadse appreciated the club's structured approach towards talent identification and athlete development and highlight-

ed the importance of creating strong grassroots-to-elite pathways for young sports persons.

"The future of Indian football depends on our ability to identify talent early, provide quality coaching and create structured opportunities for progression. Initiatives that combine grassroots scouting, athlete development and long-term planning are critical for strengthening India's football ecosystem," she said.

The Minister noted that the North East continues to be one of India's strongest sporting regions and has consistently produced exceptional football talent.

Kemp the difference as England level series

Bristol: Freya Kemp proved to be the difference-maker as England beat India by 26 runs in the second T20I in Bristol. The all-rounder played a crucial late cameo, smashing an unbeaten 39 off just 13 deliveries, including a devastating final over that yielded 24 runs off the bowling of Arundhati Reddy.

Kemp then backed up her batting heroics with the ball, claiming the key wickets of Smriti Mandhana and Jemimah Rodrigues in her two overs as India fell 26 runs short of the target.

Her return as an all-rounder comes at an ideal time for England, who begin their ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 campaign against Sri Lanka on June 12.

"It was nice to finish off the innings like that. As a team we've spoken a lot about that and finishing off at the death really well and trying to put pressure on the opposition, so it's nice to do that with Dani Gibson," said Kemp.

"And with the ball, my first over went for a few runs, but nice to pick up



the wicket. I tried to close out the game in my second over and it was nice to pick up the other wicket as well. So yeah, a good all-round performance and I'm really happy."

Freya Kemp has endured a difficult run with injuries, with England's match against New Zealand earlier this month marking her first international appearance since the 2025 Ashes tour of Aus-

tralia. During her rehabilitation, Kemp focused heavily on developing her batting while she was unable to bowl, a decision she believes has paid off, as evidenced by her match-winning innings against India. The all-rounder also credited England head coach Charlotte Edwards for her support throughout the recovery process.

Satwik-Chirag clinch men's doubles title

Singapore: India's Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty clinched the Singapore Open BWF World Tour Super 750 title with a come from behind win over Indonesia's Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Fikri in the men's doubles final here on Sunday.

The fourth seeded Indian combination dominated the summit clash after losing the opening game against the third seeded Indonesian pair to win 18-21, 21-17, 21-16 in an hour and 13 minutes.

The Singapore Open triumph will be the third Super 750 crown for the Indian combination, having won the French Open in 2022 and 2024. They had also won the Indonesia Super 1000 title in 2023.

Satwik and Chirag, who last won a title on

the BWF World Tour at the Thailand Open 2024, have been in good form since playing an important role in India's bronze medal winning performance in the Thomas and Uber Cup in May.

They then reached the finals of the Thailand Open earlier this month and followed it up with a title winning show here this week.

Chirag and Satviksairaj have become the first Indian doubles pair to win the title at the Singapore Open.

Having ended world champions Kim Won Ho and Seo Seung Jae's 34-match unbeaten run in the semifinals, Satwik and Chirag started the final by opening up a 5-2 lead but their Indonesian opponents then kept pace with them to pocket the game.

Saqib and Kartik in Top 15 at the AM Green IGPL Morocco Rising stars event

El Jadida (Morocco): Syed Saqib Ahmed and Kartik Singh were placed inside the Top 15 with one more round to go in the US\$160,000 AM Green IGPL Morocco Rising Stars 2026.

Saqib, a former India junior No. 1, who has a professional win to his name, shot 2-under 70 at the windy Mazagan Beach & Golf Resort course. He was placed Tied-14th with a total of 7-under after three days at the event, which is co-sanctioned by the Asian Develop-

ment Tour and the AM Green IGPL.

One shot ahead of Saqib was teen golfer Kartik Singh, who carded 1-under 71 to get his total to 8-under and was Tied-11th.

It was a disappointing day for many of the other Indian golfers as they were further down the leader board. Raghav Chugh (72) was hit by a triple bogey on the 16th and is now 5-under for the week in T-28th place. Trishul Chinnappa (72) was T-34 and Arjun Bhati (71) was

T-38.

Among others, Samarth Dwivedi (72) is T-40 and Sachin Baisoya, who has one win on the AM Green IGPL this season, is T-45 after a round of 73. Rashid Khan (74) and Milind Soni (73) are T-48 and Kartik Sharma (75) is T-52. Thailand's Tanapat Pichaikool, searching for his third ADT win, shot a solid eight-under-par 64 to reach 15-under 201 to take a two-shot advantage going into the final round. Argentina's Franco Scorzato, who shot a

bogey-free 67. Another Thai star, Runchanapong Youpraying, shot a second 67 of the weeks to reach 12-under and was in solo third place.

Bengaluru golfer Saqib, 31, got off to a bogey start but back to back birdies on the fourth and the fifth repaired the damage. Another bogey on the sixth was followed by a birdie on the ninth as he turned in 1-under. On the back nine, he bogeyed the 10th, but birdies on the 12th and the 18th ensured a decent round in windy conditions.

Saqib was happy with his progress, as he said, "This golf course is suiting my eye. It is a very windy and long course and I hit it further so I have an advantage of sorts. I am having fun and enjoying playing here, hopefully I can continue to do that."

Kartik had four birdies against three bogeys, while Chugh seemed to be doing fine at 2-under till he triple bogeyed Par-4 16th before finishing with a birdie on the 18th.

Kamali' double by lights up final day of NMPA Indian Open of Surfing 2026

Mangaluru: Tamil Nadu's teenage surfer Kamali Moorthy, who secured India's surfing quota for the upcoming Asian Games, completed a remarkable double by winning both the Women's Open and Surfing Juniors U-18 Girls titles at the finals of the seventh NMPA Indian Open of Surfing 2026.

The championship is one of the premier events on the national surfing calendar and serves as a key selection event for India's squad for the 2026 Asian Games. Another promising surfer from Tamil Nadu, Kishore Kumar, was crowned champion in the Men's Open category, while local favourite Pradeep Pujar secured Karnataka's only title of the championship by winning the Surfing Juniors U-18 Boys title. Harish P and Dhamayanthi Sriram also emerged victorious in the newly introduced U-14 Boys

(Groms) and U-14 Girls (Groms) categories respectively. The winners walked away with cash prizes, certificates, and mementos.

Following the conclusion of the championship, selections for the Indian surfing team for Aichi-Nagoya 2026 will be determined based on results from the NMPA Indian Open of Surfing 2026, the inaugural Andaman Little Pro 2026, coaching camps, performances at international events, and overall rankings.

The championship was organised by the Mantra Surf Club and Surfing Swami Foundation under the aegis of the Surfing Federation of India, with support from the Government of Karnataka and the Karnataka Surfing Association. The New Mangalore Port Authority returned as the title sponsor for the third consecutive year, while Cycle Pure Agarbatti and Deconstruct Skincare

came on board as Gold Sponsors, with Deconstruct also serving as the event's Official SPF Partner. Their continued backing reflects the increasing institutional and corporate investment in the growth and development of surfing in India.

Kamali Moorthy successfully defended her title with a sensational comeback performance, clinching the top spot in the Women's Open category with a score of 13.17. Sugar Shanti Banarse finished a close second with 11.73, while Shrishti Selvam finished third with a score of 8.50. Entering the final as the two favourites, Kamali and Sugar lived up to expectations in a closely fought contest. Sugar took an early lead with a strong opening wave, but Kamali, the defending champion and reigning national series winner, held her nerve before producing a decisive scoring ride late in the

heat to surge ahead and retain her crown.

Teenage sensation Kishore Kumar of Tamil Nadu lived up to expectations by winning the Men's

deciding heat featured some of the country's finest surfers battling for top honours. While Ramesh made a strong start with two quality waves, Kishore responded



Open category crown with a score of 15.20. In a fiercely contested final, he finished ahead of Ramesh Budihal (12.87), Sivaraj Babu (11.90) and Srikanth D (9.93). The championship-

with impressive scores on his opening rides and maintained his composure throughout the contest to steadily extend his lead. Sivaraj pushed hard in pursuit of the title, attempting a series

of radical manoeuvres, but was unable to complete them cleanly and eventually settled for third place.

After clinching the Men's Open title, Kishore Kumar said, "Winning the Men's Open title at such an important championship is a very special feeling. With the Asian Games on the horizon, I look forward to the team selection process and will stay focused on representing India to the best of my ability."

The home crowd had plenty to cheer about as local favourite Pradeep Pujar produced a brilliant display to capture the Surfing Juniors 18 & Under Male crown and secure the host state's only title of the championship. His penultimate wave, packed with radical manoeuvres and executed with confidence, proved to be the defining moment of the final as he strengthened his lead and finished with a winning

score of 12.17. Tamil Nadu's Tayin Arun mounted a strong challenge throughout the heat and claimed the second spot with 11.26 points, while Prahlad Sriram secured the third place with a score of 9.50.

Pradeep Pujar said, "Winning my first national championship title, especially in front of my home crowd, is an incredible feeling and a moment I will always cherish. The competition was very tough, and all the finalists pushed each other to perform at their best. I would like to thank my coach, the Surfing Swami Foundation, my family and everyone who has supported me throughout my journey".

Fresh from her success in the Women's Open category, Kamali Moorthy completed a championship double with a commanding victory in the Surfing Juniors U-18 Girls final. Kamali seized the initiative early

with a series of strong rides and never looked back, capitalising on her momentum to post a winning score of 14.83. Karnataka's Saanvi Hegde delighted the home crowd by taking second spot with 5.67 points, while Aadya Singh finished third with a score of 2.73.

Kamali after completing her double said, "I'm thrilled to have won both the Women's Open and U-18 Girls titles at the NMPA Indian Open of Surfing 2026. I would like to thank the Surfing Federation of India, the organisers, sponsors and everyone involved for putting together such a fantastic event. Congratulations to all the winners and competitors who pushed the level of competition so high. With the Asian Games selection process approaching, I'm excited for what's ahead and will continue working hard to earn my place in Team India."



IBC strengthened credit discipline, improved recoveries over past decade: NCLAT Chairperson

New Delhi: The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) has transformed India's insolvency landscape over the past decade by creating a unified, creditor-driven framework focused on timely resolution and value maximisation, NCLAT Chairperson Justice Ashok Bhushan said.

Addressing a "IBC & NCLT @10" to celebrate a decade of transformative insolvency reforms organised by PHDCCI here, Justice Bhushan described the law as one of India's most significant legal and economic reforms.

"The IBC transformed a fragmented and delay-prone insolvency regime into a unified, creditor-driven framework focused on time-bound resolution, value maximisation and accountability," he said.

Justice Bhushan noted that the NCLT and the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) had played a key role in shaping insolvency jurisprudence over the years. He, however, stressed the



need to address challenges relating to resolution timelines, institutional capacity, cross-border insolvency and group insolvency mechanisms to further strengthen the framework.

Former Supreme Court judge Justice Rajesh Bindal said the insolvency regime had significantly improved resolution outcomes, recoveries and the revival of stressed enterprises while helping reduce non-per-

forming assets (NPAs).

"The success of the insolvency ecosystem has been driven by the collective efforts of institutions, regulators, the judiciary, financial institutions and industry stakeholders," he said, calling for greater technology adoption, stronger infrastructure and enhanced institutional capacity to ensure timely resolution of cases.

Justice M M Kumar,

founding president of the NCLT, recalled the tribunal's early years and said it had successfully implemented the insolvency framework despite limited infrastructure and resources. He added that the system had facilitated substantial recoveries, contributed to reducing bad loans and improved India's ease of doing business environment.

Dr Anju Rathi Rana, Member Secretary in the

Department of Legal Affairs, said the IBC represented a fundamental shift in India's approach to business distress and insolvency by establishing a structured and accountable resolution framework while enhancing investor confidence.

Highlighting the impact of the reforms, Debajyoti Ray Chaudhuri, Managing Director and CEO of National e-Governance Services Ltd (NeSL), said more than 32,000 applications involving debt of nearly Rs 14 lakh crore had been resolved before admission into the insolvency process.

He said the figures demonstrated how the IBC had altered debtor behaviour by encouraging early settlements and negotiations, thereby reducing the need for formal insolvency proceedings.

Experts at the event also identified personal insolvency, cross-border insolvency, technology-driven reforms and enhanced institutional capacity as key priorities for the next phase of insolvency reforms in the country.

Brent crude slumps to four-week low in May after sustained highs due to US-Iran unrest

New Delhi: Global crude oil prices have witnessed a sharp decline over the past month, with Brent crude falling to nearly USD 84 per barrel after briefly soaring above USD 120 per barrel in April amid concerns over potential supply disruptions in West Asia. The retreat represents a correction of almost 30 per cent from the recent peak and has provided relief to energy-importing nations, including India.

The surge in oil prices during April was driven primarily by geopolitical tensions involving Iran and concerns over the security of the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most critical energy transit routes. The narrow waterway handles a significant share of global crude oil shipments, making any threat to its operations a major concern for international markets.

At the height of the crisis, traders feared that escalating tensions could disrupt shipping traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, potentially restricting global oil supplies. These concerns prompted a sharp increase in crude prices as market par-

ticipants rushed to factor in the possibility of a prolonged supply shock.

The uncertainty pushed Brent crude above the USD 120-per-barrel mark, its highest level in several years. Energy markets responded swiftly as investors assessed the implications of a potential disruption in one of the world's most strategically important oil corridors.

However, market sentiment has shifted considerably in recent weeks. As fears of an immediate and large-scale disruption to oil supplies began to ease, the geopolitical risk premium that had been built into crude prices gradually diminished.

Growing expectations of diplomatic engagement among regional and global stakeholders have helped calm market concerns. Investors increasingly believe that while tensions remain, the likelihood of a worst-case scenario involving major disruptions to oil shipments has declined.

Another factor contributing to the decline in prices has been the continued flow of crude oil through key shipping routes. Despite heightened geopolitical ten-

sions, energy supplies have largely remained uninterrupted, helping to reassure markets about the availability of global crude supplies.

On May 29, Brent crude futures were trading at approximately USD 84.4 per barrel, a substantial decline from the levels recorded at the end of April. The drop reflects a reassessment of supply risks as well as changing expectations regarding future market conditions.

Broader concerns about global economic growth have also weighed on oil prices. Analysts note that slowing demand growth in several major economies has tempered expectations for future crude consumption, limiting upward pressure on prices.

In addition, market participants believe that major oil-producing nations possess sufficient capacity to maintain adequate supplies despite regional instability. Expectations that producers could adjust output if necessary have further reduced concerns about a sustained supply shortage.

For India, the decline in crude oil prices comes as a significant relief.

Winning semiconductor race not easy for India, time to shift gears: Report

New Delhi: Winning the semiconductor race isn't easy for India if it continues to run at the existing pace; it should target becoming the ecosystem player that the global semiconductor industry can't run without, said "Future of India's Semiconductor Industry," released by NITI Aayog here.

The report said that India should focus on winning the "More-than-Moore" era, where advanced packaging, system integration, and manufacturing scale matter as much as transistor nodes. Basically, "More-than-Moore (MtM)" era refers to the semiconductor industry shift that focuses on adding advanced and non-digital functions to devices rather than just shrinking transistors. India's semiconductor market is projected to reach around USD 200 billion by 2035 despite a widening gap between demand growth and domestic capability.

It noted that despite this growing demand, nearly 90-95 per cent is met through imports, leading to large foreign exchange out-

flows and increasing the vulnerability of critical sectors to supply-chain disruptions.

"This widening gap between demand growth and limited domestic capability represents a critical strategic vulnerability and yet



also a historic opportunity," the report said.

The report noted that the government has recognised and taken some decisive steps through the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) to nurture domestic capabilities across design, manufacturing and ecosystem development.

"The union Budget 2026 announced ISM 2.0, signalling a clear transition from ecosystem initiation to ecosystem deepening and

scale-up."

"By 2035, India should target building a USD 120-150 billion semiconductor value chain by choosing leadership and purpose over participation."

At the core of this vision is a resilient and disci-

plined manufacturing foundation, anchored by world-class fabs that focus on what matters most to India's economy and strategic autonomy: mature-node logic, specialty analog and mixed-signal chips and compound semiconductors such as Silicon Carbide (SiC) and Gallium Nitride (GaN). They will power India's automotive energy, industrial, telecom and strategic sectors. According to the report, India will play to its

greatest strengths, including its design talent, high-quality workforce, materials and chemistry ecosystem potential.

Realising this ambition requires deliberate choices about where India competes and how it allocates capital, talent and policy attention, the report said.

The report said that establishing strong dominance in mature and compound nodes should be a near-term priority, while leadership in advanced-node wafer manufacturing is a long-term aspiration.

India should aim to secure self-reliance for domestic demand while aggressively targeting a top-three global position in advanced packaging.

India should strive to integrate itself into the core of global semiconductor supply chains by emerging as a critical global supplier of wide-bandgap materials such as SiC and GaN.

Silicon Carbide (SiC) and Gallium Nitride (GaN) are two major wide-bandgap semiconductors replacing traditional silicon in modern power electronics.

KSUM launches Mission 14X to connect experts with next-gen innovators across Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram: The Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) has launched Mission 14X, a statewide initiative aimed at connecting experienced professionals with emerging innovators and student entrepreneurs to strengthen Kerala's startup ecosystem and accelerate innovation-driven entrepreneurship.

The programme seeks to leverage the expertise and domain knowledge of professionals from diverse sectors to evaluate and mentor startup ideas emerging from the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Centre (IEDC) network, which operates clusters across educational institutions in all 14 districts of the state.

As part of the initiative, KSUM has invited professionals with more than seven years of experience in technology, leadership, innovation, business, and startup ecosystem development to join the Mission 14X Expert Network and support innovation activities across Kerala.

"Mission 14X aims to create strong district-level expert pools capable of supporting cluster-level innovation programmes, startup screenings, technology validations, and entrepreneurial ecosystem-building activities," said KSUM Chief Ex-

ecutive Officer Anoop Ambika.

"By bringing together experienced professionals and young innovators, the initiative seeks to strengthen Kerala's position as a leading startup and knowledge-driven economy," he added.

Mission 14X is expected to draw participation from experts in finance and investment, business strategy and entrepreneurship, technology and product development, research and innovation, startup ecosystem development, industry mentorship, and academia. Faculty members with expertise in innovation and startup development have also been invited to join the expert panel.

Experts associated with the programme will contribute to strengthening flagship innovation and pre-incubation initiatives such as IDE-ABOX and the IEDC startup incubation programme, which helps students transform innovative ideas into viable ventures through structured evaluation and mentoring.

Under the initiative, students can submit innovative ideas through IEDC clusters, participate in pre-incubation activities, receive feedback from experts, and pitch their concepts before panels comprising industry mentors and investors.

Selected teams will receive structured support in areas such as problem-solution validation, product-market fit assessment, customer profiling, competitor analysis, business planning, prototype development, stakeholder engagement, and investor networking.

Mission 14X aligns with KSUM and IEDC's broader objective of building a vibrant entrepreneurial culture within campuses by identifying, nurturing, and accelerating student-led startups from the idea stage to market-ready enterprises through mentorship, expert guidance, structured programmes, and industry exposure.

Designed as a flexible and impact-driven engagement platform, the initiative enables professionals to contribute their expertise while supporting Kerala's growing innovation ecosystem. It also offers participants opportunities to engage with emerging technologies, breakthrough ideas, future industry trends, and promising young entrepreneurs from across the state.

According to KSUM, experts joining the network will gain greater visibility within the innovation ecosystem, collaborate with industry leaders, expand professional networks.

Textile industry hails suspension of cotton import duty

New Delhi: The (CITI) has welcomed the Centre's decision to temporarily remove the 11 per cent import duty on cotton from June 1 to October 30, describing it as a significant step towards enhancing the competitiveness of India's textile and apparel sector in global markets. In a statement issued on Saturday, CITI Chairman Ashwin Chandran said the move comes at a crucial time when the global business environment continues to face vola-

tility and uncertainty. He noted that the existing import duty on cotton had emerged as a major obstacle for Indian textile manufacturers and exporters seeking to compete effectively with their international counterparts. According to Chandran, most of India's major textile-producing competitors in Asia enjoy duty-free access to cotton, enabling them to procure raw materials at lower costs. In contrast, Indian manufacturers were bur-

dened with additional costs due to the import duty, affecting their competitiveness in the global marketplace. He pointed out that the duty on cotton imports had increased costs across the textile value chain, from spinning and weaving to garment manufacturing. These higher input costs, he said, were limiting the industry's ability to scale up exports and capture a larger share of international markets. India's textile and apparel industry remains

heavily dependent on cotton-based products, which account for a significant portion of the country's overall textile exports. As the government pursues its ambitious target of achieving USD 100 billion in textile and apparel exports by 2030, reducing input costs has become increasingly important for the sector. Chandran stated that the temporary suspension of the import duty would provide much-needed relief to exporters, enabling them to

improve price competitiveness and respond more effectively to growing opportunities in global markets. He also highlighted the strategic importance of recently concluded and ongoing Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). According to him, lower cotton costs will allow Indian exporters to take fuller advantage of preferential market access offered under these agreements and strengthen their presence in key international destinations.

Govt nod to route CSR funds via NSE Social Stock Exchange

Mumbai: In a significant policy move aimed at strengthening India's social financing ecosystem, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has permitted companies to channel a portion of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) spending through the Social Stock Exchange platform operated by the National Stock Exchange (NSE). The decision is expected to create new funding opportunities for social enterprises and not-for-profit organisations while improving transparency and accountability in the deployment of CSR funds.

The MCA's notification, issued on May 27, amends the relevant

schedule of the Companies Act, allowing eligible companies to invest up to 10 per cent of their annual CSR expenditure in zero coupon zero principal (ZCZP) instruments issued by non-profit organisations listed on the NSE Social Stock Exchange (NSE-SSE).

The reform marks another step in the government's efforts to integrate social development initiatives with formal financial markets. By enabling corporates to use a regulated investment mechanism for social causes, policymakers hope to encourage greater participation in impact-driven financing.

The Social Stock Exchange was

introduced as an innovative platform designed to connect social enterprises with potential donors, investors and corporate contributors. It seeks to bring greater transparency, credibility and standardisation to funding directed toward social and developmental projects.

Under the revised framework, companies can now allocate a portion of their mandatory CSR budgets to eligible non-profit organisations through ZCZP instruments. These instruments do not carry interest payments or repayment of principal and are specifically designed to support charitable and social objectives rather than generate financial returns.

Industry experts believe the move could significantly enhance the flow of institutional funding into India's social sector. Traditionally, many non-profit organisations have depended on grants, donations and philanthropic contributions, often facing uncertainty in long-term funding availability.

The new provision is expected to provide credible social enterprises with access to a more structured funding ecosystem. Listing requirements and disclosure norms on the Social Stock Exchange may also help improve governance standards and strengthen investor confidence in social sector organisations.