



Aryan Age

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Offerings in Ayodhya's Ram Temple missing, alleges Akhilesh Yadav



Lucknow : In a major revelation, Samajwadi Party President Akhilesh Yadav today claimed that offerings worth crores of rupees have gone missing from the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

He posted this on his social media handle, claiming that "This is extremely sensitive news for devotees of Lord Ram all over the world. Offerings worth crores of rupees for the Ram Temple have gone missing."

Akhilesh Yadav also targeted the Shri Ram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust and the government. He wrote, "The disappearance of crores of rupees is a very shameful situation for the temple trust. No one wants to come forward to explain."

The SP president has demanded the court take suo motu cognizance, as this issue is directly linked to the deep faith in Lord Ram held by the entire Sanatani

INDIA Bloc Meeting today to Be Attended by 23 Parties, Says Jairam Ramesh

New Delhi : Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Sunday said that 23 political parties have confirmed their participation in a meeting of the INDIA alliance, or INDIA Janbandhan, scheduled to be held at the Constitution Club in New Delhi on June 8.

In a post on social media platform X, Ramesh said the meeting would take place at 12 noon and would bring together a broad spectrum of Opposition parties united against what they describe as the Narendra Modi government's attacks on democratic institutions, constitutional values and citizens' rights.

"23 political parties have confirmed participation in the INDIA Janbandhan meeting at Constitution Club, New Delhi on Monday June 8, 2026, at 12 noon," Ramesh said.

He added that while some parties would not be able to attend the meeting, they had nevertheless communicated their opposition to the policies and actions of the BJP-led central government.

"There are some parties who have expressed their inability to attend this particular meeting for their own reasons — even though they have conveyed their strong opposition to the Modi Government's policies and actions," Ramesh said.

The Congress leader alleged that the government was "snatching away the right to vote for millions of Indians," "assaulting the Constitution daily," and "attacking Opposition leaders through investigative agencies." He also accused the Centre of damaging livelihoods, fuelling inflation, undermining employment prospects for young people, hurting the investment climate and compromising national interests through its foreign policy.

The meeting comes amid renewed efforts by Opposition parties to strengthen coordination ahead of a series of political and electoral battles. The INDIA alliance, formed in 2023 as a coalition of Opposition parties seeking to challenge the BJP nationally, has continued to project itself as a platform committed to protecting constitutional institutions, federalism and democratic processes.

Ramesh sought to underscore the alliance's cohesion despite differences among its constituent parties, saying diversity remained its strength.

"Like India, the INDIA Janbandhan continues to stand united through its diversity," he said.

The June 8 meeting is expected to deliberate on a range of political issues, including electoral processes, governance concerns, economic challenges and the Opposition's future strategy against the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance government at the Centre. Leaders from participating parties are likely to discuss ways to coordinate their response to issues they contend are affecting democratic institutions and the lives of ordinary citizens across the country.



BJP Launches Statewide Outreach Campaign in Haryana to Mark 12 Years of Modi Govt

Panchkula: Haryana BJP President Dr Archana Gupta has announced the launch of a statewide public outreach campaign to mark the completion of 12 years of the Narendra Modi-led Central Government.

The campaign, which begins on June 7 and will continue until June 21, is being conducted under the theme "12 Years of Trust, Development and Public Welfare." It aims to highlight the achievements of the Central Government, its welfare initiatives and the vision of a Viksit Bharat.

Dr. Gupta said on Saturday that committees comprising four members at the district level and three members at the mandal level media interactions from June 8 to June 12, during which they will present the achievements and key initiatives of the Central Government.

A special public outreach drive will be carried out from June 8 to June 14. During this period, BJP leaders and workers will visit villages, towns and cities across the state, going door-to-door to inform citizens about various government schemes, development projects and the progress made during the last 12 years.

Dr. Gupta said the campaign is designed to strengthen direct engagement with citizens and beneficiaries of government programmes while spreading awareness about the Centre's development and welfare initiatives. The campaign will culminate on June 21, the International Day of Yoga, with yoga programmes being organized at every mandal across Haryana. Party workers and members of the public are expected to participate in the events.

Dr. Gupta expressed confidence that the campaign would help take the message of the Modi Government's achievements and its vision for a developed India to every household across the state.



Digvijaya Singh writes to PM, seeks rollback of third language addition in CBSE classes 9 and 10

New Delhi: Senior Congress leader and Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Skill Development, Women, Children, Youth and Sports, Digvijaya Singh has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking an immediate halt to what he described as the "arbitrary and unplanned" introduction of a third language in the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum for Classes 9 and 10.

The development was disclosed by Congress general secretary in charge of communications, Jairam Ramesh, in a post on social media platform X on Sunday. Ramesh said Singh had urged the Prime Minister to intervene against the move, alleging that it had been implemented in violation of established academic planning norms and contrary to decisions already taken by the CBSE Governing Body. "The Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education and senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh has written to the Prime Minister seeking a halt to the arbitrary, unplanned addition of a third language to Grade 9 and 10 CBSE curriculum — in direct contradiction of the CBSE Governing Body's own decision and all norms of academic planning," Ramesh said in his post. The Congress has argued that major curricular changes affecting lakhs of students across the country should be introduced only after adequate consultation with stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, state governments and education experts. Party leaders have maintained that sudden

changes in examination and curriculum structures can create confusion among students and place additional academic burdens on schools already preparing for board examinations. The issue comes amid continuing political debate over the implementation of the language provisions contained in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. While the policy advocates multilingual learning and encourages the study of three languages, several opposition parties and state governments have expressed concerns over the manner in which language policies are being implemented, particularly when changes are introduced without extensive consultation.

The CBSE, which is affiliated with more than 30,000 schools in India and abroad, periodically revises its curriculum in line with national education priorities and policy objectives. However, opposition leaders have repeatedly called for greater transparency and advance planning in curriculum reforms, especially those affecting secondary and senior secondary students. The latest intervention by the Parliamentary Standing Committee chairman is expected to intensify the ongoing debate over language education and the implementation of reforms under the NEP framework.



Kharge attacks Centre over LPG price hike, questions fuel policy and Ujjwala scheme reach

New Delhi: Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Sunday launched a sharp attack on the Narendra Modi-led government over rising domestic LPG prices, alleging that repeated increases in cooking gas rates were placing an unbearable burden on ordinary households and raising questions about the effectiveness of the Centre's energy and welfare policies.

Domestic cooking gas prices were raised by Rs 29 per cylinder late Saturday, marking the second hike in three months as state-owned oil marketing companies grapple with escalating global energy costs driven by the continuing conflict in West Asia.

With the latest revision, the price of a 14.2-kg domestic LPG cylinder in Delhi has increased to Rs 942 from Rs 913. The hike comes after a Rs 60 increase announced on March 7, when disruptions in West Asia triggered a sharp surge in international fuel prices.

In a post on social media platform X, Kharge claimed that soaring LPG prices were "threatening to burn down the kitchens of ordinary citizens" and accused the government of making domestic cooking fuel increasingly unaffordable. He pointed out that the price of domestic LPG cylinders had risen by Rs 89 over the past four months, arguing that the increase was hitting household budgets at a time of persistent inflationary pressures.

"The soaring prices of domestic LPG are threatening to burn down the kitchens of ordinary citizens," Kharge said, while posing a series of questions to the government regarding fuel availability, the implementation of welfare schemes and the overall trajectory of LPG prices under the current administration.

The Congress chief questioned the government's claims on fuel diversification in the wake of geopolitical tensions in West Asia. Referring to statements made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Parliament, Kharge asked what had become of the government's strategy of sourcing fuel from a wider range of countries. "Prime Minister Modi made extensive claims that India was diversifying its fuel supplies from 41 countries in response to the West Asia war. What happened to that strategy? Why is there still a shortage of LPG in rural areas?" he asked.

Kharge also cited figures related to the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, contending that a large number of beneficiary households were unable to regularly refill their LPG cylinders because of high costs. According to him, during 2025-26, 5.56 crore families under the scheme either obtained only one refill or did not refill their cylinders at all, while 3.30 crore families did not purchase a single refill. "This was even before the West Asia crisis. Isn't this a result of the Modi government's policies that have made LPG unaffordable for many?" he said.

Drawing a comparison with the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) era, the Congress president further accused the Bharatiya Janata Party of adopting double standards on inflation. He alleged that while BJP leaders frequently protested against rising prices during previous governments, they remained silent despite substantial increases in LPG prices over the past decade. "Isn't it true that the Modi government has increased domestic LPG prices by Rs 530 over the past 12 years? Why are BJP leaders no longer sitting on the streets with LPG cylinders in protest?" Kharge asked.

The Congress has repeatedly sought to make inflation, fuel prices and the cost of essential commodities central issues in its political campaign, accusing the Centre of failing to provide adequate relief to households. The BJP, on the other hand, has maintained that its welfare measures, including subsidies and targeted assistance under schemes such as Ujjwala, have expanded access to clean cooking fuel and improved the lives of millions of beneficiaries. The latest remarks by Kharge add to the ongoing political sparring between the ruling BJP and the opposition Congress over inflation, welfare delivery and the impact of rising energy costs on ordinary citizens.



India's Ease of Doing Business reforms drive investor confidence, digital transformation

New Delhi: India's sweeping reforms in governance, regulation and digital infrastructure have significantly strengthened the country's business ecosystem, making it easier to start, operate and expand businesses while boosting investor confidence and global competitiveness.

According to a government review released on Saturday, sustained efforts to simplify regulations, reduce compliance burdens and digitise public services have transformed India's business landscape over the past decade. The reforms have helped improve transparency, efficiency and ease of access to markets, credit and government services for entrepreneurs, startups and businesses of all sizes.

The impact of these measures is reflected in India's rise in global rankings. The country improved its position in the World Bank's Doing Business Report from 142nd in 2014 to 63rd in 2019. India has also strengthened its standing in the IMD World Competitiveness Ranking, moving up from 43rd place in 2021 to 41st in 2025.

A major pillar of the reform agenda has been the promotion of entrepreneurship. Since the launch of the Startup India initiative in 2016, the number of recognised startups has surged from just 502 to over 2.23 lakh by March 2026, generating more than 23.3 lakh direct jobs. Nearly half of these startups have at least one woman director or partner, underlining the growing inclusivity of India's startup ecosystem.

Business registration has also become significantly easier through digital platforms such as the SPICe system and MCA21 Version 3, which have streamlined company incorporation and compliance processes. For micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), the Udyam Registration Portal has enabled paperless and self-declaration-based registration, helping millions of enterprises enter the formal economy.

Property registration and land governance have undergone a digital overhaul through the Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme. More than 97 per cent of cadastral maps have been digitised, while over 36 crore land parcels have been assigned a Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN), enhancing transparency and reducing disputes.

The government has also focused on reducing procedural hurdles in obtaining business permits and clearances. The National Single Window System now integrates approvals across multiple central and state departments, while the PARIVESH portal has substantially reduced the time required for environmental clearances.

Market access has improved through initiatives such as the Government e-Marketplace (GeM), Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), PM GatiShakti and advanced logistics platforms. GeM alone has recorded a cumulative transaction value of Rs 18.4 lakh crore, providing opportunities to startups, women entrepreneurs and MSMEs to participate in government procurement.

On the financial front, easier access to credit has emerged as a key reform area. Schemes such as the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE), Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) and Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) have expanded formal financing to millions of businesses. Since its launch in 2015, PMMY has sanctioned loans worth over Rs 40 lakh crore through more than 57 crore accounts.

India's tax ecosystem has also become more business-friendly through the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), faceless tax assessments and a revamped income tax e-filing system. GST registrations have expanded from around 60 lakh taxpayers in 2017 to more than 1.64 crore in 2026, reflecting deeper formalisation of the economy.

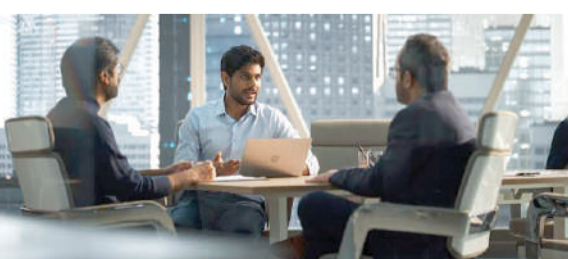
Digital public infrastructure has further strengthened the business environment. The Unified Payments Interface (UPI), now recognised by the International Monetary Fund as the world's largest real-time payment system by transaction volume, processed over 24,000 crore transactions worth nearly Rs 314 lakh crore during FY 2025-26. The platform currently serves over 540 million users and 100 million merchants.

To create a more trust-based regulatory framework, the government has undertaken extensive decriminalisation and compliance reduction measures. The Jan Vishwas reforms have rationalised hundreds of legal provisions, while more than 47,000 compliances have been simplified, digitised or removed.

Insolvency resolution has also been strengthened through amendments to the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, introducing faster timelines and improving creditor participation, making debt resolution more predictable and efficient.

Officials said the combined impact of digital governance, regulatory simplification and infrastructure modernisation is helping position India as a globally competitive investment destination. The reforms are expected to further accelerate entrepreneurship, attract investment and support long-term economic growth.

"India's Ease of Doing Business framework today reflects the combined strength of digital infrastructure, policy reforms and trust-based governance," the government said, highlighting the country's ongoing efforts to build a transparent and facilitative business environment.





DK Shivakumar flags fuel inflation, seeks report as LPG prices rise again

Bengaluru: The Karnataka government on Sunday waded into the growing controversy over rising fuel costs, with Chief Minister DK Shivakumar seeking a detailed report on the latest LPG price hike and warning that steep increases in industrial gas and diesel prices could have far-reaching consequences for both households and businesses.

The intervention comes after the Centre approved a Rs 29 increase in the price of a 14.2-kg domestic LPG cylinder, the second hike in just three months, intensifying concerns over the mounting burden on consumers already grappling with inflationary pressures.

Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, Shivakumar said the impact of the revision extended beyond household kitchens.

"I have heard the report on the increase in LPG prices. More worrying is the alarming rise in industrial gas and industrial diesel prices. I am seeking a detailed report and will speak on the issue tomorrow," he said.

His remarks signal that the Congress government may seek to sharpen its attack on the Centre over rising fuel prices, a politically sensitive issue with implications for household budgets, transport costs and industrial production.

The latest increase follows a Rs 60 hike announced on March 7, taking the cumulative rise in domestic LPG prices to Rs 89 in three months.

Industry observers say higher industrial fuel costs could trigger a ripple effect across sectors, potentially



pushing up manufacturing, logistics and food prices at a time when businesses are already facing cost pressures.

The Centre, however, has defended the revision, citing a sharp rise in global LPG prices amid continuing tensions in West Asia. It has maintained that cooking gas prices in India remain among the lowest in the world despite recent increases.

Government sources have also pointed out that state-owned oil marketing companies were incurring losses of about Rs 703 on every domestic LPG cylinder sold before the latest revision.

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UP Tourism showcases Lucknow's Heritage to future civil administrators

Lucknow: The Uttar Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation (UP-STDC) organised a special Lucknow Darshan familiarisation tour for 107 State Service Trainee Officers participating in the 88th Basic Training Programme for Promoted Deputy Collectors, providing them with an opportunity to explore the cultural, historical and tourism heritage of the state capital.

The initiative was designed to offer trainee officers an immersive understanding of Uttar Pradesh's rich legacy, enabling them to experience firsthand the historical monuments, architectural marvels and cultural traditions that have shaped the identity of Lucknow over centuries. The familiarisation tour formed part of a broader effort by the state government to integrate cultural awareness into administrative training. Officials believe that future administrators who possess a deeper understanding of the state's heritage can contribute more effectively to its preservation, promotion and development.

Addressing the significance of the programme, Uttar Pradesh Tourism and Culture Minister Jaiver Singh said such exposure visits help officers appreciate the vast cultural wealth of the

state while also familiarising them with the tourism potential that exists across different regions of Uttar Pradesh.

He noted that Uttar Pradesh is home to a unique blend of history, culture, spirituality and architectural excellence. According to the minister, firsthand exposure to these assets allows officers to better understand their value and importance in shaping the state's identity and economic prospects.

During the tour, the trainee officers visited several of Lucknow's most iconic landmarks, beginning with the historic Lucknow Residency, a site closely associated with the events of the Revolt of 1857. The visit offered participants insights into one of the most significant chapters of India's freedom struggle.

The officers also explored the renowned Bara Imambara, one of Lucknow's most celebrated architectural masterpieces. Known for its grand design, intricate construction and historical significance, the monument provided participants with an opportunity to appreciate the engineering brilliance of the Nawabi era.

Another major attraction on the itinerary was the majestic Roomi Gate, often described as the symbol of Lucknow. The imposing gateway, built during the

reign of Nawab Asaf-ud-Daula, showcased the city's rich architectural heritage and reflected the grandeur of Awadhi culture.

The tour further included visits to the Chota Imambara, the historic Picture Gallery and the Clock Tower. These monuments offered trainee officers a comprehensive understanding of Lucknow's artistic traditions, royal history and distinctive architectural styles that continue to attract tourists from across the country and abroad.

In addition to the city's historical monuments, the participants also visited the Kukrail Picnic Spot. The visit provided them with a different perspective of Lucknow, highlighting the city's natural and recreational attractions alongside its heritage landmarks.

Officials said the inclusion of Kukrail in the itinerary was aimed at showcasing the importance of ecological conservation and sustainable tourism, while also allowing participants to experience one of the city's popular green spaces. The familiarisation programme received a positive response from the trainee officers, many of whom expressed keen interest in learning about Lucknow's historical evolution, cultural traditions and heritage conservation efforts.

Integrated residential schools are 'temples of vision': Bhatti Vikramarka

Khammam: Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Sunday described the Integrated Residential Schools being constructed across the state as "temples of vision" that would shape a brighter future for coming generations.

The Deputy Chief Minister, who inspected the construction works of the Integrated Residential School at

Lakshimpuram in Bonakal Mandal under Madhira Assembly Constituency in Khammam district, said the Indiramma People's Government was according top priority to education.

During the visit, Bhatti Vikramarka reviewed the progress of various construction works, including the Junior Hostel, Junior and Senior academic blocks, Administrative Block, and

laboratory buildings meant for Mechanical, Science, Mathematics, and Computer studies.

He directed officials and contractors to ensure high-quality construction without compromising on standards and instructed them to expedite the works and complete the project within the stipulated timeframe.

Stating that every rupee spent on education was an

investment in future generations, the Deputy Chief Minister said the government was committed to providing world-class educational infrastructure to students.

He also offered several suggestions to officials regarding the quality and timely completion of laboratory facilities and instructed contractors to make the campus ready for students at the earliest.

Kamarhati TMC MLA Madan Mitra claims attack on convoy amid midnight protest

Kolkata: Trinamool Congress MLA from Kamarhati, Madan Mitra, has alleged that his vehicle was attacked and vandalised by protesters when he visited an area in Kamarhati, in the North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal, following reports of unrest.

According to Mitra, the incident took place late Saturday night in Ward No. 14 of the Kamarhati Municipality, where protests had been underway outside the residence of local councillor Arindam Biswas over alleged cut-monies issues.

Mitra said he was on his way to meet the councillor when he was confronted by a large crowd.

Speaking in a Facebook Live video after the incident, the MLA claimed that around 100 to 150 people armed with sticks surrounded his vehicle and aggressively advanced towards him.

He alleged that protesters raised slogans against him, hurled eggs at his vehicle and vandalised it. Mitra also claimed that his driver was assaulted during the incident.

The MLA said he narrowly escaped

serious harm and credited local women residents for helping him take shelter inside a house, where he remained hidden for nearly an hour while the situation remained tense.

Videos of the incident circulated on social media showing scenes of vandalism and people throwing eggs at the vehicle. However, the authenticity of the videos was not independently verified. Mitra alleged that the attack was carried out by BJP-backed miscreants. He claimed that the attackers raised "Jai Shri Ram" slogans and threatened to kill him.

Union Minister Kishan Reddy slams Revanth Reddy over 'Hitler' remarks

Hyderabad: Union Coal and Mines Minister G. Kishan Reddy on Sunday launched a sharp attack on A. Revanth Reddy over his reported remarks concerning HYDRRA and the ongoing demolition drives in Hyderabad, accusing the Telangana Chief Minister of endorsing authoritarian methods and displaying an anti-democratic mindset. In a post on social media platform X, Kishan Reddy alleged that the Congress party had historically demonstrated what he described as an "Emergency mindset" and claimed that its leaders continued to exhibit intolerance toward

dissent and criticism. He argued that the party's political approach reflected a tendency to suppress public opinion rather than engage with democratic discourse. The Union minister said that during the period of the Emergency to the present day, the Congress had repeatedly sought to silence voices that disagreed with it. According to him, recent comments attributed to the Telangana Chief Minister reflected the same political culture and raised serious concerns about the government's attitude towards citizens. Kishan Reddy alleged that Revanth Reddy had openly claimed

inspiration from authoritarian figures while discussing the establishment and functioning of HYDRRA, the Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Protection Agency. He contended that such remarks were inappropriate for a leader holding a constitutional position. The BJP leader further criticised comparisons reportedly made between demolition drives in Hyderabad and scenes witnessed in conflict-hit regions. He said references to countries such as Iran and Israel while describing civic enforcement actions in Hyderabad were disturbing and unnecessary.

Kavitha alleges 'match-fixing politics' in Patancheru, vows fight against pollution and corruption

Hyderabad: Telangana Rakshana Sena (TRS) President K Kavitha on Sunday alleged that "match-fixing politics" was prevailing in Patancheru and vowed to fight for a Telangana free from corruption, collusion, and pollution.

During her visit to Patancheru constituency headquarters, Kavitha garlanded the statue of Dr B R Ambedkar and later hoisted the TRS flag. She also visited the Patancheru Police Station and interacted with local residents and party workers.

Addressing the gathering, Kavitha said Patanche-

ru, once known as Asia's largest industrial corridor, had become synonymous with severe pollution due to the negligence of successive governments over the last three decades.

"The government is indifferent even though the entire region is severely affected by pollution. Pollution has entered the soil up to a depth of one kilometre, making it difficult to construct buildings, drill borewells, or cultivate crops," she alleged.

She said the Manjira River had also been polluted due to industrial waste flowing through Nakka Vagu.



While there was discussion about relocating industries, no attention was being paid to the livelihoods of thou-

sands of workers dependent on them, she added. Kavitha alleged that both ruling and opposition

leaders had colluded on several issues in the constituency.

"It is not even clear which party the local MLA belongs to. Leaders are becoming financially stronger while the people continue to suffer," she said.

Referring to a recent incident involving the demolition of a school using a bulldozer, Kavitha questioned whether such an act could have taken place without political support and administrative failure. She claimed the district administration responded only after public protests intensified.

Modern technology, strong prosecution and better coordination will take railway security to new heights: CM Yogi

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed officials to modernise and strengthen the railway security system across the state, emphasising that it should be technology-driven, efficient and result-oriented. Chairing a high-level review meeting of the Government Railway Police (GRP) on Saturday night, the Chief Minister said Uttar Pradesh handles the largest railway traffic network in the country and therefore requires an advanced security framework capable of ensuring passenger safety at all times.

Highlighting the importance of rail transport in the state, Adityanath noted that lakhs of passengers travel daily through Uttar Pradesh's vast railway network. He said passenger safety, protection of women, prevention of crime and immediate police assistance should remain the top priorities of all agencies associated with railway security and management.

The Chief Minister reiterated the state government's policy of zero tolerance towards crime and anti-social activities. He stated that railway stations, trains and railway premises must remain free from criminal elements and disruptive activities, directing officials to enforce the law firmly and ensure swift action against offenders.

Stressing the role of technology in modern policing, Adityanath instructed authorities to maximise the use of advanced technological tools to strengthen surveillance and security arrangements. He said modern equipment, digital monitoring systems and smart policing methods should be integrated into daily operations to improve effectiveness and response time.

During the meeting, the Director General (Railway) briefed the Chief Minister on the organisational structure of the GRP. Officials informed him that the force, established in 1867, current-

ly operates through six railway sections, 65 police stations and 89 temporary outposts across Uttar Pradesh. The GRP is responsible for safeguarding more than 3,031 trains, around 1,550 railway stations and over 30 lakh passengers every day.

Reviewing railway track and train security measures, Adityanath directed officials to further enhance coordination among the Railway Administration, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) and local police units. He stressed that seamless communication and joint operations among these agencies would significantly improve security preparedness and crime prevention efforts.

Officials informed the Chief Minister that several modern security measures are already being implemented for track protection and train safety. These include joint patrolling exercises, drone-based monitoring, CCTV surveillance, digital verification systems,

inspection of suspicious individuals through a dedicated Inspection App, strengthening informer networks and close monitoring of scrap markets and other sensitive



locations.

Expressing concern over incidents of stone-pelting on trains and railway premises, Adityanath directed the GRP to launch a special campaign aimed at completely eliminating such occurrences. He said even isolated incidents can endanger passengers and damage public property, making preventive action

and community engagement essential.

The meeting was informed that awareness campaigns conducted by the GRP have yielded encourag-

ing results in curbing stone-pelting incidents. Officials highlighted initiatives such as security chaupals, counselling programmes for parents and youths, the Rail Mitra Network, prompt prosecution of offenders and continuous monitoring mechanisms, all of which have contributed to a significant decline in such inci-

dents across several railway divisions. The Chief Minister also reviewed crowd management arrangements at railway stations, especially during festivals, large gatherings, recruitment examinations and other special occasions. He instructed officials to ensure that passengers do not face inconvenience due to overcrowding and directed them to maintain orderly movement within station premises.

To achieve effective crowd control, Adityanath suggested the adoption of measures such as regulated entry and exit points, systematic queue management, regular public announcements, round-the-clock CCTV monitoring and stronger coordination with railway authorities. He said proactive planning is necessary to prevent congestion and ensure smooth passenger movement.

Women's safety was another major focus of the review meeting. Calling it one of the highest priorities of

the state government, the Chief Minister directed officials to create a secure environment for women across the railway network. He emphasised the need for vigilant patrolling, rapid response mechanisms and increased sensitivity while handling complaints involving women passengers.

The Chief Minister also reviewed efforts to combat human trafficking and trace missing children. He directed officials to intensify ongoing rescue and rehabilitation campaigns. According to officials, under Operation Muskaan, the GRP recovered 860 children between January 1 and May 26, 2026. Various awareness and recovery drives have also helped reunite 2,325 missing persons with their families during the period under review. During the meeting, officials informed the Chief Minister that the Hardoi GRP Police Station has become the first ISO 9001-certified GRP police station in North India. The achieve-

ment was highlighted as a significant milestone in improving service quality, administrative efficiency and public confidence in railway policing. Reviewing the prosecution system, Adityanath stressed the importance of ensuring speedy and effective punishment for criminals. He directed the state government to provide necessary support for the deployment of additional manpower and procurement of modern equipment required for the expansion and modernisation of the GRP. He also instructed officials to engage with the Ministry of Railways and the Railway Board to address future requirements. Looking ahead to the proposed Haridwar Ardh Kumbh in 2027, the Chief Minister directed authorities to begin preparations immediately by formulating a comprehensive security and crowd management plan and ensuring timely coordination among all concerned districts and agencies.

Briefs :

3 arrested after encounter in Delhi

New Delhi: The Delhi Police arrested three alleged criminals, including the prime accused in a recent Saket extortion and firing case, after a brief exchange of fire in south Delhi in the early hours of Saturday, officials said. The accused — Rakesh, alias Raka (31); Sonu, alias Addu (25); and Bharat Jatav (23) — were apprehended by a joint team of the Special Staff and Anti-Auto Theft Squad (AATS) of South district during an operation near Machhi Market Road. According to the police, the action followed an investigation into an extortion case registered at Saket police station after a resident of Lado Sarai reported receiving threatening calls allegedly from Rakesh. On June 1, two motorcycle-borne assailants allegedly fired multiple rounds outside the complainant's residence to enforce the demand. The police said technical surveillance, CCTV footage analysis and local intelligence pointed to the involvement of Rakesh and Sonu, who had been absconding since the incident. Acting on specific information that the trio would be passing through Birla Vidya Niketan Marg with illegal firearms, the police laid a trap in the intervening night of June 5 and 6. Around 12.20 am, the suspects were spotted riding a motorcycle without a registration number. When signalled to stop, the accused allegedly tried to flee and opened fire on the police team. During the exchange, a bullet allegedly fired by Rakesh struck the bulletproof jacket of Head Constable Sandeep Dhayal, averting a potentially fatal injury. The police said they returned fire in self-defence, injuring Rakesh and Sonu in the legs before overpowering them.

Post Hauz Rani fire, crackdown on illegal constructions intensified

New Delhi: Days after a devastating fire at Flourish Stay bed and breakfast (B&B) facility in Hauz Rani claimed 21 lives, the Delhi Government on Saturday said civic and enforcement agencies had intensified a citywide crackdown on unauthorised constructions, building bylaw violations and unsafe commercial establishments, with the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) demolishing 94 properties and sealing 114 others since June 1. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said the government was pursuing a "zero-tolerance" policy against illegal constructions, encroachments and fire-safety violations, adding that a permanent mechanism was being developed to prevent unsafe structures from operating in the Capital.

Three Bhuu gang sharpshooters in Delhi Police net

New Delhi: The Delhi Police arrested three alleged sharpshooters, including a juvenile, linked to the Himanshu Bhuu gang in the Bawana area, officials said on Saturday. The police also recovered two sophisticated illegal pistols and 27 live cartridges from their possession. With their arrests, the police claimed to have averted a targeted attack on a resident of Pooth Khurd village, who was allegedly being monitored by the accused at the behest of gang associates. According to the police, a patrolling team noticed three men riding a motorcycle suspiciously near Bengali Market in Pooth Khurd on Friday evening. When the riders allegedly attempted to flee after spotting the police, the team chased and intercepted them. The accused were identified as Ajay (22), a resident of Jhajjar in Haryana.

Delhi Govt all set to induct 2800 new E-buses, enhancing cleaner public transport: Min

New Delhi: The Delhi government is set to take a major step towards strengthening the national capital's public transport network through the planned engagement of 2,800 air-conditioned low-floor Electric buses under the Centre's PM E-DRIVE scheme.

According to Delhi Transport Minister Dr Pankaj Kumar Singh, the proposed fleet comprises 1,400 nine-metre and 1,400 twelve-metre electric buses.

The initiative is expected to improve accessibility of public transport across Delhi, by enhancing last-mile connectivity, particularly in the peripheral areas of the city.

The Transport Department has observed encouraging operational performance of nine-metre electric buses that are deployed in the city, particularly in meeting local and feeder transport requirements, enhancing last-mile connectivity. Building upon this experience, the

proposed induction seeks to create a balanced fleet capable of serving both high-density corridors and neighborhood connectivity needs.

The initiative is part of



the state government's broader vision to expand the city's public transport fleet and increase the share of zero-emission mobility solutions.

The government aims to expand Delhi's overall public transport bus fleet to nearly 14,000 buses by 2028-29, enhancing service coverage and greater accessibility for commuters across the Na-

tional Capital Territory.

At present, Delhi has nearly 4,300 electric buses in operation, which makes it one of the largest electric bus fleets in the country.

By the end of this year, the government aims to increase this number to around 7500 E-buses, reinforcing its commitment to cleaner public transport and sustainable urban mobility.

According to the Transport Minister, in the upcoming expansion phase, the government is also pursuing the induction of 3,330 additional electric buses under

PM E-DRIVE Phase-II, that included 500 seven-metre electric buses, aimed towards strengthening feeder services and last-mile connectivity, especially improving access for the population living across the rural belt and the areas that have faced accessibility problems regarding essential services, resources, and facilities.

The minister noted that the government led by CM Rekha Gupta has been consistently pursuing measures aimed at modernising public transport infrastructure improving commuter experience.

The initiatives also include the creation of the necessary charging and power infrastructure at bus depots to support large-scale electrification of the fleet.

The initiative is also expected to contribute in reducing vehicular emissions, improving air quality, by providing a cleaner, safer and reliable public transport system.

Delhi CM lauds country's hardworking & creative youth, urges them to contribute in nation building

New Delhi: Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Saturday underscored the importance of India's youth, stating that the country's greatest strength lies in its young population, which she described as hardworking, visionary, creative and courageous. She made the remarks while addressing a large gathering at a youth-focused national convention in the capital.

The Chief Minister was speaking at the Youth for Viksit Bharat - MY Bharat Youth Convention held at Thyagaraj Stadium, where thousands of young participants from across the country had assembled to engage in discussions on nation-building and development.

Highlighting the achievements of India's youth, Gupta said young people have consistently set new benchmarks across multiple fields including sports, entrepreneurship, art, technology, content creation, education and administration. She said their contributions are shaping India's present

and future in significant ways.

She added that behind every success story lies relentless hard work, discipline and dedication, and it is this spirit that is driving India towards becoming a developed nation. According to her, the determination of young Indians is a key factor in accelerating national progress. Calling upon the youth to take active responsibility in shaping the nation's future, the Chief Minister said that even a small step taken by each young citizen can collectively move the entire nation forward. She emphasised the power of collective effort in a country with a population of over 1.4 billion people. Gupta further stated that young people will play the most crucial role in achieving Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, urging them to dedicate their energy, talent and innovative spirit towards nation-building efforts. She remarked that while not everyone may get the opportunity to die for the

country, everyone has the opportunity to live for it by contributing meaningfully to its growth and progress through their daily work and achievements.

Praising the scale and diversity of the gathering, she said the convention brought together young entrepreneurs, athletes, artists, public representatives, content creators and successful candidates from highly competitive examinations such as the UPSC, making it a powerful representation of India's talent pool. According to Gupta, such platforms highlight the vast potential of Indian youth and serve as an inspiration for others to contribute actively to national development and social transformation. She also congratulated Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya for organising the initiative, stating that the MY Bharat Youth Convention has become an important platform not only to honour young achievers but also to motivate them toward greater involvement in nation-building activities.

SUV fatally hits pedestrian in west Delhi, drunk driver arrested

New Delhi: A 55-year-old unidentified pedestrian lost his life after being struck by an SUV near the busy Rajouri Garden Chowk in the early hours of Sunday, police said. According to officials, the accident occurred around 3.50 am when the SUV allegedly hit the man while he was walking near the intersection. The impact of the collision proved fatal, and the pedestrian was rushed to Acharya Bhikshu Government Hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead on arrival. Police stated that the driver of the SUV, identified as Harshit Raj Dogra, is a 27-year-old resident of Ramesh Nagar. Preliminary findings suggest

that he was allegedly under the influence of alcohol at the time of the incident.

Officials said both the driver and the injured pedestrian were taken to the hospital following the accident. While the victim could not be saved, the driver was also medically examined as part of standard procedure. The deceased has not yet been identified, and police teams are working to establish his identity. Efforts are underway to trace any missing person reports that may match the victim's description. Investigators said that initial probe indicates the SUV was being driven by Dogra when the collision took place near the intersection.

Delhi Crime Branch files 3,000-page chargesheet against extortion syndicate

New Delhi: The Anti Robbery & Snatching Cell (ARSC) of the Delhi Police Crime Branch has filed a comprehensive chargesheet exceeding 3,000 pages against an alleged organised extortion syndicate headed by Rajkumar alias Raju Meena under the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA).

The chargesheet has been filed before the designated MCOCA court at Saket against Rajkumar alias Raju Meena, Mukesh Kumar alias Pakodi and Sanjay Gupta.

Deputy Commissioner

of Police (Crime Branch) Sanjeev Kumar Yadav said the investigation uncovered a well-organised criminal network allegedly involved in extortion, intimidation, blackmail, illegal collections and concealment of crime proceeds.

He said the syndicate operated through a systematic pattern of targeting police personnel and other public servants to generate unlawful financial gains.

According to investigators, Rajkumar alias Raju Meena and his associates allegedly targeted on-duty traffic police personnel by

inducing them to accept small amounts to avoid challans. The accused would then secretly record videos, allegedly manipulate the footage and use it to threaten victims with departmental action, vigilance inquiries and false complaints in order to extort money.

Crime Branch officials said the investigation revealed that the alleged criminal activities were not isolated incidents but part of a continuing organised criminal enterprise. The probe also exposed an alleged illegal "sticker/marka" network through which commercial

vehicle operators were reportedly made to pay regular amounts in exchange for protection from enforcement action.

In a significant development, Crime Branch has also arrested Surekha Rani, wife of the alleged kingpin Rajkumar alias Raju Meena.

Investigators claim that she was in possession of assets allegedly acquired from the proceeds of organised crime and acted as a beneficiary and repository of such assets.

Surekha Rani, a practising advocate at Karkardooma Courts, was arrested

under provisions of MCOCA after investigators found evidence suggesting that several properties and assets had been acquired in her name.

The financial investigation conducted by Crime Branch uncovered movable and immovable assets worth more than ₹10 crore, including residential and commercial properties, bank deposits, vehicles and other assets allegedly linked to proceeds of crime. Investigators found a significant mismatch between the lawful income declared by the accused and the assets under their control.

Two nabbed for killing youth in Shalimar Bagh

New Delhi: Delhi Police has claimed to have solved a murder case in the Shalimar Bagh area within 24 hours, arresting two accused persons in connection with a fatal stabbing incident, an official said on Saturday.

According to police, the incident came to light during the intervening night of June 4 and 5, when information was received that a young man had been admitted to Fortis Hospital with serious stab injuries following a violent altercation near BC Block in Shalimar Bagh. Despite medical efforts, the victim succumbed to his injuries, prompting a murder investigation.

Based on the complaint and initial inputs, police registered a case under



relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and launched a swift probe into the matter. Officers examined local inputs, technical evidence and possible escape routes used by the suspects.

Within a short span of time, investigators identified and traced two suspects allegedly involved in the incident. The accused have been identified

as Saurabh alias Tola and Sachin alias Chiddi.

Police said both accused were apprehended while they were allegedly attempting to flee the area after the incident, indicating a possible attempt to evade arrest immediately after the crime. During interrogation, the accused reportedly disclosed key details about the attack. Based on their disclosure, police recovered the knife allegedly used in the crime, along with the clothes worn at the time of the incident, which are now part of the evidence collected for forensic examination. Officials further stated that both accused have previous criminal records, suggesting a history of involvement in unlawful activities.

Delhi govt continues crackdown on illegal constructions, safety violations

New Delhi: Acting on the directions of Chief Minister (CM) Rekha Gupta, the Delhi government on Sunday intensified its drive against illegal constructions, encroachments and violations of building safety norms across the capital.

Enforcement agencies carried out action in the Khanpur and Sainik Farm areas of South Delhi against structures found violating approved building plans and prescribed regulations.

The government said the campaign is aimed at ensuring public safety and preventing accidents linked to unauthorised and unsafe constructions.

Officials inspected several sites during the drive and initiated action where violations were detected. Gupta reiterated the government's zero-tolerance approach towards unsafe construction practices.

"The Delhi government is working with the safety of citizens as its highest priority," she said, adding that strict action would continue wherever violations of



building by-laws, fire safety norms or approved construction standards are found.

She further stated, "The Delhi government's policy is absolutely clear. Violations of the ground plus five limit.

And prescribed construction norms will not be accepted under any circumstances in the capital. If any individual, builder, or institution undertakes construction in violation of the rules, strict action will be taken in accordance with the law. No one will be allowed to put people's lives at risk."

The CM also said the government is exploring long-term reforms, includ-

ing the possibility of introducing a third-party insurance mechanism for public use buildings, guest houses, nursing homes and other institutions to strengthen compliance with safety standards.

Malviya Nagar MLA and Delhi Jal Board Vice Chairman Satish Upadhyay said.

"Safeguarding Delhi's future remains a priority for the government, and any compromise with people's lives will no longer be tolerated at any cost."

The government has indicated that the enforcement drive will continue across Delhi in the coming weeks.

Jantar Mantar protest a trailer, Pradhan must resign in 7 days: CJP founder Dipke

New Delhi: Founder of the online movement Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), Abhijeet Dipke, on Sunday thanked the "thousands" of people who participated in the group's protest at Jantar Mantar and warned that the agitation would continue if Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan was not removed from office or

did not resign within seven days. In a post on X, Dipke described Saturday's demonstration as a "historic" show of strength and said it reflected growing anger among students and young people over issues related to the education system.

"Yesterday, thousands of us made history. Our peaceful protest at Jantar Mantar

showed the government a trailer of what cockroaches are capable of when we unite," he wrote. Claiming that most people who joined the demonstration had never participated in a protest before, he added, "They felt emboldened by our collective presence to express their sheer anger and frustration at the education system," he

said, while thanking supporters, including students and children, who attended the event despite the summer heat.

"Change cannot happen if we don't make our voices heard," he stated.

Asserting that "this doesn't end here", Dipke accused Pradhan of wronging an entire generation.

Govt mulling third-party insurance system for buildings; 124 properties examined, action taken against violations: CM

New Delhi: Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said on Saturday that her government is seriously mulling a third-party insurance system for buildings, even as different government wings conducted large-scale enforcement drives across the capital, with 124 properties examined and action taken against violations.

The concerted action comes in the wake of the June 3 Malviya Nagar guest house fire tragedy in which 21 people, including 13 foreign nationals, perished and several were injured.

The large-scale campaign against illegal constructions involves demolition of illegal properties, sealing operations, and the issuance of show-cause notices.

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said the Delhi government is operating under a 'zero-tolerance' policy regarding unauthorised construction, encroachment, violations of fire safety norms, and any activities that pose a threat to the lives and property of citizens.

She said her government is developing a permanent system through which such dangerous and illegal constructions can be effectively curbed in the future. She said the government is seriously working on the possibility of developing a third-party insurance system for buildings.

Gupta said the government's Revenue Department, Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Delhi Development Authority (DDA), and other concerned agencies are conducting large-scale enforcement drives across the capital. The Revenue Department examined 124 properties and took action where violations were found.

According to the department, notices were issued to violators after inspections at 10 sites in North District. Notices were also issued following inspections at 10 sites in East District, 21 in West District, 13 in South-West District, and 10 in Central District (North).

During inspections of 30 sites in



South District, 11 premises were sealed and show-cause notices were issued in 19 cases. In the North-West District, three unauthorised buildings were demolished for violating building by-laws. Sealing notices were issued in New Delhi District, while closure notices were issued in Central District.

In Old Delhi District, a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Fire Department was found to be available, but since the building approval plan was not avail-

able, the matter was referred to the MCD for necessary action.

Similarly, over the past six days, the MCD carried out demolition action on 94 properties and sealed 114 properties, in the wake of the May 30 Saket building collapse in which six people died.

Additionally, the DDA has been directed to strengthen its enforcement mechanism against encroachment and illegal constructions. The government's aim is to ensure that no construction, commercial activity, or public utility arrangement operates in Delhi that poses a threat to people's life and property.

A high-level meeting was held under the chairmanship of the DDA Vice Chairman where a detailed discussion took place on strengthening the enforcement mechanism for preventing and removing encroachments and unauthorised constructions in areas under DDA's jurisdiction.

During the meeting, the status of en-

croachment on DDA land, unauthorised constructions in development areas, and the current enforcement system were reviewed.

The Building Department has been directed to conduct a special drive to identify buildings where large-scale violations have been found. It has also been decided that if serious violations of the approved building plan are found then strict action will be taken immediately, including removal of the concerned architect from the panel, and blacklisting them.

The meeting also held discussions on encroachments and unauthorised constructions on DDA land within land pooling areas and development areas notified under the Delhi Development Act, 1957. In this regard, DDA's Flying Squad and Quick Response Teams (QRTs) have been asked to intensify the identification and removal of such cases under the existing enforcement framework.

Editorial

The Perilous Labyrinth of the Gulf Conflict

The geopolitics surrounding the Gulf conflict has reached a critical and deeply concerning juncture; US President Donald Trump's constantly shifting statements and political flip-flops have created global confusion regarding when or how this war might end. A shocking development has recently come to light, revealing that President Trump has launched a scathing attack on his close ally, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. During a private phone conversation, Trump disparagingly labeled Netanyahu as "crazy and unhinged," fiercely criticizing his warmongering policies specifically citing Israel's escalating military operations and the resulting widespread destruction in Lebanon. Iran has taken a firm stance, asserting that Netanyahu's excessive aggression and the attacks on Lebanon pose the greatest obstacle to global peace proposals, making any peace negotiations impossible until Israel completely halts its military operations in the region. Ultimately, it was Netanyahu's flawed policies that dragged the US into this bloody conflict, resulting in immense economic and strategic losses for Washington. Realizing that this alliance is now exacting a heavy price on the global stage, the pragmatic Donald Trump has turned against his own friend. Donald Trump was furious to see that Israel's obstinate policy was jeopardizing the bilateral ceasefire and truce across the Gulf region; he bluntly asked Netanyahu, "Have you actually lost your mind?" This heated verbal exchange was revealed to the global media by the international news site 'Axios,' sparking a debate on the international stage about who is truly mad and who is sane. Trump's conversation illustrates how, when civilized reason vanishes from politics, insults replace reasoned discourse. The personal and political recklessness of these two leaders has pushed the world to the brink of a third world war, causing severe disruptions to international supply chains, acute fuel shortages, and skyrocketing inflation consequences the entire globe is forced to endure. Meanwhile, Iran is adopting an aggressive, uncompromising stance, declaring that it will not surrender under any circumstances and is fully prepared for direct war with the United States. Exasperated by this entire crisis, Trump sharply rebuked Netanyahu, implying in no uncertain terms that were it not for his backing as President, Netanyahu would currently be rotting in prison on various corruption charges.

However, even after such strong warnings from the international community and the United States, Netanyahu remains unyielding, emphatically stating that the military operation against Hezbollah in Lebanon will continue regardless of the circumstances. This clearly indicates a significant rift in the relationship between these two traditional allies. This war of words carries three major global implications: first, the strategic differences between Trump and Netanyahu have intensified sharply. Second, Netanyahu's brutal actions in Lebanon have placed the Trump administration in a legal and moral bind on the global stage, causing Trump significant personal distress. Third, Trump is signaling that Israel should heed American pressure and take at least one step back adopting a stance of de-escalation. If Netanyahu wishes to avoid a crushing defeat in Israel's upcoming general elections, it would be wise for him to stop posturing as if he has already won the war and instead agree to an immediate ceasefire. Failure to defuse this tension in time poses a serious risk that this entire political gamble could backfire on him. From the perspective of international foreign policy, this widening political chasm and lack of trust between the US and Israel play right into Iran's hands, allowing Tehran to reap direct strategic benefits. Iran has posed a highly valid and legitimate question to Trump: how can Netanyahu order successive airstrikes on Lebanon while delicate ceasefire negotiations are simultaneously underway on the international stage? Iran has held direct US covert military support responsible for this aggressive act by Israel, arguing internationally that the move constitutes a blatant violation of the official ceasefire. Exasperated by this, Trump has effectively cornered Netanyahu within the constraints of international law.

Significantly, Israel persisted with fierce attacks on Lebanon even after the US President's stern warning, resulting in the tragic deaths of eight innocent Lebanese civilians.

It is entirely natural for Iran to become increasingly agitated and aggressive as a result. If Donald Trump were to truly withdraw his backing from Benjamin Netanyahu, the latter would find himself in a dire predicament within his own country. On one hand, his domestic political adversaries would rise up against him, while on the other, the corruption inquiry pending against him in the Knesset (parliament) would likely accelerate, potentially leading to his imprisonment. If the Israeli elections postponed due to the war-like situation were to take place amidst this political turmoil, Netanyahu's party would suffer a crushing blow from voters, and his political standing would be shattered.

Therefore, his true personal and national interest lies in setting aside his ego and aligning with Trump.

With great diplomatic acumen, Iran has cast a wide net proposing a 'limited agreement' before US foreign policy; it will be intriguing to see whether Trump, the 'businessman,' takes the bait. The demands Iran has placed before the US are highly significant and strategic. Iran's primary condition is the immediate cessation of military conflicts and Israeli attacks across all fronts, including Lebanon.

Furthermore, they have stipulated that the US must immediately lift the economic and naval blockade imposed in the Gulf, thereby enabling Iran to officially supply crude oil to the international market. Most importantly, they have demanded that the billions of dollars in Iranian revenue and funds frozen in American banks during the period of US-imposed economic sanctions be immediately released to Iran. Thus, it must be said that Iran has, for the time being, succeeded in making the US dance to its tune.

Record 50 GW + renewable capacity integration in a year

The Consultative Committee meeting for the Ministry of Power, was held today in Chandigarh. The meeting on the subject of 'Grid Stability' was chaired by Shri Manohar Lal, Union Minister for Power.

The meeting was attended by the Shri Shripad Yesso Naik, Minister of State for Power, Member of Parliaments (MPs) who are members of the Consultative Committee, Secretary, Ministry of Power, and senior representatives from key power sector institutions including the Central Electricity Authority, Grid Controller of India Limited and Central Transmission Utility of India Limited.

The Committee deliberated on the emerging requirements of grid stability in view of India's growing electricity demand, large-scale renewable energy integration and increasing share of inverter-based generation resources and bulk loads. Discussions covered secure renewable integration, transmission strengthening, energy storage, dynamic reactive power support, grid flexibility, compliance with technical standards, forecasting, power quality and resili-

ence of the grid.

It was noted that grid stability is central to energy security and that India's

of STATCOMs and synchronous condensers, PMU-based monitoring, black-start mock drills, and

based generation resources and bulk loads were appreciated: Avoiding mismatch between commissioning of

complexes to optimize transmission investments. Planning and deployment of equipment such as

Periodic and timely review of technical standards for new technologies such as battery energy storage systems, grid-forming inverters, electrolyzers and data centre loads.

Strengthening compliance monitoring through periodic self-audit and compliance reporting by grid-connected entities.

Improving renewable energy forecasting through better weather data, calibration and maintenance of weather stations, and installation of automatic weather stations in renewable energy plants.

Enhancing grid resilience through strengthening of transmission and distribution infrastructure in weather-prone corridors, maintaining emergency restoration systems and augmenting black-start capability for faster restoration.

Developing a suitable framework for power quality and harmonics assessment in view of increasing penetration of inverter-based resources.

The meeting concluded with a resolve to work collectively towards a clean, reliable, flexible, secure and resilient Indian grid.



clean energy transition must be supported by a reliable, flexible and resilient power grid.

Members appreciated the initiatives already being taken, including resource adequacy planning, ancillary services, energy storage promotion, deployment

strengthening of technical standards. Committee appreciated the record renewable capacity integration of more than 50 GW in a year.

The following actions for ensuring grid stability in the Indian grid with large penetration of inverter-

transmission lines and RE generation projects to avoid curtailment. Promoting pumped storage projects for long-duration storage to ensure resource adequacy and provide inertial support.

Encouraging suitable bulk consumers closer to large renewable generation

STATCOMs and synchronous condensers for voltage stability and system strength support.

Establishing suitable regulatory and commercial mechanisms to harness flexibility services from renewable energy sources and storage systems.

Third Mountain Tunnel Breakthrough Achieved in Maharashtra for Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project



A major engineering milestone has been achieved in the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project with the successful breakthrough of the third mountain tunnel (MT-07) at Ambesari village in Dahanu Taluka of Palghar district, Maharashtra.

With this achievement, three mountain tunnel breakthroughs have now been completed in Maharashtra within the last five months, reflecting rapid progress in one of the most technically challenging sections of India's first

high-speed rail corridor.

The newly completed MT-07 mountain tunnel is 417 metres long and 14.4 metres wide, designed to accommodate both up and down tracks of the Bullet Train corridor. The tunnel was excavated through a controlled drilling and blasting method from both ends, supported by advanced engineering and safety protocols.

Throughout the excavation process, sophisticated monitoring systems and geotechnical instruments were deployed to ensure

structural stability, worker safety and precision execution. Real-time monitoring arrangements including Surface Settlement Points (SSP), 3D targets, strain gauges and seismographs continuously monitored vibrations, tunnel behaviour and surrounding structures. Comprehensive worker safety measures including ventilation systems, fire-safety arrangements, controlled access and continuous geotechnical supervision were maintained during tunnelling operations.

The latest breakthrough builds upon earlier milestones achieved in the Maharashtra section of the project. The first mountain tunnel breakthrough (MT-05), spanning 1.5 km, was achieved near Saphale in Palghar district on 2 January 2026, marking the first successful mountain tunnel breakthrough for the Bullet Train Project in Maharashtra. This was followed by the second breakthrough (MT-06) on 3 February 2026, involving a 454-metre-long tunnel excavated using New Austrian Tunnelling Method (NATM), resulting in two breakthroughs being achieved within about one month in Palghar district.

Among the seven mountain tunnels under construction in Ma-

hharashtra, MT-05, MT-06 and MT-07 have now achieved breakthroughs, MT-08 (350 metre) already achieved breakthrough on 5 October 2023, MT-03 has crossed 80% excavation progress, MT-04 has reached nearly 60% progress, while MT-01 and MT-02 are progressing steadily. Of the total eight mountain tunnels in the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project, seven are located in Palghar district of Maharashtra and one in Valsad district of Gujarat, where tunnelling work has already been com-



pleted. All three mountain tunnels between Vapi and Boisar Bullet Train stations have been successfully ex-

cavated. The Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project continues to drive adoption of advanced tunnelling, monitoring and construction technologies, strengthening In-

dia's capabilities in high-speed rail infrastructure and laying the foundation for safe, modern and future-ready rail mobility.

Roadmap for Closing Skills Gaps and Strengthening India's Position as a Global Talent Hub

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), in collaboration with the World Economic Forum (WEF), today convened the High-Level Roundtable of the India Skills Accelerator (ISA) in New Delhi under the theme "From Insight to Action: Closing Skills Gaps for Growth." The roundtable brought together leaders from government, industry, academia, international organizations and development partners to deliberate on priority actions required to bridge emerging skills gaps and strengthen India's role as a global talent hub.

The India Skills Accelerator, announced in January 2026 following the approval of the Union Cabinet, is hosted by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and forms part of the World Economic Forum's Global Accelerators Network. The initiative seeks to foster public-private collaboration to align skilling systems with evolving labour market needs, develop in-

novative skills financing models and accelerate workforce readiness in emerging sectors including artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, supply chains, and the green economy.

The roundtable was co-chaired by Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Minister of State for Education, Government of India; Dr. Sukanta Majumdar, Minister of State for Education and Development of North Eastern Region, Government of India; Ms. Shobana Kamineni, Executive Chairperson, Apollo HealthCo Limited; and Mr. Sanjiv Bajaj, Chairman and Managing Director, Bajaj Finserv. The Co-Chairs were joined by Mr. Mirek Dušek, Managing Director, World Economic Forum.

The discussions focused on identifying the key forces shaping India's labour market, validating priority interventions to address critical skills gaps, and building a coalition of

stakeholders committed to advancing the India Skills Accelerator agenda.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Minister of State for Education, Government of India, said: "India's demographic strength can become the world's greatest growth engine if we are able to continuously align skills with the evolving demands of technology, industry and society. The India Skills Accelerator represents a new model of collaboration where government, industry, academia and global institutions come together not merely to discuss challenges, but to co-create solutions. As India advances towards Viksit Bharat 2047, our focus must be on building agile, future-ready and globally competitive talent that can power innovation and growth both within the country and across the world."

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Sukanta Majum-

dar, Minister of State for Education and Development of North Eastern Region, Government of India, said: "The future of education and skilling lies in deeper integration between learning and employability. As technologies transform industries at an unprecedented pace, it is imperative that our institutions equip learners not only with knowledge but also with relevant skills, adaptability and a lifelong learning mindset. Through collaborative platforms such as the India Skills Accelerator, we can build pathways that prepare our youth for opportunities in emerging sectors and contribute meaningfully to India's growth story."

Ms. Saadia Zahidi, Managing Director, World Economic Forum, said "India is in a strong position to shape the future of the global workforce. Realizing this opportunity requires strong collaboration between government, industry and education stakeholders to ensure skills systems keep pace with

economic and technological change. The India Skills Accelerator is an important platform to strengthen this coordination, align workforce development with industry demand, and help build a more inclusive, resilient and future-ready economy."

The roundtable concluded with a shared commitment from stakeholders to advance priority actions through structured public-private collaboration, with a focus on workforce transformation, skills financing, emerging technologies and inclusive growth. The outcomes of the deliberations will inform the implementation roadmap of the India Skills Accelerator and support India's efforts to strengthen its position as a leading global talent hub.

The roundtable witnessed participation from a diverse group of leaders representing government, industry, academia and international organisations. Industry leaders included representatives from Apollo Hospitals, Bajaj Finserv, JSW Group, Mahindra

Group, RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Wipro, Reliance Foundation, ReNew, IBM, Bharat Seats Ltd., and Reliance Industries Limited. The discussions were further enriched by participation from the World Economic Forum, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), FICCI, Observer Research Foundation (ORF), IIT Delhi-FIT, AICTE, UGC, CBSE, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of External Affairs, NCVET, NSDC, MSDE and other key stakeholders from India's skilling and workforce ecosystem.

The India Skills Accelerator is part of the World Economic Forum's Global Accelerators Network and is hosted by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. The platform aims to close skills gaps, strengthen workforce readiness and foster innovative multi-stakeholder solutions to support India's economic growth and competitiveness in the future of work.



Briefs :

High Court Steps in Over Sunflower Seed Purchase Dispute

Chandigarh : The Punjab and Haryana High Court has sent notices to the state government, ordering them to quickly resolve a disagreement regarding the purchase of sunflower seeds.

The decision was taken by a bench of judges after a public interest petition was filed by a group of local farmers.

The farmers explained that their freshly harvested sunflower seeds are currently lying unprotected out in the open markets because local commission agents are refusing to buy them. The dispute started after a government letter stated that the agents would receive a 1 percent commission on the Minimum Support Price for the crop.

However, the local agents' association rejected this amount and demanded a 2.5 percent commission instead. Because of this deadlock, the farmers are suffering heavily. Although the farmers had complained to local government committees, no action was taken. The High Court has now asked government lawyers to get clear instructions on how to settle the matter peacefully by June 9.

The legal battle surrounding the procurement of sunflower seeds in the region has reached a critical juncture, prompting direct intervention from the judiciary.

High Court Imposes Heavy Fine for Delaying Legal Cases

Chandigarh : The Punjab and Haryana High Court has made it clear that lawyers and clients cannot delay court cases whenever they want.

The court explained that while it gives extra time for genuine problems, lawyers cannot expect delays just to suit their own comfort.

The court ordered a fine of 1.5 lakh rupees on people who took 11 chances to present their evidence over more than two years but still failed to finish.

The judge noted that it is wrong for lawyers to stay away from court and keep everyone waiting. The court gave the defendants one final chance to present their evidence by July 2, but they must pay the heavy fine first.

Half of the money will go to the other party in the case, and the other half will go to legal services.

The court warned that no more extra time will be given under any circumstances.

The Punjab and Haryana High Court has taken a decisive stand against the prolonged delay of legal proceedings, issuing a stern warning to both legal professionals and litigants.

The court explicitly stated that the justice system cannot be manipulated or slowed down at the whim of the parties involved.

While the judiciary remains willing to grant extensions for genuine and unavoidable complications, it firmly asserted that lawyers and clients cannot treat delays as a matter of personal convenience or comfort.

This strict stance culminated in the court imposing a substantial financial penalty of 1.5 lakh rupees on a set of litigants who had drastically stretched the timeline of their dispute.

Congress Protest Over Exam Paper Leaks Faces Police Water Cannons

Kurukshetra : Hundreds of Congress workers and leaders held a major protest near the home of Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Saturday. Led by Youth Congress chief Uday Bhanu Chib and Member of Parliament Deepender Hooda, the group marched against recent paper leaks and issues in national competitive exams like NEET and CBSE.

Heavy police forces were deployed to maintain order, and when the protesters tried to climb over the police barricades, authorities used water cannons to push them back. The protesters shouted slogans against the government and demanded the resignation of the Union Education Minister. Deepender Hooda addressed the crowd, stating that paper leak mafias are ruining the future of young people while unemployment and crime are rising in the state. He claimed that local youth are losing job opportunities to people from outside states. Although the police briefly detained the Congress leaders at the site, they were released later. The leaders announced that they would



hold their next protest in Panipat on June 12.

The ongoing controversy surrounding national competitive examinations has escalated into physical confrontations on the streets, drawing sharp political battlelines. A massive demonstration organized by hundreds of Congress party workers and high-ranking leaders culminated in a tense standoff near the residence of Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini. The demonstration, spearheaded by prominent figures including Youth Congress chief

Uday Bhanu Chib and Member of Parliament Deepender Hooda, was organized to voice fierce opposition against recent exam paper leaks and systemic irregularities plaguing crucial national assessments like the NEET and CBSE.

As the large crowd of demonstrators marched toward the high-security residential zone, they were met by a massive deployment of law enforcement personnel. The local administration had set up heavily fortified security barricades along the route to restrict access and

maintain public order. The situation turned chaotic when a segment of the protesting crowd attempted to scale these police barriers, prompting authorities to deploy high-pressure water cannons to push the activists back and disperse the gathering.

Amidst the spraying water and rising tensions, the protesters continued to shout anti-government slogans, focusing their anger on the central administration and explicitly demanding the immediate resignation of the Union Education Minister.

Student Short Film From Rohtak Selected for Russian Film Festival

Rohtak : A short film named 'Jogai Parivar' has been selected for an international film festival in Russia. The film was made by the students of Dada Lakhmi Chand State University of Performing and Visual Arts in Rohtak. It will be screened at the 21st 'Within the Family International Festival of Family and Children's Film' in Yaroslavl, which starts on July 3. The movie was directed by Arpit Anand Singh, a direction student from the 2023 batch who comes from Gorakhpur. Many other students from the university's Film and Television Faculty worked hard as actors, assistant directors, and technical crew members. University officials expressed great pride in this achievement, noting that the festival is the largest in the world for family and children's movies. The short film beautifully portrays the everyday reality of society and family. To make their acting feel completely real, some of the student actors even learned the Bhojpuri language in a very short time. The achievement of a student-led cinematic project from Haryana has sparked immense pride within the academic and artistic community, marking a significant

milestone on the global stage. A short film titled 'Jogai Parivar', conceptualized and produced by the students of Dada Lakhmi Chand State University of Performing and Visual Arts in Rohtak, has officially been selected for a prestigious international film festival in Russia. The film is scheduled to be screened at the 21st "Within the Family" International Festival of Family and Children's Films, hosted in the historic city of Yaroslavl, with the event set to commence on July 3. The creative vision behind the successful production was guided by Arpit Anand Singh, a promising film direction student from the university's 2023 batch who originally hails from Gorakhpur. The project served as a collaborative canvas for the institution, drawing in a dedicated cohort of students from the Film and Television Faculty who contributed their talents as actors, assistant directors, and technical crew members. University officials expressed profound pride in the selection, highlighting that the Russian festival is widely regarded as the largest global platform dedicated entirely to cinema focused on family values and children's narratives.

Court Rejects Bail for AAP Leader Deepak Singla in Bank Scam Case

Panchkula : A special anti-money laundering court has refused to grant bail to Aam Aadmi Party leader Deepak Singla in a massive bank fraud case. Singla, who serves as AAP's Goa in-charge and contested Delhi elections twice, was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate on May 18.

The case started in 2018 when the CBI registered a complaint regarding a fraud of over 155 crore rupees against Oriental Bank of Commerce involving a company called Mahesh Timber Private Limited. Later investigations revealed that the total unpaid amount reached more than 239 crore rupees. The Enforcement Directorate discovered that the suspects used fake import documents to steal bank funds. Singla, who held important positions in connected companies, is accused of helping hide and move the money. The agency opposed his bail, stating that 143 crore rupees are still missing and need to be found. They also mentioned that Singla has been uncooperative during questioning and refused to share the password to his mobile phone. Singla's lawyers ar-

gued that the case has been going on for eight years and the arrest was unfair, but the court decided to keep him in custody while investigations continue. A special court in Panchkula dealing with money laundering cases has rejected the regular bail application of Aam Aadmi Party leader Deepak Singla. Singla, who holds a prominent role as the party's co-in-charge for Goa and previously contested the Delhi assembly elections on two occasions, remains in custody following his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate on May 18. The legal trouble originates from an initial First Information Report registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation in 2018 regarding an extensive financial scam. The base case focused on allegations that a firm named Mahesh Timber Private Limited had defrauded the Oriental Bank of Commerce of approximately 155.21 crore rupees, a figure that cumulative investigations later revealed ballooned past an outstanding total of 239 crore rupees. According to the Enforcement Directorate, the suspects manipulated the system by using unau-

thorized SWIFT amendments to artificially inflate Foreign Letters of Credit from an original value of 21 crore rupees up to a massive 173 crore rupees. The federal agency revealed that the accused individuals utilized a complex network of shell companies based in both India and Singapore to orchestrate sham transactions and generate a fake trail of timber imports that never actually occurred. Singla is accused of playing an active role in the conspiracy due to his directorial and key managerial positions in the entities tied to the fraud, including Mahesh Timber Private Limited and Traffic Media India Private Limited. The prosecution strongly opposed his release on bail, emphasizing to the court that nearly 143 crore rupees of the siphoned funds remain completely untraceable and require active tracking through the ongoing investigation. Furthermore, the central agency argued against bail by pointing out Singla's non-cooperative behavior during his custodial interrogation, stating that he gave evasive answers to the vast majority of questions put to him.

Chief Minister Urges Young Generation to Develop Villages

Sonepat : Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini spoke to a gathering during a foundation day event at Samalkha on Saturday. He praised the local community for their hard work and dedication in building the development center, stating that true progress happens when society takes responsibility for its own growth.

The Chief Minister encouraged young people to make their home villages self-reliant, support local farmers, and help children get better opportunities. He noted that the state government is focused on promoting chemical-free natural farming and has set aside a dedicated budget for it.

He also mentioned that Haryana is highly successful in sports and promised that providing proper training facilities in villages would help create future national and international athletes.

The political and administrative landscape of Haryana witnessed a significant moment of grassroots engagement as the state's leadership sought to bridge the



gap between governance and rural development.

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini took center stage at a prominent public gathering organized during a foundation day celebration in Samalkha.

His address focused heavily on the necessity of local empowerment, com-

munity-led initiatives, and the critical role that the younger demographic must play in reshaping the future of the state's rural territories.

During his comprehensive address to the gathered audience, the Chief Minister extended deep appreciation to the local residents for their collective efforts and unwav-

ering commitment toward the regional infrastructure. He specifically lauded the hard work and dedication that went into creating the newly established development center in the area.

Saini emphasized that such community-built structures stand as a testament to what can be achieved when citizens unite for a shared public cause, serving as a model for other regions to emulate.

The Chief Minister articulated a philosophy of decentralized progress, asserting that genuine and long-lasting advancement within a nation can never be achieved solely through top-down government mandates. Instead, he argued that true societal evolution occurs when local communities actively step up and take direct ownership of their own socioeconomic growth.

By fostering a culture of self-determination and civic responsibility, individual towns and villages can build a sturdier foundation for prosperity that is less dependent on external administrative intervention.

Hot Days Ahead for Punjab and Haryana Before Rain Brings Relief

Chandigarh : A four-day heat wave is coming to parts of Punjab and Haryana starting June 8. However, a three-day rainy period right after that should bring some relief to the people. The India Meteorological Department said on June 7 that temperatures will likely go up by 3 to 4 degrees Celsius over the next four days.

A new weather system called a western disturbance will hit the mountains on June 11. This will bring light to medium rain, thunder, lightning, and strong winds to Punjab and Haryana from June 11 to June 13. Even though it rained a bit at the end of May, the total rain for June has been lower than usual. Punjab is short of its normal rain by 31 percent, and Haryana is short by 29 percent. Lately, some areas also saw hailstorms and strong winds, which kept the temperatures normal or cool for a short time. In Punjab, Barnala has stayed completely dry, while Nawanshahr has been the wettest area. In Haryana, Sirsa has received no rain at all, while Palwal has received the most.

Residents of Punjab and Haryana should brace for a brief period of intense summer heat before a shifting weather pattern offers much-needed respite. The India Meteorological Department announced that a four-day



heatwave is projected to grip several parts of both states starting June 8. During this period, maximum temperatures are expected to climb by 3 to 4 degrees Celsius, pushing daily conditions well above the seasonal average. Fortunately, relief is already on the horizon in the form of a new western disturbance. This incoming weather system is expected to hit the northern mountain regions on June 11, triggering a three-day spell of wet weather across the plains. Between June 11 and June 13, parts of Punjab and Haryana are forecasted to experience light to moderate rainfall, accompanied by thunder, lightning, and strong gusty winds, which will effectively break the heatwave. This upcoming precipitation is highly anticipated, as the region is currently facing a notable rainfall

deficit for the month of June. Despite brief showers toward the end of May, recent statistics indicate that Punjab is running 31 percent short of its normal rainfall, while Haryana is experiencing a 29 percent deficit.

While some isolated pockets previously witnessed localized hailstorms and strong winds that temporarily cooled the air, the broader region has remained unseasonably dry. The weather distribution across the states has also been highly uneven. In Punjab, Barnala has recorded absolutely zero rainfall, remaining completely dry, whereas Nawanshahr has emerged as the wettest district in the state. Similarly, in Haryana, Sirsa has yet to receive a single drop of rain this month, while Palwal has recorded the highest amount of precipitation in the state.

The northern plains of India are currently preparing for a dramatic shift in meteorological conditions, with a major weather transition expected to unfold over the coming week. The India Meteorological Department has officially signaled the onset of an intense four-day heatwave across significant portions of both Punjab and Haryana, scheduled to commence on June 8. This impending dry spell is expected to push daily operational and living conditions to their limits, presenting a sharp challenge to the local infrastructure and the general populace before any atmospheric relief manifests. According to the official forecasts released by regional meteorological centers, maximum day temperatures are projected to experience a sharp upward trajectory, climbing by 3 to 4 degrees Celsius over the designated four-day window. This rapid thermal escalation will effectively push ambient temperatures well above the standard seasonal averages for early June, creating oppressive daytime environments. Local authorities are expected to monitor the situation closely, as the combination of rising thermal levels and stagnant air mass conditions typically increases the risk of heat-related stress across rural and urban centers alike.

Man Arrested in Jagadhri for Demanding One Crore Rupee Extortion

Yamunanagar : The police caught a man named Shiv Shakti Sahni on Saturday while he was accepting 4 lakh rupees in extortion money at the Gymkhana Club in Jagadhri. The accused, who is originally from Rajasthan but lives in Jagadhri, was arrested following a complaint by a liquor businessman named Vinay Sahni.

According to the complaint, Shiv Shakti and his partners had been making threatening phone calls and filing fake complaints against the businessman with different government departments. They demanded 1 crore rupees to withdraw the complaints, threatening to ruin his business and hurt him if he did not pay. After some negotiation, the demand was dropped to 72 lakh rupees. The businessman had already paid 2.5 lakh rupees in May to protect himself but informed the police when the harassment continued. The police set up a trap and arrested the suspect red-handed. Meanwhile, the suspect's son claimed to the media that his father is innocent and that the case is just a misunderstanding over a regular business dispute.

An intense criminal investigation unfolded in Yamunanagar as law enforcement officials successfully neutralized a high-stakes fi-

nancial extortion plot targeted at a prominent local entrepreneur. The operation reached its climax at the high-profile Gymkhana Club in Jagadhri, where a specialized police team apprehended a suspect identified as Shiv Shakti Sahni while he was actively receiving a substantial cash payout. This swift tactical intervention marked the end of a prolonged period of administrative harassment and physical intimidation that had been directed toward a local businessman who refused to succumb completely to illegal demands. The legal machinery was set into motion following a comprehensive formal complaint lodged by Vinay Sahni, a well-established liquor businessman operating within the region. In his detailed statement to the authorities, the complainant outlined a systematic campaign of coercion that had been orchestrated against him by the primary suspect and a network of accomplices over several months. The victim revealed that his business operations and personal peace of mind had been severely compromised by a continuous barrage of anonymous threats and highly calculated administrative maneuvers designed to cripple his professional standing. According to the official investigation, the suspect, who originally hails

from the state of Rajasthan but had been residing in the Jagadhri area, utilized a dual strategy of psychological intimidation and bureaucratic manipulation. Shiv Shakti Sahni and his associates reportedly initiated their scheme by launching a wave of fabricated complaints against Vinay Sahni's business enterprises, submitting them to various state government departments. These fraudulent petitions were intentionally designed to trigger invasive regulatory audits and official scrutiny, thereby creating immense artificial pressure on the businessman to seek a quick resolution.

Simultaneously, the extortionists supplemented these official disruptions with direct, threatening communication via telephone calls, explicitly demanding a massive sum of one crore rupees to bring an end to the harassment. The suspects made it entirely clear that the false complaints filed with government agencies would only be retracted upon the full delivery of the demanded financial package. They further escalated the gravity of their extortion attempts by threatening to permanently dismantle the victim's commercial infrastructure and inflict severe physical harm upon him if he attempted to involve law enforcement agencies.

Cooking Gas and Fuel Prices Go Up in Haryana

Gurugram : Families in Haryana are facing higher costs as the price of a 14.2 kg domestic LPG cylinder has increased by 29 rupees. The new prices started at midnight, making Gurugram the most expensive place in the state with a cylinder costing 979.50 rupees. This is the second time prices have gone up in three months, following a 60 rupee increase in March.

Prices vary across different towns, with Fatehabad at 971 rupees and Panchkula at 968.50 rupees. Other fuel prices are also rising, as petrol and diesel went up by 7.50 rupees per liter recently, and CNG became 6 rupees dearer per kilogram. Experts say global market problems and political tensions around the world are causing these hikes. Even with these higher prices, oil companies are still losing money because they sell fuel below the actual cost. Government officials mentioned that they are only passing a small part of the global cost increases to the public.

The economic landscape for households across Haryana has taken a challenging



turn following a substantial upward revision in the prices of essential domestic commodities. Families throughout the region are now forced to re-evaluate their monthly budgets as the retail cost of a standard 14.2-kilogram domestic liquefied petroleum gas cylinder has climbed by twenty-nine rupees. This sudden inflationary adjustment has sent ripples through

local consumer markets, intensifying discussions regarding the overall cost of living and the compounding financial pressures faced by ordinary citizens in both urban and rural setups.

The newly adjusted tariff structure officially went into effect at the stroke of midnight, catching many consumers by surprise and leading to immediate changes at

distribution centers. Following this administrative update, the commercial hub of Gurugram has earned the unfortunate distinction of becoming the most expensive location in the entire state for domestic cooking gas. Residents in Gurugram must now shell out a record 979.50 rupees to secure a single LPG cylinder, a figure that places a heavy burden on

the disposable income of middle-class and lower-income families alike.

This latest price hike is particularly distressing for the public because it does not represent an isolated event, but rather the continuation of a worrying short-term inflationary trend. This is the second time that cooking gas prices have been aggressively adjusted upward within a tight three-month window, pointing toward deep systemic volatility. This current increase follows closely on the heels of a massive sixty-rupee spike that was implemented back in March, meaning consumers are dealing with a cumulative double-blow to their wallets in a very short period.

The retail pricing network across Haryana exhibits a highly fragmented pattern, with the final cost of a domestic cylinder varying noticeably from one district to another based on localized logistics. For instance, in the town of Fatehabad, the price of an LPG cylinder has stabilized at 971 rupees under the new directive, reflecting slight differences in local taxation.

Huge Bank Fraud Leads to CBI Raids on Government Officials

Chandigarh : The Central Bureau of Investigation searched the homes of three IAS officers and one IFS officer on Saturday. The raids took place in Chandigarh, Panchkula, and the Delhi National Capital Region. The searches are connected to a massive 661 crore rupee scam involving IDFC First Bank and AU Small Finance Bank. The Enforcement Directorate is also looking into this and says 645 crore rupees were stolen. The money belonged to eight government departments in Haryana and two in Chandigarh.

The officers involved are Mohd Shayin, Pankaj Agarwal, Pardeep Kumar, and Navneet Kumar Srivastava. Investigators believe these public officials worked secretly with bank workers. They helped open bank accounts and move government money to the wrong places. A private company named Vipam Consultancy allegedly received this stolen money and put it into its director's personal account. The government had already given permission to investigate eight top officers. Last month, officers were questioned, and their phones were taken.

Two of them were suspended, and the others were moved to different jobs. The

investigation started after fake fixed deposit documents were used to trick government departments while the actual money was sent away to fake companies.

The administrative and financial sectors of the region have been deeply shaken following a massive anti-corruption operation that has reached the highest echelons of public service.

The Central Bureau of Investigation has launched a coordinated series of raids targeting the residential premises of multiple top-tier public servants, including three Indian Administrative Service officers and one Indian Forest Service officer. These extensive search operations were carried out across six strategic locations spanning Chandigarh, Panchkula, and the wider Delhi National Capital Region, signaling a major escalation in the federal probe. The judicial and investigative crackdown stems from an incredibly sophisticated financial swindle involving a staggering sum of 661 crore rupees.

This immense public asset misappropriation specifically centers around government funds that had been officially parked in corporate accounts maintained with IDFC First Bank and AU

Small Finance Bank.

Alongside the central police probe, the Enforcement Directorate has concurrently launched an aggressive anti-money laundering investigation, officially noting that at least 645 crore rupees of public wealth was systematically diverted away from state treasuries. The immense scale of the financial breach is illustrated by the broad spectrum of public institutions that fell victim to the insider conspiracy.

According to detailed case folders released by federal agents, the fraudulent scheme actively compromised the financial reserves of eight separate government departments operating under the Haryana administration. Furthermore, the siphon network successfully penetrated the capital reserves of two major public entities governed by the Chandigarh Union Territory administration, including the local Municipal Corporation and the Chandigarh Renewable Energy and Science and Technology Promotion Society. Federal investigators have explicitly named the high-ranking bureaucrats currently under the scanner as Mohd Shayin, Pankaj Agarwal, Pardeep Kumar, and Navneet Kumar Srivastava.

Four People Sentenced to Life Imprisonment for the Brutal Double Murder of a Wrestler and Her Brother

Sonepat : A local court has given rigorous life sentences to four individuals, including a wrestling coach, his wife, and his two brothers-in-law, for killing a young female wrestler and her brother. They were also punished for trying to kill the woman's mother in Halalpur village back on November 10, 2021.

A woman named Dhanpati filed a complaint with the Kharkhoda police stating that Pawan Kumar, a resident of Baland village, had been running a wrestling school named after Olympian Sushil Kumar in Halalpur for three years. Pawan was married to a woman from Halalpur who also worked as a coach at the school. Many young wrestlers from nearby villages practiced there, including Dhanpati's 22-year-old daughter, Nisha. Nisha's

18-year-old brother, Sooraj, drove her to the school every day and had dropped her off as usual on the day of the incident. Dhanpati explained that they later received a call from the school stating that Nisha was done with her practice. When Dhanpati and Sooraj arrived to pick her up, the coach and his accomplices started shooting at them. They tried to run away to save themselves, but Nisha had already been shot and killed near the entrance gate of the school. Dhanpati fell to the ground after being hit by bullets, while the attackers chased after Sooraj and shot him dead near a water canal.

The police filed a case against the school owner Pawan, his wife Sujata, and her brothers Amit and Sachin under various legal sections, and later took all four into custody.

Haryana Chief Minister Criticizes Opposing Political Parties

Ludhiana : Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini visited a religious event in Ludhiana on Sunday to celebrate the birth anniversary of Guru Amar Das. He prayed for peace and harmony and spoke to the gathering about the Guru's teachings on equality and helping others. He also promised 5 lakh rupees to help buy land near the shrine.

During his speech, Saini criticized the Congress party, claiming it is losing its presence across the country. He said he would work with Captain Amarinder Singh to form a government in Punjab. He accused the Congress of increasing corruption and drug issues when they ruled Punjab in the past. Saini also criticized the Aam Aadmi Party government, saying they failed to keep their promises and allowed law and order to break down, which is causing business

owners to leave the state.

The regional political and cultural spheres witnessed a significant moment of cross-border engagement as the leadership of Haryana traveled into neighboring Punjab for a prominent public appearance. Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini arrived in the industrial hub of Ludhiana on Sunday to participate in a high-profile religious gathering dedicated to celebrating the birth anniversary of Guru Amar Das.

His presence at the spiritual event highlighted a deliberate attempt to connect with the local community through shared cultural values, setting a respectful and solemn tone for the initial proceedings of the day before transitioning into broader socio-political discussions.

During his address to the large congregation gathered



at the spiritual venue, the Chief Minister offered formal prayers for the preservation of peace, societal stability, and communal harmony across the region.

He spoke extensively about the enduring legacy and profound teachings of Guru Amar Das, emphasizing that the values of absolute social equality and selfless service to humanity remain deeply relevant in navigating modern societal challenges. Saini urged the audience to integrate these

spiritual principles into their daily lives, noting that a compassionate and unified society is the strongest foundation for regional development and mutual prosperity.

To demonstrate concrete administrative and personal support for the community's spiritual infrastructure, the Chief Minister announced a significant financial gesture during the ceremony.

He formally promised a monetary grant of five lakh rupees from available developmental funds to assist the

local management committee in acquiring adjacent land plots near the sacred shrine. This financial allocation is intended to facilitate the physical expansion of the complex, ensuring that the venue can comfortably accommodate the growing number of pilgrims and smoothly run its ongoing charitable initiatives.

After concluding the spiritual and humanitarian segments of his address, the Chief Minister pivoted toward the regional political landscape, utilizing the public platform to deliver an analytical and sharp critique of the primary opposition forces. Saini launched a direct attack against the Congress party, asserting that the traditional political organization is experiencing a rapid and irreversible decline in its operational footprint across the country.

He argued that the par-

ty's central leadership has become increasingly disconnected from the real aspirations of ordinary citizens, leading to a steady loss of its electoral relevance in successive state contests.

Looking forward to future political alignments and electoral battles within the region, the Chief Minister dropped a major hint regarding his party's long-term strategic planning for the state of Punjab.

He explicitly stated his intention to collaborate closely with veteran political leader Captain Amarinder Singh to build a robust and stable alternative governance framework in the state. Saini suggested that this partnership would combine seasoned administrative experience with a fresh developmental vision, offering the electorate a reliable path toward economic recovery and political stability.

Rohtak Cleanliness Drive Uses Tents and Benches to Stop Littering

Rohtak : The Rohtak Municipal Corporation has started a unique initiative to stop people from throwing garbage on the roadsides. Under the guidance of the new Municipal Commissioner, Narendra Kumar, the city identified 28 illegal dumping spots and chose three major problem areas to test a new method.

The city administration set up a tent at a market site in Sector-2 and placed public benches at two other locations on Delhi Road and near Gohana Adda.

Municipal workers have been posted at these spots to stop residents from dumping waste.

The city is also setting up security cameras to catch and fine anyone caught littering. Additionally, a new campaign called "Dustbin zaroori hai, iske bina safai adhoori hai" has started.

This rule makes it compulsory for all shopkeepers and street vendors to keep dustbins at their shops so



customers do not throw trash on the streets.

Officials reminded everyone that keeping the city healthy and clean requires help from every citizen. The Rohtak Municipal Corporation has launched a creative strategy to prevent public littering and eliminate unauthorized garbage collection points along the city's thoroughfares.

Under the leadership of the newly appointed Municipal Commissioner, Narendra Kumar, the civic administration conducted a comprehensive survey to map out twenty-eight recurring illegal dumping zones.

From this list, authorities selected three high-priority problem locations to pilot an innovative monitoring and space-reclamation project

designed to alter public disposal habits.

To physically disrupt the pattern of illegal dumping, the city administration set up a functional tent structure directly at a problematic market site in Sector-2, while placing public seating benches at two separate chronic dumping spots on Delhi Road and near Gohana Adda.

Investigation Ordered After Rats Damage Body at Hisar Hospital

Hisar : The family of a 25-year-old woman named Komal held a protest at the Civil Hospital on Sunday morning after finding that her body had been damaged by rats in the mortuary. The family noticed large bite marks on her forehead and face when her body was brought out for a post-mortem examination. They also saw rodents running around the deep freezer in the room.

Komal had been admitted to a government hospital in Hansi for a C-section delivery on Saturday. Due to heavy bleeding and complications, doctors referred her to the main hospital in Hisar. Sadly, her condition got worse and she passed away on the journey. Doctors in Hisar declared her dead on arrival and kept her body in the mortuary overnight. The family stated that she had no injuries on her face before her death. Chief Medical Officer Dr. Sapna Gahlaut has ordered an of-

ficial inquiry to investigate the negligence.

An official investigation has been launched at the Civil Hospital in Hisar following serious allegations of negligence regarding the storage and handling of a deceased patient's body in the facility's mortuary.

The family of a 25-year-old woman named Komal staged a formal protest at the hospital premises on Sunday morning after discovering that her body had sustained visible damage, reportedly caused by rodents, while being kept in the deep freezer room overnight.

The distressing situation came to light when the body was brought out of the mortuary for a scheduled postmortem examination. Family members immediately noticed deep bite marks concentrated on the woman's forehead and face, noting that she had absolutely no facial injuries pri-

or to her passing. According to witnesses at the scene, rodents were observed moving freely around the cooling units where the bodies are stationed, raising immediate concerns regarding the structural maintenance and sanitary conditions of the facility. Komal had initially been admitted to a government hospital in Hansi on Saturday to undergo a C-section delivery. Due to severe post-operative bleeding and subsequent medical complications, doctors determined she required advanced care and referred her to the main district hospital in Hisar.

Her health deteriorated rapidly during the transit, and she unfortunately passed away during the journey. Upon arrival in Hisar, medical staff declared her dead on arrival and transferred her body to the mortuary for the night. In response to the family's protest and the apparent

lapse in security, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Sapna Gahlaut has ordered a formal inquiry to investigate the administrative failure and assign accountability.

The healthcare infrastructure and administrative accountability within the state's public medical network have come under intense scrutiny following a highly disturbing incident reported at a prominent regional medical facility.

A wave of public outrage and formal administrative action was triggered at the Civil Hospital in Hisar when severe lapses in post-mortem care came to light, causing deep emotional distress to a grieving family. The situation highlights ongoing vulnerabilities in basic public healthcare management, leading to immediate calls for systemic overhaul and the strict enforcement of standard operating procedures across institutional mortuaries.

Traffic Police Give Two Weeks to Auto Drivers for Proper Papers

Karnal : A traffic police official held a meeting with auto-rickshaw and e-rickshaw drivers near the city traffic post to share important safety rules. The officer told all drivers to get their vehicle documents fully ready within the next 15 days.

If drivers do not have the proper papers after this two-week deadline, they will be fined and their vehicles might be taken away by the police. The official reminded

drivers to drive safely, stay sober, and always carry a valid driving license. Drivers were also told to stay in their proper lanes and avoid making sudden turns that cause traffic jams and accidents. Finally, the officer asked the drivers to be honest and return any bags or items that passengers accidentally leave behind in their vehicles.

The local traffic police administration in the city of Karnal has officially initi-

ated a major regulatory crackdown and public safety awareness campaign specifically targeting the operators of auto-rickshaws and e-rickshaws. This significant development commenced with a comprehensively organized meeting convened by a senior traffic police official right in the vicinity of the main city traffic post.

The primary objective of this gathering was to directly communicate a series of critical safety protocols, legal

mandates, and operational guidelines that every single driver must strictly adhere to moving forward.

The atmosphere at the meeting was serious, reflecting the department's firm commitment to transforming the current state of public transportation safety and traffic management within the urban limits.

During the extensive briefing, the presiding traffic police official issued a clear and unequivocal directive to

all the gathered auto-rickshaw and e-rickshaw operators regarding the legal status of their vehicles. The authorities have explicitly granted a strict grace period of exactly fifteen days for every driver to thoroughly review, update, and completely organize their official vehicular documentation.

This two-week window is intended to give the operators ample time to visit the relevant transport offices, pay any outstanding dues,

renew expired registrations, and ensure that every piece of paperwork required by law is fully valid and readily available for inspection at any given moment.

The police department has made it abundantly clear that this fifteen-day grace period is a firm deadline and not a flexible suggestion, meaning that consequences will be swift once the time expires. The official warned the drivers that the traffic police will launch a rigorous

verification drive across the city immediately following the conclusion of these two weeks. Any operator found navigating the city streets without the proper, legally mandated paperwork after the deadline will face immediate punitive action. These penalties will not be limited to standard monetary fines, as the authorities are fully prepared to impound and confiscate vehicles belonging to non-compliant drivers to ensure accountability.

Beyond the pressing issue of vehicular documentation, the traffic police official dedicated a substantial portion of the meeting to reinforcing fundamental road safety rules that are frequently ignored on daily commutes. The drivers were reminded that operating a commercial passenger vehicle carries an immense amount of social responsibility, as hundreds of citizens rely on them daily for safe transport.



Indian men's Hockey team leaves for European Leg of FIH Hockey Pro League 2025-26

Bengaluru: The Indian Men's Hockey Team departed from Kempegowda International Airport here on Saturday night for the European leg of the FIH Hockey Pro League 2025-26, where they will take on some of the top hockey nations in a crucial phase of the tournament.

The Indian contingent is travelling to Brussels, Belgium, via Abu Dhabi, as the team will undergo a preparatory training camp and play a friendly match between June 7 and 9 in Brussels.

The short training block aims to help the squad acclimatise to European conditions ahead of a packed Pro League schedule.

Following the camp in Belgium, the team will move to Rotterdam, the Netherlands, on June 10 for the first phase of their European campaign. India will face Germany and hosts Netherlands in the FIH Hockey Pro League from June 14 to 21 in Rotterdam.

Thereafter, the squad will travel to London, England, where they will take on



Pakistan and England in the second phase of the European leg from 23 to 28 June 2026.

India will play each of the four opponents twice during the tour. The eagerly-awaited matches against Pakistan will be played on June 23 and June 26.

Speaking ahead of the departure, Indian Men's

Hockey Team captain Harmanpreet Singh expressed confidence in the squad's preparations and excitement for the challenges ahead.

"The European leg of the Pro League is always a great test because you are up against some of the best teams in the world in their home conditions. We have prepared well during our

training camp in Bengaluru, and the players are looking forward to competing at the highest level," said Harmanpreet, who returns to lead the side after missing the Australian leg of the FIH Pro League in Hobart due to personal reasons.

"Our objective is to play fearless hockey, remain disciplined in key moments and

continue evolving as a group. The upcoming matches will give us an excellent opportunity to assess ourselves against top-quality opposition and continue building momentum as a team," the captain said.

"Our focus will be on executing our plans consistently, improving with every game and ensuring that we make the most of this tour. The Pro League is an important platform for us to gain experience, strengthen combinations and continue our progress as a unit. We are excited for the challenge and eager to give our best for India," he added.

The Indian team aims to secure valuable points in the Pro League to move up in the standings while continuing to build towards upcoming major international competitions, including the FIH World Cup and the Asian Games later this year.

India will begin their European leg of the FIH Pro League 2025-26 against the Netherlands on June 14 at 7:30 pm IST.

UCI Pledges Support to Make Pune Grand Tour Cycle Race the World's Fourth Grand Tour

Lake Garda: The Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) has pledged its full support to help establish the Pune Grand Tour (PGT) as the world's fourth Grand Tour and position Pune as a leading global sports tourism destination. During a special presentation of the organizing team of PGT before the UCI Management Committee in Lake Garda, Italy, the world governing body for cycling praised the Pune Grand Tour for delivering a race of a quality comparable to the finest cycling events in the world and expressed amazement that an event of such a big scale and international standard was successfully conceived, planned and executed within just six months. The UCI also lauded the exemplary discipline displayed by the more than 2.5 million spectators (largest for any sporting event in India) who attended the five-day event and commended the police and district administration for ensuring exceptional safety and security arrangements despite the unprecedented crowds. Recognizing the race as the first genuine opportunity to cre-

ate a future Grand Tour outside Europe, UCI President David Lappartient extended the organization's full cooperation to support the event's long-term growth, including expertise in urban mobility planning and assistance in strengthening grassroots cycling development programs across India. The Pune Grand Tour received a significant boost on the global cycling stage as the UCI endorsed the event's long-term vision and reaffirmed its commitment to supporting its growth, a release stated on Sunday. A delegation comprising Pune District Collector Jitendra Dudi, Cycling Federation of India (CFI) Secretary General Maninder Pal Singh and Bajaj Auto Director Abhinav Bindra was invited by UCI President David Lappartient to present the remarkable journey and future roadmap of the Pune Grand Tour, whose inaugural edition was successfully held in January 2026. Sharing the key outcomes of the presentation and subsequent interaction with the UCI Management Committee, Jitendra Dudi said, the UCI Management Committee not

only appreciated the quality and execution of the race, but also approved the upgrade of the Pune Grand Tour to UCI 2.1 Status, marking a major milestone in the event's international recognition. The committee also gave its consent for the 2027 edition to be held between January 26 and January 31, allowing the event to incorporate three national holidays, while leaving the final scheduling decision to the Pune district administration. (UCI 2.1 status is a Class 1 stage race classification that attracts a higher caliber of teams, allowing up to 50 per cent of the participants to be elite UCI World Teams. It also features larger prize purses, more UCI ranking points and stricter organizational standards.) Representing the unique partnership between government, federation and corporate stakeholders that delivered the inaugural edition of the race, the delegation of PGT outlined Pune's ambition to establish the Pune Grand Tour among the world's premier cycling events during the presentation to the UCI Management Committee.

FIFA World Cup Group J preview: Argentina launches title defense as Jordan makes debut

Washington: Argentina will launch its title defense in Group J as it bids to become the first team in 64 years to retain the FIFA World Cup. Lionel Scaloni's side is joined by Algeria, returning after a 12-year absence, Austria, back at the finals for the first time since 1998, and tournament debutant Jordan.

Argentina team: Argentina arrives at the tournament as world and continental champion, aiming to win a fourth successive major international competition.

Lionel Scaloni's side cruised through South American qualifying, finishing nine points clear of second-placed Ecuador with 12 wins from 18 matches.

The 48-year-old has built a mature, adaptable 4-3-3 system since taking

over in 2018. Seventeen members of the squad that triumphed in Qatar remain, providing continuity and tournament-winning know-how.

The spine of the team is formidable. Emiliano Martinez provides a commanding last line in goal, Cristian Romero and Lisandro Martinez form an elite Premier League central defensive partnership, and Enzo Fernandez anchors a midfield that blends industry with invention.

Up front, Lautaro Martinez and Julian Alvarez offer contrasting but complementary options, while the supporting cast of Rodrigo De Paul, Alexis Mac Allister and Giovanni Lo Celso ensures Scaloni can adjust to any opponent.

The group stage schedule, playing Algeria in Kansas City, and Austria and Jordan both in Dallas, should present few obstacles for the runaway group favorite.

Star player: Lionel Messi is competing at his sixth World Cup, an all-time record. Now 38, the Argentina captain holds the national records for appearances (198) and goals (116), and has scored 13 times at the global showpiece, making him his country's all-time top scorer in the competition. His quest to finish as the tournament's leading marksman is one of the few honors missing from a collection that already includes the World Cup Golden Ball in 2014 and 2022.

Player to watch: Nico Paz has emerged as one of

the revelations of the European season. The

21-year-old midfielder scored 13 goals and provided



eight assists in 40 appearances for Como, helping the Italian club secure historic qualification for the UEFA Champions League.

A left knee issue slowed his preparation, but the medical staff are confident he will be available for the

opener against Algeria. His creative spark from midfield offers Scaloni a fresh dimension, according to Xinhua. Algeria team: Algeria

returns to the World Cup stage for the first time since its memorable run to the round of 16 at Brazil 2014, where it pushed eventual winner Germany to extra time. Under Bosnian coach Vladimir Petkovic, appointed in early 2024, Algeria qualified with authority, winning eight of its 10 African preliminaries and losing just once. Algeria's greatest strength lies in its attacking variety. Captain Riyad Mahrez provides guile, Mohamed Amoura, who scored 10 goals in qualifying, offers direct running, and teenage prospect Ibrahim Maza supplies unpredictability. The squad's weakness is in goal, where three goalkeepers selected share only 10 caps and a single clean sheet in its last 13

World Cup matches underscores a long-standing vulnerability.

Star player: Mahrez remains the face of Algerian football. Now 35, the Al-Ahli winger captains the side and has declared this will be his final World Cup. A Champions League winner and five-time Premier League champion with Manchester City and Leicester City, Mahrez is his country's second-highest all-time scorer with 38 goals in 114 caps. His touch, vision and set-piece delivery remain Algeria's primary creative weapons, even if he no longer completes 90 minutes.

Player to watch: Maza has already been nicknamed "Mazadona" by supporters for his close control and creative flair. The 20-year-old

Berlin-born playmaker featured in 28 Bundesliga games for Bayer Leverkusen this season, scoring three goals and registering four assists, while also gaining Champions League experience. Having represented Germany at youth level, Maza pledged his international future to Algeria and is the country's most exciting attacking prospect at the tournament.

Austria team: Austria is back at a World Cup for the first time in 28 years, having topped UEFA qualifying Group H ahead of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Under German coach Ralf Rangnick, appointed in April 2022, Austria has become one of Europe's most distinctive and aggressive pressing sides.

Suthar's dream debut powers India's control over AFG on Day 2

Mullanpur: A dream debut from Manav Suthar headlined a dominant all-round display as India tightened their grip on the one-off Test against Afghanistan, declaring at 564 for 8 before reducing the visitors to 113 for 5 at stumps on Day Two here on Sunday.

Left-arm spinner Manav Suthar made an immediate impact on his Test debut, striking three times across the day to break Afghanistan's resistance at key moments. He first removed Rahmanullah Gurbaz early in the innings, with Sai Sudharsan taking a sharp catch at slip, setting the tone for India's relentless bowling effort.

He returned later to cap his performance by dismissing Afsar Zazai for 3, taking a simple return catch and completing a memorable debut spell marked by control, accuracy and composure under

pressure.

India's dominance, however, was built on a towering batting effort earlier in the day. Resuming at 368 for 3, the hosts quickly took control through a commanding 169-run partnership between skipper Shubman Gill (126) and Rishabh Pant (81). Gill anchored the innings with elegance and patience while Pant provided the aggression, ensuring Afghanistan were kept under constant pressure. India's lower order also made key contributions, with debutant Manav Suthar showing promise with the bat and Washington Sundar playing a crucial stabilising and counter-attacking role with an unbeaten half-century (52*), ensuring India capitalised fully on their strong position.

Despite a spirited response from Afghanistan pacer Mohammad Saleem Safi, who produced a six-

wicket haul, India never lost control of the game. Safi struck twice in quick succession to remove Gill and Dhruv Jurel, briefly lifting Afghanistan's energy in the field. However, Pant counterattacked with authority, striking six fours and three sixes in a fluent 81 that pushed India beyond 450 before lunch. The hosts eventually reached 475 for 6 at the interval. Afghanistan's struggle with the ball soon shifted to a battle for survival with the bat. At tea, they were already 28 for 1 after Suthar's early strike, and the pressure only intensified in the post-lunch session.

The passage of play after tea was marked by tight bowling, tense reviews and brief flashes of resistance. Hashmatullah Shahidi survived a caught-behind appeal off Washington Sundar after UltraEdge confirmed a faint inside edge, overturn-

ing the on-field decision.

Rahmat Shah also benefited from a close LBW call earlier, with India losing a review due to inconclusive camera angles caused by sight-screen obstruction. However, Afghanistan's resistance gradually unraveled. Shahidi was dismissed at 32.2 overs when Prasad Krishna trapped him lbw, with ball-tracking confirming the delivery was hitting leg stump. Rahmat Shah fought hard with a fluent 43, including a lofted six off Sundar, but lacked support as wickets fell regularly around him.

Suthar continued to be the constant threat, maintaining control through the middle overs and ensuring Afghanistan never built partnerships. His final strike at 39.5 overs sealed the innings phase, as he removed Afsar Zazai to complete a standout three-wicket haul on debut.

Srishti Kiran finishes runner-up at ITF World Tennis Tour Juniors

Bengaluru: Thirteen-year-old Bengaluru tennis sensation Srishti Kiran continued her remarkable rise on the international junior circuit by finishing runner-up at the prestigious ITF World Tennis Tour Juniors J100 Guatemala City in Guatemala City, Guatemala, further cementing her reputation as one of India's most promising young tennis talents.

The young Indian produced another impressive week of tennis against a strong international field before eventually falling in the final to top seed Ellery Mendell of the United States. Despite the defeat, Srishti's performance throughout the tournament earned widespread praise and highlighted her rapid progress on the global junior circuit.

In the championship match, Srishti fought hard before going down 4-6, 3-6 in a contest that tested both her skill and resilience. The final proved particularly challenging as she struggled with physical discomfort and cramps during the

latter stages of the encounter.

The Indian teenager began the match confidently and showed little sign of nerves despite competing in one of the biggest finals of her young career. She surged to an early 2-0 lead in the opening set and continued to dictate play, eventually extending her advantage to 3-1 against the tournament's top seed. However, Mendell gradually found her rhythm and began to turn the momentum in her favour. The American displayed composure under pressure, winning a series of crucial points to erase the deficit and ultimately capture the first set 6-4.

The second set remained highly competitive, with neither player able to establish clear control. At 3-3, the contest appeared evenly balanced and Srishti looked capable of forcing a decisive third set through her aggressive shot-making and determination. At a crucial stage of the match, Srishti earned two game points that could have shifted momentum significantly in her favour.

Unfortunately for the Indian youngster, the onset of cramps began affecting her movement around the court, making it difficult for her to maintain the same intensity.

As her mobility became restricted, Mendell capitalised on the opportunity and increased the pressure. The top seed used her experience effectively, winning the key exchanges and eventually closing out the second set 6-3 to secure the title. Although she fell short in the final, Srishti's performance in Guatemala represented another major achievement in what has been a breakthrough season. The tournament showcased her ability to compete consistently against some of the best junior players in the world. Entering the event, Srishti was already riding a wave of confidence after capturing five consecutive ITF junior titles. That remarkable winning streak had established her as one of the most in-form players on the circuit and demonstrated her growing maturity as a competitor.

India dominates medal tally at 1st World Yogasana Championship 2026

Ahmedabad: India continued its commanding performance at the inaugural World Yogasana Championship 2026, finishing Day 3 at the top of the medal standings with an extraordinary haul of 30 medals, including 24 gold, five silver and one bronze. The impressive performance further reinforced India's dominance in the sport and highlighted the country's deep-rooted expertise in Yogasana on the international stage.

The championship, currently being held in Ahmedabad, has emerged as a landmark event in the evolution of Yogasana as a competitive global sport. Athletes from numerous countries have gathered to showcase their

skills, transforming the traditional discipline into a high-level international sporting competition.

Indian participants delivered exceptional performances across multiple categories, demonstrating remarkable flexibility, balance, endurance and mental focus. Their consistent success throughout the competition has enabled the host nation to establish a significant lead over the rest of the field.

With 24 gold medals already secured, India has displayed a level of dominance rarely witnessed in international multi-category sporting events. The athletes' performances reflected years of dedicated training and highlighted the country's strong

infrastructure for nurturing Yogasana talent.

The Indian contingent also added five silver medals and one bronze medal to its tally, taking the overall count to 30 medals after three days of competition. This remarkable achievement has placed the country comfortably ahead of its closest rivals in the championship standings.

Occupying second place on the medal table is Singapore, which has accumulated six medals, including two gold, two silver and two bronze.

The country's athletes have delivered commendable performances and emerged as one of the strongest international competitors at the event.

India, WI in final Women's T20 WC dress rehearsal in Cardiff

Cardiff: With the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 just days away, India and the West Indies will use their warm-up clash at Sophia Gardens on Monday to address lingering questions and build momentum ahead of the global showpiece. Though the fixture carries no official significance, it offers both sides a valuable opportunity to fine-tune combinations before the tournament begins. For third-ranked India, the match comes in the aftermath of a disappointing 2-1 T20I series defeat to England, a result that exposed uncertainties in both

batting and bowling departments. Captain Harmanpreet Kaur has indicated that the team management is close to finalising its preferred XI, but experimentation continues as India seek the right balance. The batting order remains a key talking point. Yastika Bhatia, returning from a lengthy injury layoff, was promoted to No. 3 during the England series, prompting a reshuffle that pushed Jimimah Rodrigues down the order while Harmanpreet moved to No. 5. The openers have struggled for consistency, while wicketkeeper-batter Richa Ghosh



is still searching for form in the lower middle order. The warm-up games are expected to provide opportunities to fringe players, with all-rounder Radha Yadav and batter Bharti Fulmali among

those looking to strengthen their claims. Radha's return after nearly a year away from international cricket could be particularly significant, given her experience, fielding prowess and ability to

contribute with the bat. India's pace attack also remains under scrutiny. Renuka Singh Thakur, Arundhati Reddy and Kranti Gaud endured a difficult phase earlier this year, and English conditions are likely to test their discipline and adaptability once again. In contrast, the West Indies arrive in Cardiff buoyed by their recent triseries triumph in Dublin. The Caribbean side secured back-to-back victories early in the tournament before edging past challenges from Ireland and Pakistan to emerge on top through superior net run rate.



Market valuation of 7 of top-10 most-valued firms erode by Rs 1.25 tn

New Delhi: The combined market valuation of seven of the top-10 most-valued firms eroded by Rs 1.25 trillion in a week with the Reliance Industries took the biggest hit.

The market valuation of Reliance Industries dropped Rs 39,718 crore to Rs 17,47,321.40 crore. HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, and State Bank of India were the gainers while on the losing end were Reliance Industries, Bharti Airtel, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Bajaj Finance, Larsen & Toubro, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) and Hindustan Unilever. ICICI Bank went up Rs 4,484.86 crore to Rs 9,05,074.77 crore and that of HDFC Bank climbed Rs 4,101.47 crore to Rs 11,50,743.31 crore. The mcap of State Bank of India



jumped Rs 12,692.09 crore to Rs 9,02,523.63 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of LIC diminished Rs 14,610.74 crore to Rs 5,05,873.32 crore while

Bajaj Finance lost Rs 9,681.36 crore from its mcap, which stood at Rs 5,53,580.97 crore.

The valuation of Hindustan Unilever declined Rs

5,909.23 crore to Rs 4,98,301.31 crore.

TCS faced an erosion of Rs 20,134.66 crore from its valuation, which stood at Rs 7,95,346.09 crore while

Bharti Airtel's market valuation dipped Rs 18,736.04 crore to Rs 10,96,150.49 crore and that of Larsen & Toubro tumbled Rs 16,880.2 crore to Rs 5,43,956.44 crore.

In a rank-wise analysis, Reliance Industries remained the most-valued domestic firm followed by HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, TCS, Bajaj Finance, Larsen & Toubro, LIC, and Hindustan Unilever.

The Indian stock market on Friday ended in the red, in a volatile trading session, as investors weighed the Reserve Bank of India's latest inflation and growth projections. At close, Sensex was at 74,243, lower by 117 points or 0.16per cent while, NSE Nifty ended at 23,366.70, down 49.85 or 0.21per cent.

Singareni Raises Telangana's Flag on Global Stage with World Championship Victory: Dy CM Bhatti

Hyderabad: Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka today congratulated the Singareni Rescue Team for bringing international recognition to Telangana by emerging as world champions at the prestigious International Mines Rescue Competition held in Zambia.

The rescue team, accompanied by Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) Chairman and Managing Director Dr. Buddha Prakash Jyoti, called on the Deputy Chief Minister at Mahatma Jyotirao Phule Praja Bhavan in Hyderabad and presented the trophies and medals won at the international event.

Congratulating the team members, Bhatti said Singareni had once again demonstrated its leadership in underground mine rescue operations on the global

stage. He expressed happiness that the Singareni Rescue Team secured first place in the Underground Mines Rescue category, outperforming teams from major mining nations including China, Canada, Australia, Poland and Colombia.

Describing the achievement as a matter of pride for Telangana and the country, the Deputy Chief Minister said the victory reflected the high standards of professionalism, dedication and technical expertise maintained by Singareni's rescue personnel. He praised the rescue workers for their courage and commitment, noting that they routinely risk their own lives to save miners during accidents and emergency situations. "The services rendered by rescue personnel are invaluable. Their dedica-

tion and readiness to work under highly challenging conditions have now earned global recognition," he said.

Bhatti further assured that the State government would extend full support to strengthen Singareni and help it emerge not only as a leading coal-producing company but also as a front-runner in various fields of excellence.

He said the international recognition earned by the rescue team highlights the capability and expertise of Singareni employees, who operate in some of the most demanding mining environments. The Deputy Chief Minister said the team's success has enhanced Telangana's reputation in the global mining sector and serves as an inspiration for future generations of mining professionals.

PM SVANidhi transitioned into institutional platform for financial inclusion: PNB Chief

New Delhi: The PM SVANidhi (Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor's Atma Nirbhar Nidhi) scheme has successfully transitioned into an extended institutional platform for financial inclusion in India, said Ashok Chandra, MD & CEO, Punjab National Bank.

"The primary utility of PM SVANidhi lies in its brilliant dismantling of the barriers to formal credit for informal micro-entrepreneurs.

Historically, street vendors were trapped in vicious cycles of high-interest debt from informal moneylenders. PM SVANidhi shattered this paradigm by providing collateral-free working capital loans. Operated as a progressive lending ladder, it incentivizes fiscal discipline," Chandra said.

"Initially, when the scheme was launched, vendors began with a first tranche of up to Rs 10,000, and upon timely repayment, seam-

lessly graduate to a second tranche of up to ₹20,000, and a third of up to Rs 50,000. Backed by a 7per cent per annum interest subvention credited quarterly to the borrowers' accounts, the scheme makes formal credit incredibly affordable," he added.

As the scheme marked its sixth anniversary on 1st June, 2026, its massive scale, recent structural upgrades, and holistic socioeconomic impact offer a definitive blueprint for empowering the bottom of the pyramid, the PNB chief said.

He mentioned that the overwhelming success of the program is vividly reflected in its metrics. Demonstrating the massive scale of India's financial inclusion drive, 75.69 lakh micro-entrepreneurs have been successfully tapped into PM SVANidhi loans as of 29th May 2026, out of which 72.4 per cent are digitally active entrepreneurs.

India's electronics manufacturing at inflection point amid import dependence, rising demand and policy interventions

New Delhi: India's consumer electronics manufacturing sector is entering a critical phase of growth as rising domestic demand, government-backed manufacturing initiatives and stable monetary policy create new opportunities, even as the industry remains vulnerable to global supply-chain disruptions and import dependence.

The challenges facing the sector were underscored by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its June 2026 Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting, which high-

lighted risks arising from elevated crude oil prices, geopolitical tensions in West Asia and persistent global supply-chain uncertainties. These factors, the central bank warned, could contribute to imported inflation and create headwinds for industries dependent on overseas sourcing.

For India's consumer electronics industry, the concerns are particularly significant as a large share of critical components—including semiconductors, display panels, memory chips, sensors and batteries—continue

to be imported. Industry experts say disruptions in global trade routes, currency fluctuations and rising freight costs can have a direct impact on production expenses, inventory management and pricing strategies.

At the same time, the RBI's decision to keep the repo rate unchanged at 5.25 per cent has provided a measure of certainty for manufacturers planning long-term investments.

Commenting on the policy environment, Tushar Tekriwal, Director, Starttron Lifestyles Pvt. Ltd, said,

"The RBI's decision to maintain the repo rate at 5.25 per cent provides manufacturers with greater financing stability for long-term investments. This creates an opportunity to accelerate domestic production of semiconductors, battery cells, display modules and electronic components through strategic investments, technology partnerships and production-linked incentives. Reducing import dependence will not only improve supply-chain resilience but also shield manufacturers from external

shocks such as currency volatility and geopolitical disruptions."

Industry observers note that while India has emerged as one of the world's fastest-growing electronics markets, the country's ambition of becoming a global manufacturing hub will require significant investments in domestic component production and technological capabilities. Meanwhile, demand from Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities is increasingly becoming a major growth driver for the consumer electronics market.

Telangana's Singareni refutes KTR's Coal Stock Allegations, Says Only 26.51 Lakh Tonnes Available

Hyderabad: State-owned Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) today rejected allegations made by BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) regarding the alleged disappearance of nearly 40 lakh metric tonnes of coal worth around Rs ₹1,600 crore, clarifying that the company had only 26.51 lakh tonnes (2.651 million tonnes) of coal stock as of June 4, 2026.

In a detailed statement, SCCL said the available coal stock at its mines and Coal Handling Plants (CHPs) represented the lowest stock level recorded in the last decade and was being continuously dispatched to consumers through rail and road transport based on demand.

The clarification came a day after KTR, in a letter to union Coal Minister G. Kishan Reddy, sought an immediate and comprehensive investigation into the alleged

disappearance of coal stocks from the company.

SCCL said maintaining coal stocks is a standard operational practice followed by all coal-producing companies to ensure uninterrupted supplies to thermal power stations and other consumers. The company noted that coal stocks generally accumulate during the high-production period from November to May and are subsequently utilized when production is affected by seasonal or operational factors. According to SCCL records, coal stocks stood at 70 lakh tonnes in 2015-16 and 74 lakh tonnes in 2016-17, while the average stock maintained between 2014 and 2024 was around 50 lakh tonnes.

The company emphasized that maintaining adequate coal reserves is particularly critical during the monsoon season to ensure

uninterrupted coal supplies to thermal power stations.

SCCL said it normally seeks to maintain a minimum stock of around 30 lakh tonnes, equivalent to about 15 days' requirement for power plants. Addressing another issue raised by KTR regarding the mandatory Site Visit Certificate requirement in overburden (OB) removal tenders, SCCL defended the policy, stating that it was introduced in May 2025 to ensure contractors fully understand site conditions, safety requirements, scope of work and local operational challenges before bidding.

The company said several contractors in the past had abandoned projects midway or executed works slowly after failing to properly assess geographical, mining and socio-political conditions, leading to production losses, financial setbacks and contractual disputes.

Citing examples such as the Srirampur OC-II and IK OC projects, SCCL said inadequate assessment by contractors had adversely impacted planned coal production targets.

The company maintained that the Site Visit Certificate requirement is neither unique to SCCL nor intended to restrict competition. Similar provisions are already being followed by organizations including GMDC, GIPCL, NMDC, several solar power projects and EPC contracts.

Within SCCL, such certificates were made mandatory for Coal Handling Plant projects in 2018, 2021 and 2023 based on recommendations from CMPDI, a subsidiary of Coal India Limited.

SCCL said all contractors are being facilitated with site visits and certificates are issued to every bidder who visits the project site.

India's Ease of Doing Business reforms drive investor confidence, digital transformation

New Delhi: India's sweeping reforms in governance, regulation and digital infrastructure have significantly strengthened the country's business ecosystem, making it easier to start, operate and expand businesses while boosting investor confidence and global competitiveness. According to a government review released on Saturday, sustained efforts to simplify regulations, reduce compliance burdens and digitise public services have transformed India's business landscape over the past decade. The reforms have helped improve transparency, efficiency and ease of access to markets, credit and government services for entrepreneurs, startups and businesses of all sizes. The impact of these measures is reflected in India's rise in global rankings. The country improved its position in the World Bank's Doing Business Report from 142nd in 2014 to 63rd in 2019. India has also strengthened its standing in the IMD World Competitiveness Ranking, moving up from 43rd place in 2021 to 41st in 2025. A major pillar of the reform agenda has been the promotion of entrepreneurship. Since the launch of

the Startup India initiative in 2016, the number of recognised startups has surged from just 502 to over 2.23 lakh by March 2026, generating more than 23.3 lakh direct jobs. Nearly half of these startups have at least one woman director or partner, underlining the growing inclusivity of India's startup ecosystem. Business registration has also become significantly easier through digital platforms such as the SPICE system and MCA21 Version 3, which have streamlined company incorporation and compliance processes. For micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), the Udyam Registration Portal has enabled paperless and self-declaration-based registration, helping millions of enterprises enter the formal economy. Property registration and land governance have undergone a digital overhaul through the Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme. More than 97 per cent of cadastral maps have been digitised, while over 36 crore land parcels have been assigned a Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN), enhancing transparency and reducing disputes. The government has also fo-

ocused on reducing procedural hurdles in obtaining business permits and clearances. The National Single Window System now integrates approvals across multiple central and state departments, while the PARIVESH portal has substantially reduced the time required for environmental clearances. Market access has improved through initiatives such as the Government e-Marketplace (GeM), Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), PM GatiShakti and advanced logistics platforms. GeM alone has recorded a cumulative transaction value of Rs 18.4 lakh crore, providing opportunities to startups, women entrepreneurs and MSMEs to participate in government procurement. On the financial front, easier access to credit has emerged as a key reform area. Schemes such as the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGT-MSE), Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) and (PMMY) have expanded formal financing to millions of businesses. Since its launch in 2015, PMMY has sanctioned loans worth over Rs 40 lakh crore through more than 57 crore accounts.

RBI's Reform Push May Attract USD 40 bn Capital Inflows, Support Rupee: SBI Report

New Delhi: The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) decision to keep key interest rates unchanged while unveiling a series of measures to attract foreign capital could pave the way for inflows of at least USD 40 billion, strengthen the rupee and lower borrowing costs, according to a report by the State Bank of India (SBI).

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), in its latest review, unanimously decided to maintain the repo rate at 5.25 per cent and retain its neutral stance despite growing global uncertainties. At the same time, the central bank introduced a set of reforms aimed at boosting foreign participation in India's financial markets and improving the country's external sector resilience.

SBI Research, in its Ecowrap report, said the RBI's latest policy reflects a careful balancing of inflation concerns and growth

priorities. While the central bank revised its FY27 growth projection downward by 30 basis points to 6.6 per cent, it raised its inflation forecast by 50 basis points to 5.1 per cent amid concerns over global commodity prices, supply-chain disruptions, weather-related uncertainties and the possibility of El Niño conditions affecting agricultural output.

The report noted that the policy language indicated greater vigilance towards inflation and exchange-rate stability. According to SBI, the RBI's emphasis that movements in the rupee are not always aligned with economic fundamentals sends a strong signal against speculative pressures in the currency market. It said such an approach is intended to reinforce confidence and prevent unnecessary volatility in the foreign exchange market.

Among the most significant measures announced by the RBI is the inclusion of newly issued 15-year, 30-year and 40-year government securities under the Fully Accessible Route (FAR), allowing foreign portfolio investors unrestricted access to these instruments. The SBI said the move, combined with tax incentives introduced by the government, is likely to make Indian government bonds significantly more attractive to global investors.

The report observed that foreign investor participation under FAR remains relatively low, with only a small portion of the available limit currently utilized. With substantial investment headroom available, SBI believes the reforms could lead to a sizeable increase in foreign inflows into the government securities market.

According to the report, greater foreign participation

would increase demand for government bonds, improve liquidity in long-term securities, reduce borrowing costs for the government, and provide support to the rupee. It could also strengthen India's case for wider inclusion in global bond indices, further

broadening the investor base.

SBI estimated that the tax exemptions available to foreign investors could translate into benefits worth between Rs 4,500 crore and Rs 6,000 crore, enhancing post-tax returns and further encouraging investment in Indian debt markets.

The report said the cumulative impact of the bond market reforms, incentives for overseas borrowing and measures to attract foreign

currency deposits could result in capital inflows exceeding USD 40 billion. Such inflows, it added, could help stabilize the rupee and potentially pull it back toward the 92-93 per dollar range.

The RBI has also announced concessional foreign exchange swap facilities to encourage external commercial borrowings (ECBs) by public sector undertakings until September 30.

The SBI said the initiative is particularly significant as ECB inflows declined sharply in FY26. By lowering the effective cost of overseas borrowing, the scheme is expected to encourage public sector enti-

ties to access international capital markets more aggressively while reducing pressure on domestic funding channels.

Another key measure relates to Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank), or FCNR(B), deposits. The SBI said the RBI's decision to bear hedging costs and certain regulatory expenses will allow banks to offer more attractive returns to non-resident Indians. The report suggested that these incentives could lead to substantial foreign currency inflows, potentially surpassing the USD 34 billion mobilized during the FCNR(B) deposit drive of 2013.

The report also welcomed the RBI's decision to restore the time limit for realization and repatriation of export proceeds to nine months from the temporary 15-month window that had been introduced during the

pandemic. Faster realization of export earnings is expected to improve foreign exchange availability and strengthen external sector liquidity.

On the domestic front, SBI highlighted that credit growth has remained robust despite global headwinds. Bank credit expanded by 16.2 per cent year-on-year as of mid-May 2026, driven from strong lending to retail borrowers, the services sector, MSMEs and large industries. Agricultural credit also continued to register steady growth.

The report further noted that the RBI's proactive liquidity management measures have helped keep the banking system in surplus liquidity territory, although funding conditions have tightened somewhat in recent months. Going forward, the drawdown of government cash balances and the seasonal return of cur-

rency during the monsoon period are expected to support liquidity conditions.

The SBI concluded that the RBI's latest policy package marks a significant shift towards strengthening external sector stability while preserving growth momentum.

The report maintained that the central bank is likely to remain cautious in the coming months and expects a pause in the August monetary policy review, arguing that growth considerations could continue to outweigh the case for an aggressive rate-hiking cycle.

With a combination of monetary prudence and structural reforms, the report said, the RBI has laid the groundwork for stronger capital inflows, improved market confidence and greater resilience in the Indian economy amid an increasingly uncertain global environment.