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WORLD » PAGE 14

Industrial output slows to 4.9% in new data series

The base year has been revised to 2022-23 from 2011-12; growth rate in April was slower than 5.8% recorded in the corresponding period last year; mining and quarrying output declined by over 5%

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

India's industrial output, as measured by the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), grew 4.9% in April 2026 under the revised series with 2022-23 as the base year released on Monday. The growth rate was slower than 5.8% recorded in April last year with 2011-12 as the base year.

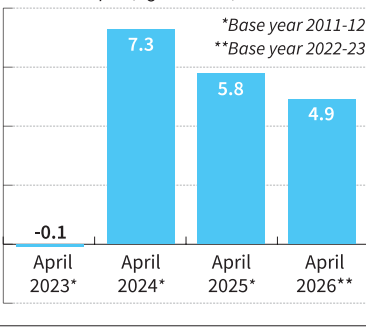
The new series has broadened the coverage of the index by incorporating water supply, sewerage and waste management activities and gas supply, while retaining the existing three core sectors – mining, manufacturing, and electricity. Of the four sectoral indices, three grew at a slower pace and one shrunk in the reporting

Growth falters

Industrial output grew only 4.9% in April 2026, slower than 5.8% and 7.3% recorded in the same month in previous years



The chart shows the Y-o-Y IIP growth rates for April (figures in %)



month on a year-on-year basis. While mining and quarrying output declined by over 5.1%, manufacturing sector output grew at 6.2% in the reporting month, slightly slower than the 6.3% in 2025. The electricity and gas supply sector grew at 4.9% while water supply, sewerage and waste management grew at 6.6%.

The base years of major macroeconomic indicators, which were earlier 2011-12, were revised in 2026 beginning with the GDP. The IIP is the latest in the measures that have been revised to 2022-23 as the base year.

Besides adding new sectoral divisions, the new series also entails "improved granularity". For instance,

mining sector index will now include data classification for fuel minerals, metallic minerals, including rare earth minerals and non-metallic minerals, including minor minerals. Similarly, the electricity index has been classified into renewable and non-renewable sources.

The new basket of goods to calculate IIP consists of 1,042 products mapped to 463 item groups. The older series had just 839 items mapped to 407 item groups. Further, the weights provided to each sector and each industry within the manufacturing sector has been revised in line with the updated Gross Value Added (GVA) 2022-23 series.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

'No space for anti-India elements in Myanmar'



Promising talks: PM Narendra Modi with Myanmar President Min Aung Hlaing in New Delhi on Monday. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Kallol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

Visiting Myanmar President Min Aung Hlaing has assured India that he will not allow use of his country's territory by groups that pose a security threat to Indian interests. The concern was raised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who held broad-spectrum conversations with Mr. Hlaing on Monday, including calls for dialogue between the junta-backed government and the pro-democracy Opposition in Myanmar. Foreign

Secretary Vikram Misri said the discussion included the issue of detention of former leader and Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi. "The President reiterated Myanmar's assurance that its territory would not be permitted to be used against India's security interests. The Prime Minister affirmed that India... remained committed to deepening security cooperation," a joint statement issued at the end of the official discussion mentioned.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10



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छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल

पर्यायस भवन, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला- रायपुर (छ.ग.)

// सर्व संबंद्धित को सूचना //

भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, नई दिल्ली की अधिसूचना दिनांक 14/09/2006 (यथा संशोधित) के तहत सर्व संबंद्धित को सूचित किया जाता है कि मेसर्स विराज अर्थ प्रयुजन प्राइवेट लिमिटेड, ग्राम - अमाली, तहसील-कोटा, जिला - बिलासपुर (छ.ग.) में Greenfield Wet Type Coal Washery Project Based on Heavy Media Cyclone Technology - 2.6 MTPA Total Area 9.54 ha के पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति हेतु लोक सुनवाई बाबत छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल में आवेदन किया गया है। उक्त प्रस्तावित परियोजना के संबंध में पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति हेतु लोक सुनवाई दिनांक 22/12/2025 एवं 30/01/2026 को प्रातः 11:00 बजे से शासकीय निवेदन कारखाने महाविद्यालय कोटा, तहसील-कोटा, जिला-बिलासपुर (छ.ग.) स्थित खेल भवन में नियत की गई थी। उक्त प्रस्तावित परियोजना के पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति हेतु लोक सुनवाई को अप्रतिहत्य कारणों से कलेक्टर, कार्यालय कलेक्टर, जिला-बिलासपुर (छ.ग.) के संशोधित आदेश क्रमांक/403/स.व.लि./लो.सु./2025 बिलासपुर दिनांक 17/12/2025 एवं आदेश क्रमांक /182/स.व.लि./लो.सु./2026 बिलासपुर दिनांक 14/01/2026 के परिपत्रानुसार निम्नलिखित, समय एवं स्थल पर उपरोक्त विषयानुसार लोक सुनवाई को स्थगित किया गया था। जिसकी सूचना का प्रकाशन राष्ट्रीय समाचार पत्र द हिन्दू एवं स्थानीय समाचार पत्र दैनिक भास्कर में प्रकाशित कराया गया था।

सूचित है कि उक्त प्रस्तावित परियोजना के लिए पुनः कार्यालय कलेक्टर, जिला - बिलासपुर (छ.ग.) के द्वारा लोक सुनवाई दिनांक 19/06/2026 को प्रातः 11:00 बजे, ग्राम अमाली, तहसील-कोटा, जिला-बिलासपुर (छ.ग.) स्थित लोक सुनवाई खसरा नंबर 1248/1, 1248/2, 1348/8, कुल रकबा 0.647 हे. प्रस्तावित परियोजना स्थल पर निम्नलिखित की गई है।

उक्त प्रस्तावित परियोजना के संबंध में आपत्ति / सुझाव / विचार / टीका-टिप्पणी इस सूचना के जारी होने के दिनांक से 15 दिवस के अंदर क्षेत्रीय अधिकारी, क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, छ.ग. पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, व्यापार विहार, पं. दीनदयाल उपाध्याय पार्क के पास, बिलासपुर (छ.ग.) के कार्यालय में लिखित एवं मौखिक रूप से कार्यालयीन समय में प्रस्तुत की जा सकती है।

ई.आई.ए. अधिसूचना दिनांक 14/09/2006 (यथा संशोधित) के प्रावधानों के अनुसार डाक्टर ई.आई.ए. रिपोर्ट, कार्यपालक की प्रति (हिन्दी व अंग्रेजी में) एवं इसकी सी. डी. (साफत कौपी) जन सामान्य के अवलोकन / पढ़ने हेतु डाक्टर, पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन, मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, इंदिरा पर्यावरण भवन, वायु विंग, जोरगांव रोड, नई दिल्ली, क्षेत्रीय निदेशक, एकीकृत क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, अरण्य भवन, नार्थ ब्लॉक, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, रायपुर, कलेक्टर, कार्यालय कलेक्टर, जिला-बिलासपुर, मुख्य कार्यपालन अधिकारी, कार्यालय, जिला पंचायत - बिलासपुर, जिला-बिलासपुर, अनुविभागीय अधिकारी (रा.), कार्यालय, अनुविभागीय अधिकारी (रत.) - कोटा, जिला-बिलासपुर, मुख्य महाप्रबंधक, कार्यालय मुख्य महाप्रबंधक, जिला व्यापार एवं उद्योग केन्द्र, बिलासपुर, जिला-बिलासपुर, मुख्य कार्यपालन अधिकारी, कार्यालय जम्पद पंचायत - कोटा, जिला-बिलासपुर, मुख्य नगर पालिका अधिकारी, कार्यालय नगर पंचायत / नगर पालिका परिषद - कोटा, जिला-बिलासपुर, तहसीलदार, कार्यालय तहसीलदार-कोटा, जिला-बिलासपुर, संचयन / संचयन कार्यालय ग्राम पंचायत / ग्राम - अमाली, विल्लीभंद, उमरमरा, जोगीपुर, नगावण, कुवाचिमूडा, लालपुर, सलका, पोड़ी, छेकवाबा, बाकीचाट, कलारसरौड़ी, खुदपुर, कोटर, सोरी, पीपरतराई, अमने, खराहनी, गोबरीपाट, तहसील/जम्पद पंचायत कोटा, जिला-बिलासपुर (छ.ग.) एवं मुख्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, पर्यायस भवन, नार्थ ब्लॉक, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, रायपुर (छ.ग.) एवं क्षेत्रीय अधिकारी, क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, व्यापार विहार पं. दीनदयाल उपाध्याय पार्क के पास, बिलासपुर (छ.ग.) में रखी गई है।

सदस्य सचिव
छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल,
नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, रायपुर (छ.ग.)

LEGAL NOTICE

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA
STREET ADDRESS: 201 North First Street, San Jose, CA 95113
MAILING ADDRESS: 191 North First Street CITY AND ZIP CODE: San Jose, California 95113
BRANCH NAME: Family Justice Center
PETITIONER: Anurag Bhardwaj
RESPONDENT: Kiran Kumari

FAMILY LAW NOTICE
Dissolution / Legal Separation/Nullity/Parentage

Electronically filed by Superior Court of CA, County of Santa Clara, on 11/8/2024 4:22 PM
Reviewed By: J. Gamez
Case #24FL003799
Env. #17253632

CASE NUMBER 24FL003799

PLEASE READ THIS ENTIRE FORM
Your case has been assigned to Judge Delgado, Jessica M. in Department: _____ for all purposes at the Family Courthouse Located at: 201 North First Street, San Jose, CA 95113.

TO THE PETITIONER (the person who started the case): You must serve a copy of this notice on the other party. YOU CANNOT SERVE THE OTHER PARTY YOURSELF.

TO THE RESPONDENT (the person who did not start the case): If you want to protect your rights and participate in this case, you must file a Response with the Court within 30 days of being served.

RULES FOR THE STATUS CONFERENCE:
You must follow the California Rules of Court, the Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara Local Family Law Rules and you must use the correct forms. You can access the California Rules of Court and Judicial Council forms at www.courts.ca.gov/rules.htm and the Local Family Law Rules and Local forms at www.sccourt.org.

A final judgment will NOT be entered in your case automatically. You must take further action to finish your case!

IF YOU NEED HELP:
• Please visit the Self Help section on the Court's website at www.sccourt.org
• For a low cost consultation with a private attorney contact the Santa Clara County Bar Association at (408) 971-6822 (or www.sccba.com).
• You can also email, call or Live Chat the Court's Self Help Center by going to www.sccourt.org, then click "Contact the Self Help Center".

If, after reviewing the Court's website or other information, you would like to schedule a Status Conference to review the status of your case and next steps to finish it, you may contact the Family Court Clerk's office at (408) 534-5000 or visit them in person at one of the three courthouses listed above during regular Court business hours. The purpose of the Status Conference is to review your case's progress; it is not the date when your case is actually finished.

LEGAL NOTICE

community property is divided, the language in the deed that characterizes how title is held (i.e., joint tenancy, tenants in common, or community property) will be controlling, and not the community property presumption. You should consult your attorney if you want the community property presumption to be written into the recorded title to the property.

FL-100

PARTY WITHOUT ATTORNEY OR ATTORNEY STATE BAR NUMBER: 278629
NAME: DAVID WORSHAM; BROOK MEAKINS, SBN 264577
FIRM NAME MEAKINS LAW
STREET ADDRESS: 715 HEARST AVENUE SUITE 203
CITY: BERKELEY STATE: CA ZIP CODE: 94710
TELEPHONE NO. (510)922-1031
FAX NO (510) 621-7976
E-MAIL ADDRESS: brook@meakinslaw.com
ATTORNEY FOR (name) Anurag Bhardwaj

Electronically filed by Superior Court of CA, County of Santa Clara, on 11/8/2024 4:22 PM
Reviewed By: J. Gamez
Case #24FL003799
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LEGAL NOTICE

FL-160 in Attachment 10b. as follows (specify):

11. OTHER REQUESTS
a. Attorney's fees and costs payable by Petitioner Respondent
b. Petitioner's former name be restored to (specify):
c. Other (specify): Each Party To Bear Their Own Attorney's Fees and Costs.
 Continued on Attachment 11c.

12. I HAVE READ THE RESTRAINING ORDERS ON THE BACK OF THE SUMMONS, AND I UNDERSTAND THAT THEY APPLY TO ME WHEN THIS PETITION IS FILED.
I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Date: 10/30/2024
Anurag Bhardwaj
(ID #E42zNrbIH3SWhP41y6KcN)
(TYPE OR PRINT NAME)
(PETITIONER)

Date: 10/30/2024
Brook Meakins/David Worsham
(TYPE OR PRINT NAME)
(ATTORNEY FOR PETITIONER)

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Read Legal Steps for a Divorce or Legal Separation (form FL-107-INFO) and visit "Families Change" at www.familieschange.ca.gov - an online guide for parents and children going through divorce or separation.

NOTICE: You may redact (black out) social security numbers from any written material filed with the court in this case other than a form used to collect child, spousal or partner support.

NOTICE-CANCELLATION OF RIGHTS: Dissolution or legal separation may automatically cancel the rights of a domestic partner or spouse under the other domestic partner's or spouse's will, trust, retirement plan, power of attorney, pay-on-death bank account, survivorship rights to any property owned in joint tenancy, and any other similar thing. It does not automatically cancel the right of a domestic partner or spouse as beneficiary of the other partner's or spouse's life insurance policy. You should review these matters, as well as any credit cards, other credit accounts, insurance policies, retirement plans, and credit reports, to determine whether they should be changed or whether you should take any other actions. Some changes may require the agreement of your partner or spouse or a court order.

FL-100 (Rev. January 1, 2020)
PETITION-MARRIAGE/DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP (Family Law)

SUMMONS (Family Law) NOTICE TO RESPONDENT (Name): Kiran Kumari

You have been sued. Read the information below and on the next page.
Petitioner's name is: Anurag Bhardwaj
CASE NUMBER 24FL003799

Electronically filed by Superior Court of CA, County of Santa Clara, on 11/8/2024 4:22 PM
Reviewed By: J. Gamez
Case #24FL003799
Env. #17253632

You have 30 calendar days after this Summons and Petition are served on you to file a Response (form FL-120) at the court and have a copy served on the petitioner. A letter, phone call, or court appearance will not protect you. If you do not file your Response on time, the court may make orders affecting your marriage or domestic partnership, your property, and custody of your children. You may be ordered to pay support and attorney fees and costs. For legal advice, contact a lawyer immediately. Get help finding a lawyer at the Courts County Online Self-Help Center (www.courts.ca.gov/selfhelp/) at the California Legal Services website (www.lawhelpca.org) or by contacting your local county bar association.

NOTICE-RESTRAINING ORDERS ARE ON PAGE 2: These restraining orders are effective against both spouses or domestic partners until the petition is dismissed, a judgment is entered, or the court makes further orders. They are enforceable anywhere in California by any law enforcement officer who has received or seen a copy of them.

FEES WAIVER: If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the clerk for a fee waiver form. The court may order you to pay back all or part of the fees and costs that the court waived for you or the other party.

(SEAL) 1. The name and address of the court are: Superior Court of California, Santa Clara County Santa Clara Family Court 201 N. 1st St. San Jose, CA 95113
2. The name, address, and telephone number of the petitioner's attorney, or the petitioner without an attorney, are: DAVID WORSHAM, SBN 278629; (510) 922-1031, BROOK MEAKINS, SBN 264577 MEAKINS LAW 715 HEARST AVE, STE 203 BERKELEY, CA 94710
Date: 11/8/2024 4:22 PM
Clerk: by /s/ J. Gamez, Deputy
STANDARD FAMILY LAW RESTRAINING ORDERS
Starting immediately, you and your spouse or domestic partner are restrained from:
1. removing the minor children of the parties from the state or applying for a new or replacement passport for those minor children without the prior written consent of the other party or an order of the court;
2. cashing, borrowing against, canceling, transferring, disposing of, or changing the beneficiaries of any insurance or other coverage, including life, health, automobile, and disability, held for the benefit of the parties and their minor children;
3. transferring, encumbering, hypothecating, concealing, or in any way disposing of any property, real or personal, whether community, quasi-community, or separate, without the written consent of the other party or an order of the court, except in the usual course of business or for the necessities of life; and
4. creating a nonprobate transfer or modifying a nonprobate transfer in a manner that affects the disposition of property subject to the transfer, without the written consent of the other party or an order of the court. Before revocation of a nonprobate transfer can take effect or a right of survivorship to property can be eliminated, notice of the change must be filed and served on the other party.
You must notify each other of any proposed extraordinary expenditures at least five business days prior to incurring these extraordinary expenditures and account to the court for all extraordinary expenditures made through these restraining orders are effective. However, you may use community property, quasi-community property, or your own separate property to pay an attorney to help you or to pay court costs.

NOTICE-ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HEALTH INSURANCE: Do you or someone in your household need affordable health insurance? If so, you should apply for Covered California. Covered California can help reduce the cost you pay towards high quality affordable health care. For more information, visit www.coveredca.com. Or call Covered California at 1-800-300-1506.

WARNING-IMPORTANT INFORMATION
California law provides that, for purposes of division of property upon dissolution of a marriage or domestic partnership or upon legal separation, property acquired by the parties during marriage or domestic partnership in joint tenancy is presumed to be community property. If either party to this action should die before the jointly held (Continued...)

SUMMONS (Family Law) NOTICE TO RESPONDENT (Name): Kiran Kumari

You have been sued. Read the information below and on the next page.
Petitioner's name is: Anurag Bhardwaj
CASE NUMBER 24FL003799

Electronically filed by Superior Court of CA, County of Santa Clara, on 11/8/2024 4:22 PM
Reviewed By: J. Gamez
Case #24FL003799
Env. #17253632

You have 30 calendar days after this Summons and Petition are served on you to file a Response (form FL-120) at the court and have a copy served on the petitioner. A letter, phone call, or court appearance will not protect you. If you do not file your Response on time, the court may make orders affecting your marriage or domestic partnership, your property, and custody of your children. You may be ordered to pay support and attorney fees and costs. For legal advice, contact a lawyer immediately. Get help finding a lawyer at the Courts County Online Self-Help Center (www.courts.ca.gov/selfhelp/) at the California Legal Services website (www.lawhelpca.org) or by contacting your local county bar association.

NOTICE-RESTRAINING ORDERS ARE ON PAGE 2: These restraining orders are effective against both spouses or domestic partners until the petition is dismissed, a judgment is entered, or the court makes further orders. They are enforceable anywhere in California by any law enforcement officer who has received or seen a copy of them.

FEES WAIVER: If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the clerk for a fee waiver form. The court may order you to pay back all or part of the fees and costs that the court waived for you or the other party.

(SEAL) 1. The name and address of the court are: Superior Court of California, Santa Clara County Santa Clara Family Court 201 N. 1st St. San Jose, CA 95113
2. The name, address, and telephone number of the petitioner's attorney, or the petitioner without an attorney, are: DAVID WORSHAM, SBN 278629; (510) 922-1031, BROOK MEAKINS, SBN 264577 MEAKINS LAW 715 HEARST AVE, STE 203 BERKELEY, CA 94710
Date: 11/8/2024 4:22 PM
Clerk: by /s/ J. Gamez, Deputy
STANDARD FAMILY LAW RESTRAINING ORDERS
Starting immediately, you and your spouse or domestic partner are restrained from:
1. removing the minor children of the parties from the state or applying for a new or replacement passport for those minor children without the prior written consent of the other party or an order of the court;
2. cashing, borrowing against, canceling, transferring, disposing of, or changing the beneficiaries of any insurance or other coverage, including life, health, automobile, and disability, held for the benefit of the parties and their minor children;
3. transferring, encumbering, hypothecating, concealing, or in any way disposing of any property, real or personal, whether community, quasi-community, or separate, without the written consent of the other party or an order of the court, except in the usual course of business or for the necessities of life; and
4. creating a nonprobate transfer or modifying a nonprobate transfer in a manner that affects the disposition of property subject to the transfer, without the written consent of the other party or an order of the court. Before revocation of a nonprobate transfer can take effect or a right of survivorship to property can be eliminated, notice of the change must be filed and served on the other party.
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OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE DEATH

BACHU SRINIVASULU (58),
Manager - Circulation, Sales and Distribution, The Hindu, Hyderabad passed away on 01-06-2026.

Address:
H. No. 12-1-1279
Shanti Nagar,
Near SFS School,
Lalapur, Secunderabad - 500007
Mobile: 9848880563

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES 12th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

S. JAYA
Born: 01.03.1944 Died: 02.06.2014
It is 12 years since you left us, but you remain in our hearts forever
Fondly Remembered by Husband, Daughters, Sons-in-Law, Grandchildren & Relatives
May your soul rest in peace and bestow happiness in our lives
A. Sivaramkrishnan C4/44, Kendriya Vihar, Velappanchavadi, Chennai - 800077.
Contact: 26274034 / 9444975565

9th Anniversary

P. DEV KUMAR
30-09-1940 02-06-2017
Senior District Judge, Journalist borned by P.B. GOI
Bureau Chief UN, Shubrareshwar
Special Correspondent, UN, New Delhi
1st Qualified Rank Tripartite Umpire of Chess
Honorary Captain of Indian Army given to War Correspondents
Head of Screening Committee for Parliamentary Journalists

Fondly Remembered by:
P. Ravi Tez & Family

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Saket building owner held; MCD to identify, seal illegal structures

Action soon against six buildings near site of collapse for violating norms, inspection drive to cover entire South Zone: official; AAP seeks SIT probe

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI



AAP councillors outside the office of MCD's Dy. Commissioner, South, on Monday, demanding his suspension over the May 30 incident. ANI

The Delhi police on Monday arrested 71-year-old Karamveer Singh, the owner of the five-storey building that collapsed in Saidulajab near the Saket metro station in Mehrauli on May 30, killing six persons – five medical aspirants and a canteen owner. He has been booked under Sections 105 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder), 290 (negligent conduct towards building construction, repair, or demolition), and 125(a) (act endangering human life) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, an officer said.

collapse site for violating building norms and inspections will be carried out in the area over the next few days.

Previous complaints over similar violations of building laws will also be looked into, he added.

Residents have alleged that the building was uninhabitable and that illegal construction on it was going on despite the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) issuing a notice to the owner based on a complaint. A day after the incident, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta ordered the suspension of two municipal officials. On Monday, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) held a protest outside the office of MCD's South Zone Deputy Commissioner Rakesh Kumar demanding his suspension and calling for a Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe into lapses by senior civic officials.

Residents have alleged that the building was uninhabitable and that illegal construction on it was going on despite the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) issuing a notice to the owner based on a complaint. A day after the incident, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta ordered the suspension of two municipal officials. On Monday, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) held a protest outside the office of MCD's South Zone Deputy Commissioner Rakesh Kumar demanding his suspension and calling for a Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe into lapses by senior civic officials.

“Notices will be issued to owners of unauthorised buildings exceeding the permitted ground-plus-three-floor limit in areas such as Mehrauli, Saket, and others in the South Zone, which includes the neighbourhoods of Saidulajab, Paryavaran Complex and Freedom Fighters’ Enclave, where illegal construction is widespread,” the official said.

Meanwhile, a senior official said the MCD has identified six buildings near the

collapse site for violating building norms and inspections will be carried out in the area over the next few days.

“Notices will be issued to owners of unauthorised buildings exceeding the permitted ground-plus-three-floor limit in areas such as Mehrauli, Saket, and others in the South Zone, which includes the neighbourhoods of Saidulajab, Paryavaran Complex and Freedom Fighters’ Enclave, where illegal construction is widespread,” the official said.

Students protest against ‘lapses’ in CUET, NEET, CBSE Class 12 results

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI



Students protesting outside the Ministry of Education office. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

Delhi staged a protest outside the office of the Ministry of Education on Monday against alleged irregularities and scams in the conduct of the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) and the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET), as well as technical issues in the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Class 12 evaluation system. The police said 25 students were detained for protesting without permission. “They had not even applied for permission. The women students were released by sunset, and the rest were released later,” a police officer said.

Students protesting outside the Ministry of Education office.

Students protesting outside the Ministry of Education office.

The All India Students’ Association (AISA) and the Krantikari Yuva Sangathan (KYS) were among the organisations that participated in the protest. The protesters demanded the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over what they described as repeated irregularities in various examinations. “If paper leaks are to be stopped, the National Test

Students protesting outside the Ministry of Education office.

Students protesting outside the Ministry of Education office.

Agency (NTA) must be dissolved entirely,” Nitish Kumar, former president of the Jawaharlal Nehru University Students’ Union, said.

Students protesting outside the Ministry of Education office.

Students protesting outside the Ministry of Education office.

Rain-hit farmers to get higher compensation

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

On Monday, CM Rekha Gupta said a provision introduced in 2015 provided compensation of ₹20,000 per acre for crop losses caused by heavy rain. “This amount is approximately ₹49,421 per hectare. Given the rise in agricultural costs over the past 10 years, the government has increased the assistance to ₹75,000 per hectare,” she said. Ms. Gupta added that 10,977.44 acres (about 4,442.41 hectares) of agricultural land had been affected in Delhi last year. The assistance will be limited to recorded landowners. Land owned by companies and vested in gram sabhas will not be eligible.

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Madhya Pradesh to roll out UCC soon, says CM; urges public to share suggestions

State govt. launches website to gather public opinion; panel headed by retired Supreme Court judge told to submit draft Bill along with a detailed report of its findings within 2 months: Yadav

Mehul Malpani
BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Monday sought suggestions from the public on a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and said that the Bill will be implemented in the State soon.

In a video statement, Mr. Yadav said a high-level committee, formed in April, headed by retired Supreme Court judge Justice Ranjana Prasad Desai is currently touring various parts of the State to gather public opinion and suggestions on the subject.



The M.P. government is planning to table the Bill in the State Assembly before Deepavali. FILE PHOTO

“Currently, there is no need for different customs and legal provisions governing married women as

well as different family traditions across various religions. Madhya Pradesh now needs to move towards a Uniform Civil Code,” he said.

The Chief Minister noted that States such as Uttarakhand, Gujarat and Assam have already adopted the law, and said Madhya Pradesh will follow suit.

Mr. Yadav said the State government has launched a website where people can share their suggestions. “I personally appeal to you to share your suggestions and whatever thoughts you have through the website,” he said.

“We want UCC to be im-

plemented in Madhya Pradesh as soon as possible,” the Chief Minister said.

On April 27, the M.P. government formed a six-member panel headed by Justice Desai with a retired IAS officer, a senior government official, and legal and social experts as members.

Submission deadline
The panel was told to submit the draft Bill along with a detailed report of its findings to the State government within 60 days.

As per sources, the government is planning to table the Bill in the State Legislative Assembly before Deepavali this year.

Govt. can take back its land when needed, says Minister

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Speaking on the government's decision to take back the land leased to the Delhi Gymkhana Club, Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal on Monday said the government could take back land needed for any other purpose and that this process would be followed wherever necessary.

“Land is a basic feature of urban development. In most cases, it has been given on lease. The leased land can be vacated upon expiry of the lease or even before that for any other use,” Mr. Lal said during a press conference on the BRICS Urbanisation Forum to be hosted by the Ministry on June 11-12.

He said wherever there was a requirement, the government could take back its land.

The Delhi Gymkhana Club has been asked by the Ministry on May 22 to hand over its premises by June 5 as the 27.3-acre plot was required for “strengthening and securing defence infrastructure”. The club stands adjacent to the Prime Minister's residence in New Delhi.

The club had been operating from the location since 1913 and the present buildings were constructed in the 1930s.

Timings
DELHI

TUESDAY, JUN. 02	RISE 05:24	SET 19:15
	RISE 21:15	SET 06:30
WEDNESDAY, JUN. 03	RISE 05:24	SET 19:16
	RISE 22:00	SET 07:25
THURSDAY, JUN. 04	RISE 05:24	SET 19:16
	RISE 22:39	SET 08:21

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	36	23
Safdarjang	36	23
Palam	36	21

Delhi Palam Today
39°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be hot and uneasy. Night also will be comfortable. Mostly dry weather to occur.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
36°C The weather will be warm with moderate winds. Night will be pleasant. Spell of duststorm and thundershower to occur.

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THE HINDU
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Delhi L-G calls for time-bound plan to improve city's air quality

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant-Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu on Monday called for a time-bound action plan to improve air quality across the National Capital Region (NCR) during a meeting with Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) chairperson Rajesh Verma.

Identifying road dust, vehicular emissions, biomass burning, and industrial pollution as the main sources of pollution in Delhi-NCR, Mr. Sandhu said authorities must act urgently. Calling air pollution a regional problem, he said it requires a coordinated response from Delhi, neighbouring NCR districts, and other States.

“All concerned agencies must work on a war footing to ensure measurable improvements before the up-



Delhi L-G Taranjit Singh Sandhu on Monday held a meeting with CAQM chief Rajesh Verma. ANI

coming winter season,” Mr. Sandhu said.

The L-G said road dust was a major contributor to PM10 and PM2.5 pollution. “Effective dust mitigation must form the backbone of Delhi's clean-air strategy,” he said, adding that controlling dust pollution was both essential and achievable because most of the agencies responsible for it operate within the Capital.

Mr. Sandhu emphasised the need for agencies to ex-

pand the deployment of mechanical road-sweeping machines, repair roads, promptly remove silt extracted from drains, and strengthen dust-control infrastructure. He also called for increased tree plantation and the creation of green buffers.

Tightening emissions
The meeting also focused on accelerating the adoption of electric vehicles and electric buses, and on tightening the monitoring of industrial emissions.

Mr. Sandhu called for stronger coordination among agencies such as the CAQM, Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Public Works Department, Delhi Development Authority, and Irrigation and Flood Control Department, along with real-time tracking of pollution-control measures.



WELLNESS INITIATIVE INAUGURATED
Bal Bharati Public School, Ganga Ram Hospital Marg, hosted the inauguration of ‘Yog Sankalp’, a wellness initiative of the Child Education Society (CES) in collaboration with Mokshayatan Yog Sansthan. The programme marked the beginning of a month-long yoga celebration across 26 Bal Bharati Public Schools. Acharya Pratishta ji, Director, Mokshayatan Yog Sansthan, delivered the keynote address, while Mr. Dheeraj Shashwat, Mr. Nikhil Channa, Mr. K. Khullar, Mr. L. V. Sehgal, Ms. Meenu Goswami, Principal Mr. Deepak Dua and Ms. Asha Prabhakar were present. Students presented yoga demonstrations highlighting wellness, mindfulness and holistic development.

NCS MUN 2026 HOSTED
Navy Children School, Chanakypuri, New Delhi, successfully hosted NCS MUN 2026, bringing together 38 delegates from nine schools for discussions on global issues and diplomacy. The United Nations Security Council served as the committee in session, focusing on armed tensions, resource exploitation and international peace. Principal Ms. Oshima Mathur addressed the opening ceremony, while delegates engaged in debates, caucuses and crisis simulations, including discussions on the Strait of Hormuz and Antarctic mineral zones. The closing ceremony was presided over by Vice Principal Ms. Monisha Ahlawat, who recognised delegates for their leadership, critical thinking and diplomatic skills.

ANNUAL PRIZE DISTRIBUTION CEREMONY
New Era Public School, Mayapuri, celebrated their Annual Prize Distribution Ceremony for the academic session 2025-26, recognising student achievements in academics, sports and co-curricular activities. Mrs. Usha Chopra, Founder Principal and Director, appreciated the efforts of students and teachers and encouraged them to strive for excellence. Mrs. Vandana Chawla, Director (Innovations), and Mr. Rohit Chopra, Director, NEPS Dwarka, motivated students to pursue their goals with dedication. Principal Mrs. Neerja Bhaskar Anand congratulated the awardees. The programme featured orchestra and choir performances, a presentation on school achievements, and a student play themed “Walls and Bridges”.

For Subscription related queries, please contact Kapil Nagar:
Handphone: +91 9810089457/Email: kapil.nagar@thehindu.co.in

What is common between St. Stephens & ForumIAS Academy?

Minal Karanwal (AIR 35). Benjo Jose (AIR 59). Shruti Sharma (AIR 1). Ruhani (AIR 5). Zinnia (AIR 156). Bhavika Chopra (AIR 25). They are all alumni of the top Delhi University College and chose to prepare with ForumIAS Academy for Civil Services*

“I am thankful to ForumIAS Academy for all the help from Prelims to Mains and the Interview in my journey to AIR 471 in CSE 2023 and AIR 25 in CSE 2025”

BHAVIKA CHOPRA
AIR-25
UPSC CSE-2025

Bhavika Chopra, IAS, AIR 25, ForumIAS Residential Student

If you know someone otherwise bright, who has had trouble realising their true potential (not clearing prelims or needs a rank improvement), email us at ravi@forumias.com to start a transformational journey with Forum Residential Coaching. (FRC)

*Course enrolled: Minal Karanwal (CCP:Pre+Mains), Benjo Jose (MGP, Ethics+), Shruti Sharma (MGP), Ruhani (MGP), Zinnia (SFG, MGP, Ethics, FRC), Bhavika Chopra (SFG, MGP, Ethics, Essay).

Inviting application for Forum Residential Coaching (FRC)

FRC#11 Rankforge for CSE 2027 STARTS 20 JUNE	Scan to Register 	FRC#12 MFG Mains Focus Group for Mains 2026 STARTS 15 JUNE	Scan to Register
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65% of IAS toppers* under rank 10 and 20 in CSE 2025 final list have been students of Mains Guidance Program (MGP) by ForumIAS Academy. Including Rank 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 19.

MAINS GUIDANCE PROGRAM (MGP) STARTS 06 JUNE

Mentor Supported Test based Guidance Program for CSE Mains
Mains Guidance Program is a time tested, test series based, mentor guided program that has enabled hundreds of aspirants add the three letters I.A.S. to their name. MGP consists of 17 tests with detailed solutions, answer evaluation & mentor feedback to help you cover the most important issues from which questions may be asked in Mains 2026. MGP+ includes everything in MGP + 4 additional essay test covering syllabus worth 1250 marks. With high quality content that does not waste your time and mentor support, it is the gold standard for Mains guidance.

CURRENT AFFAIRS CLASSES STARTS 07 JUNE

What is common between Samiksha Dwivedi, Rishabh Yadav, Donuru Ananya Reddy, Garima Lohia, Divya Mishra, Sanjitha Mohapatra, Varun Reddy and Pratham Kaushik? They are all IAS officers, selected in the past 8 years, and they are among the highest scorers in General Studies Mains. Since its inception, CA Classroom students have secured among the highest marks in GS. Current Affairs Classes for Mains 2026 are power-packed, theme-based sessions that provide the much-needed conceptual clarity & value addition aimed at breaching the 430+ marks barrier in GS Mains. The classes not only offer content differentiation but also comprehensive coverage, ensuring that you will not need any other material for preparing the dynamic issues of GS Paper 2 & 3. Classes will be held three days a week at **5 PM** and will be of **2-2.5 hours duration**.

ETHICS+ CLASSES (MAINS 2026/27) STARTS 09 JUNE

General Studies Paper IV is one of those subjects that determines your rank, service, and cadre. In fact, it often determines whether you have to write the next attempt or not. With scores ranging from 80 to 160, it is the paper that needs minimum time but has maximum impact on your scorecard. Ethics+ classes by ForumIAS have been instrumental in score and rank improvement. Ethics+ students include Lavanya, Siddharth (23 marks increase and moving from IPS to IAS), Shikhar Mogha, IAS (134 score in GS4), Zinnia Aurora, Abhishek Sharma, Bhavika Chopra, Madhvendra Pratap Singh, Rahul J. Patil, and scores of other officer selects.

GS ADVANCED PROGRAM (GSAP) STARTS 04 JUNE

What is better than MGP & Current Affairs Classes? The GS Advanced Program. One, because it includes the MGP and Current Affairs. Two, for those of us who have missed a foundation course, done self-study or otherwise not a good static preparation. The GSAP provides a second avenue for course correction. GSAP has been designed to address the core issues in preparation. It includes: (a) Content-Building Classes that comprehensively cover GS Mains topics with conceptual clarity and updated relevance, (b) Daily Answer Writing Assignments to reinforce classroom learning and build writing discipline, and (c) Dedicated Mentorship for continuous performance tracking, feedback, & improvement.

ANSWER WRITING FOCUS GROUP STARTS 08 JUNE

The Answer Writing Focus Group is an answer writing focused initiative by ForumIAS, you need for you to enhance and enrich your Mains static content to the exam level. It is useful for anyone who is writing or expecting to write the Mains examination. The AWFG provides you the below benefits: a) Complete coverage of the static syllabus through questions, discussions and answers. b) Answer Writing Practice in a timed manner. c) Specific Arguments and Keywords for the issues from which questions are asked.

ESSAY GUIDANCE PROGRAM STARTS 10 JUNE

Once viewed as the holy grail of high returns with minimal effort, the essay paper now demands structured thinking, refined expression, and regular practice. There is no universal strategy; each topic demands a distinct approach, critical thinking, and a coherent framework of ideas. The Essay Guidance Program offers a structured platform through its classes, workshops, tests and discussions to assist the student in a) Better understanding of the complexities and core demand of the topic. b) Build reusable content including value added content and expand your available knowledge base. c) Practice and evaluation of your essay writing skills. Several students from EGP have improved their Essay scores by 20-40 marks, helping them secure a rank.

OGP ADVANCE (Optional Guidance Program) Study Modules covering Optional syllabus with self-assessment worksheet. 20 AWSM classes (Answer Writing Structure & Methodology) that turn topics into probable questions & teach step-wise answer framework with answer scripts. 20 DAWT mini tests (consist of 7 questions) to build exam-speed writing with evaluation, discussion, & model answers. 6 Sectional Tests + 2 Full Length Tests simulating UPSC pattern with evaluation, discussion, & model answers. Comprehensive PYQ integration through classes, worksheets, and tests. Personalised mentorship based on each worksheet & test. Crisp & concise study material. STARTS 14 JUNE ONLINE & OFFLINE	OPTIONAL SUBJECTS PSIR SOCIOLOGY ANTHROPOLOGY GEOGRAPHY PUB AD. LAW हिंदी साहित्य	OPTIONAL TEST SERIES 4 Layers of Tests i.e. DAWT (Mini tests), Sectional, Full-Length and Simulator Tests. Content Blueprint: Carefully curated study material. Detailed Model Answers & concept-based test discussion. Expert Evaluation & Personalized Mentorship. O-AWFG Optional Answer Writing Focus Group Who Should Join? Aspirants who are overwhelmed by the Optional syllabus and unsure how to begin answer writing. Daily micro-targets create discipline & make writing a non-negotiable habit. MAINS 2026 02 JUNE MAINS 2026 08 JUNE O-AWFG PRIME Optional Answer Writing Focus Group Who Should Join? Aspirants who know the syllabus but can't write regularly or fluently. Builds speed, flow, and continuity; turning "I know this" into effective answers. MAINS 2026 02 JUNE MAINS 2026 08 JUNE ATS Augmented Test Series Who Should Join? Aspirants whose answers are written well but fail to fetch marks despite repeated tests. ATS sharpens structure, presentation, and depth-converting effort into higher scores. MAINS 2026 07 JUNE MAINS 2026 14 JUNE
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IAS 2027 COHORT-5 MGP 2027 MAINS GUIDANCE PROGRAM ONLINE & OFFLINE 01 JUNE ENGLISH & हिंदी में	PTS 2027 PRELIMS TEST SERIES ONLINE & OFFLINE 26 JUNE ENGLISH & हिंदी में
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Mains 2027 is not just about studying more – it's about writing better. ForumIAS MGP 2027 is designed to transform your answers from average to exceptional, with expert evaluations, model answers, and a community of serious aspirants pushing each other forward. Join the Mentor Guided, test series based study plan for Civil Services that has helped every second candidate selected in the Civil Services Examination Final List in CSE 2025. It is the proven, time tested program that has produced Rank 1 – Anudeep, Shruti, Ishita & Aditya – 4 times in the past 7 years.

The ForumIAS Prelims Test Series 2027 aims to prepare you for Civil Services Prelims 2027 in a structured, relaxed and comprehensive manner. It seeks for gradual and incremental progress over multiple levels with expected reading and outcome at each level. Through its 4 levels of tests, it ensures complete coverage of static subjects through NCERTs and recommended textbooks, as well as coverage of current affairs for a period of 2 years. Different patterns and difficulty levels provide sufficient practice to develop problem-solving skills for Prelims.

FORUM LEARNING CENTRES

DELHI (KAROL BAGH) Plot No. 36, 3rd Floor (Above Kalyan Jewellers) Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi – 05	DELHI (MUKHERJEE NAGAR) 856, Banda Bahadur Marg, near Batra Cinema, Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi, 110033	GURGAON Plot No. 894, Saraswati Vihar, Chakkarpur, Near MG Road Metro Station, Sec-28, Gurgaon	PATNA 2nd floor, AG Palace E Boring Canal Road, Patna Bihar 800011	HYDERABAD 1st Floor, SM Plaza, RTC X Rd, Indira Park Road, Jawahar Nagar, Hyderabad, Telangana 500020
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INBRIEF



Liquor 'scam': ED attaches properties worth ₹1,000 cr.

The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) on Monday said it has provisionally attached properties with a deed value of ₹200 crore and combined market value of over ₹1,000 crore in connection with the alleged liquor scam in Chhattisgarh. The attached properties include a hotel in Goa for which ₹110 crore was paid for in unaccounted cash sourced from the liquor scam and physically transported at the instance of Chaitanya Baghel, the son of senior Congress leader and former Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, claimed the agency. Mr. Chaitanya Baghel is one of the accused in the case and is currently out on bail.

Shopkeeper gunned down in busy Punjab market area

A shopkeeper was shot dead on Monday by two unidentified attackers in Makhu town in the border district of Ferozepur in Punjab, police said. The deceased was identified as Gurcharan Singh Gaba, owner of a general store in the main market of Makhu. Two assailants arrived on a motorcycle at the market and opened fire at Gurcharan. The assailants allegedly fired multiple rounds before fleeing from the spot. The sudden attack sparked panic among shopkeepers and customers in the busy market area. Locals rushed an injured Gurcharan to a nearby hospital but was declared dead shortly after his arrival.

'Custodial death': three Odisha Police personnel suspended, IPS officer sent to district HQ

Satyasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

Three police personnel were suspended and an IPS officer transferred on Monday, hours after a man named Susant Sahu died from injuries allegedly sustained during custodial torture in Odisha's Ganjam district.

Based on a complaint from the deceased's wife and a preliminary inquiry, the Inspector General (Southern Range) sent IPS officer Nitesh Kumar Mishra to the district headquarters and suspended Sub-Inspector Sameer Kumar Rout, Assistant Sub-Inspector Baikuntha Jena and constable Suman Kumar Sahu.

Susant's wife Mamajini Pradhan alleged in her complaint that a team from the Kabisuryanagar police station picked up her hus-

DGP Khurania has ordered the Human Rights Protection Cell of Odisha Police to probe the charges

band and another person, Iswar Sahu, from their homes on May 25. The two were reportedly arrested in connection with a stone-blasting case.

"The police did not produce them in court. Instead, they subjected my husband and Iswar to excessive physical torture. On Sunday, my father-in-law and brother-in-law were asked to take my husband from the police station. The police threatened to file cases against us if we did not comply," said Ms. Pradhan. She added that the police personnel forcibly took their signatures on blank paper.

With 35 MLAs sworn in as Ministers, Suvendu's Ministry strength now 41

Chief Minister gives prominence to geographical, ethnic and gender considerations in expansion with seven women Ministers and 10 Ministers from North Bengal in his Council of Ministers

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Thirty-five BJP MLAs were sworn in as Ministers in the West Bengal government on Monday at an event organised at Lok Bhavan in Kolkata. West Bengal Governor R.N. Ravi administered the oath to 13 Cabinet Ministers, three Ministers of State (independent charge) and 19 other Ministers of State (MoS). With six Ministers, including Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari, taking the oath on May 9, the total size of the Ministry has increased to 41.

As per Article 164(1A) of the Constitution, the total number of Ministers, including the CM, in the Council of Ministers in a State shall not exceed 15% of the strength of the Assembly. West Bengal has 294 seats in the Legislative Assembly and thus has a maximum of 44. Portfolios of the new Ministers sworn in on Monday will be allocated on June 3.



Governor R.N. Ravi administering the oath of office to the members of the Council of Ministers in Kolkata on Monday. ANI

Mr. Adhikari has given prominence to geographical, ethnic and gender considerations in the expansion of the Council of Ministers. The number of women Ministers stands at seven with one Cabinet Minister, Agnimitra Paul, one MoS (independent charge) Malati Rava Roy, and one MoS, Kalita Majhi, MLA from Ausgram, who was a house help before the election.

Ten MLAs from North Bengal have made it to the Ministry, including Nisith Pramanik - appointed Minister for North Bengal De-

velopment - and Sankar Ghosh, who was sworn in on Monday. This is the highest number of legislators from North Bengal that have ever been included in the Council of Ministers in West Bengal.

Kolkata dip

Only four MLAs from Kolkata have made it to the Ministry, a departure from earlier where legislators from Kolkata used to dominate the State Cabinet. The key faces sworn in as Cabinet Ministers on Monday include Tapas Roy, Swapan Dasgupta, Sharadwat Mukherjee, Ar-

jun Singh and Jagannath Chatterjee, all MLAs who have been elected for the first time on a BJP ticket. Mr. Ghosh, Deepak Burman, Manoj Oraon, and Gouri Shankar Ghosh, who were elected to the Assembly for the second time, were also sworn in as Cabinet Ministers.

The prominent names from the ST community include Manoj Oraon, Rajesh Mahato, Joyel Murmu, Amiya Kisku and Bishal Lama. The prominent names from Scheduled Caste community include Dipak Barman, Anandmoy Barman, Dudh Kumar Mondal, Hare Krishna Bera, Nadiar Chand Bauri, Dipankar Jana, Kalita Majhi

Among the MoSs who were administered the oath were Joyel Murmu, Ashok Dinda, Anandmoy Burman, Kaushik Chowdhury, Gargi Das Ghosh, Bhaskar Bhattacharya, Dibakar Gharani, Sumana Sarkar, Santanu Pramanik, Purnima Chakraborty, and Umesh Rai.

Corruption-free govt., no compromise on secularism: T.N. CM

The Hindu Bureau
TIRUCHI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay said on Monday that the TVK-led government would be a "government for all" and it would never compromise on secularism, State rights, river water-sharing, or social justice.

He was speaking at a public meeting organised to thank the voters of the Tiruchi East constituency, from where he was elected to the Assembly (since vacated) apart from Perambur in Chennai. Mr. Vijay promised the people of Tamil Nadu that he would provide a corruption-free government. "I understand it is not magic and cannot be done overnight. But I will make it happen. I have no other job than working for you," he said, adding that everything would be done according



CM Joseph C. Vijay

to the Constitution.

Referring to the criticism of his government, Mr. Vijay said those who had pledged to wait for six months (before assessing his performance) could not hold their tongue for even six days. "Within half an hour of government formation, they started speaking. They were even ranting at a wedding," he said.

Main political opponent

He reaffirmed that the DMK would remain the TVK's main political opponent and all other "formations" were irrelevant.

'CM's house bigger than PM's': RJD questions 'allotment of Patna bungalows to NDA MPs'

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) on Monday raised questions over the "allotment of ministerial bungalows to several Bihar MPs in Patna in violation of rules". The Opposition party also questioned the Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance government's decision to merge the Chief Minister's official residence at 1, Anne Marg with 5, Deshratna Marg, which had been designated for the Deputy Chief Minister.

The development comes close on the heels of a row over a notice issued to former Chief Minister Rabri Devi to vacate the 10, Circular Road bungalow in Patna. The bungalow, currently occupied by Ms. Devi and her family, has been allotted to Dairy and Fish-



RJD national general secretary Abdul Bari Siddiqui (right) at a press meet in Patna. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

eries Minister Nand Kishor Ram, who had been allotted 21, Harding Road just a few weeks ago.

RJD national general secretary Abdul Bari Siddiqui said a number of NDA leaders, including BJP national president Nitin Nabin and JD(U) working president Sanjay Jha, "continue to live in their bungalows despite quitting their positions

in the State government without any objection".

Quoting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public appeal to curb discretionary spending, Mr. Siddiqui said, "The Chief Minister of the country's poorest State has the most luxurious bungalow in India. Samrat Choudhary's bungalow is even larger than the Prime Minister's residence. He has also merged 5, Deshratna Marg, formerly designated for the Deputy Chief Minister, into the CM's residence."

"Can the government justify under what capacity the BJP national president Nitin Nabin is residing at 3, Taylor Road bungalow? Two former Chief Ministers, Jitan Ram Manjhi (now Union Minister) and Rajya Sabha MP Nitish Kumar, have been allotted bungalows in Patna," the RJD leader said.

The silken voice of Hindi cinema that touched hearts falls silent

OBITUARY

Anuj Kumar

Suman Kalyanpur, who touched the deepest corners of our hearts with her silken voice, passed away in Mumbai on Sunday night after a brief illness. Like a gentle wind bearing the fragrance of first rain, Kalyanpur's voice possessed a luminous clarity that spoke directly to the listener. It never knocked on the door of the heart - it felt like it was already nestled within, like a long-lost memory waiting to be remembered. Her understated and intimate expressions made her songs feel like quiet confessions.

In Hindi cinema's golden age, when competition was not always fair, and musical giants carried huge egos, Kalyanpur



SUMAN KALYANPUR (1937-2026)

viewed singing not as a vehicle for fame but as a pure, spiritual extension of her early love for the fine arts. Underappreciated even after delivering massive chartbusters, she remained remarkably soft-spoken, media-shy, and genuinely embarrassed by extravagant praise.

Born on January 28, 1937, in Dhaka to Shankar Rao Hemmady, a noted banker, she relocated to Bombay with her family in 1943. Music was not her first choice. As a teenager, she was passionate about the visual arts. After completing her schooling at Mumbai's St. Columba

High School, she enrolled at the prestigious Sir J.J. School of Art to pursue painting.

Her musical quest began when family members noticed her natural talent while she sang Noor Jehan songs at home, prompting her to pursue formal vocal training under family friend and composer Pandit Keshav Rao Bhole.

Later, maestro Khan Abdul Rehman Khan of Kirana gharana gave her a grounding in Hindustani classical music, followed by a stint with Master Navrang.

Finds a footing

Meanwhile, in 1953, when Kalyanpur sang at a college function, she impressed the legendary Talat Mahmood with her rendition of Noor Jehan classics. Mahmood recommended her name to the recording la-

bel HMV, and Kalyanpur found a footing in an extremely competitive industry led by the Mangeshkar sisters.

In a career spanning three decades, the Padma Bhushan sang in around 100 films in different languages. Her definitive masterpieces include *Na Tum Hamein Jano* (*Baat Ek Raat Ki*), a masterpiece in romantic yearning with Hemant Kumar, where her voice floats like moonlight over a minimalist arrangement by S.D. Burman. In Shankar Jaikishen's pulsating *Aaj Kal Tere Mere Pyar Ke Charhe* (*Brahmachari*) and Kalyanji Anandji's teasing love song *Na Na Karte Pyar Tumhin Se Karte* (*Jab Jab Phool Khile*, 1965) with Rafi, Kalyanpur exudes her playful energy and mischievous tone without losing vocal control, while Naushad's ten-

der *Mera Pyar Bhi Tu Hai* (*Saathi*, 1968) with Mukesh is a perfect example of Kalyanpur's soft, romantic, caressing vocal style.

Comparison with Lata

Though a section of the industry saw Kalyanpur as an alternative to Lata Mangeshkar, and radio announcers inadvertently credited her songs to Mangeshkar, a close look reveals the difference in their sonic signatures. The discerning always appreciated Suman's softer, slightly rounder texture, which lent itself beautifully to intimate settings.

One of the abiding links with the golden era of Hindi film music, Kalyanpur will live on through melodies that continue to resonate across generations, a soothing voice that made ordinary love stories feel poetic and eternal.

Villagers protesting against 'illegal mining' attacked in Rajasthan

Press Trust of India
JAIPUR

Villagers protesting against alleged illegal mining in Rajasthan's Ajitpura-Kujeta were attacked with stones and fired upon by unidentified persons on Monday, leaving at least six injured, police said.

According to police, the attack took place when the residents resumed their protest, which entered its 300th day.

Some of the injured sustained bullet wounds and were rushed to the government BDM hospital in Kotputli. Two persons in critical condition were later referred to Jaipur for advanced treatment.

Superintendent of Police Satveer Singh said special

teams have been formed to identify and arrest those involved in the attack. Police said additional force has been deployed to maintain law and order.

Officials said the protest had been going on for several months. They added that the protest site was recently cleared by the administration with assistance from police on May 29, but the villagers gathered again at the site on Monday, when the attack took place.

Villagers claimed that they have been demanding action against "illegal mining, blasting and overloaded vehicles but the administration didn't address their concerns". They also alleged that the mining mafia enjoys "political patronage" in the State.

IN BRIEF



Eleven persons held after CID busts online betting network

Eleven persons were arrested by the Telangana CID's Special Investigation Team (SIT) for allegedly operating a multi-State illegal online betting network linked to the Dafabet platform, following an investigation into the loss of nearly ₹10 lakh by a software engineer from Karimnagar. The CID seized three luxury vehicles, including BMW, Mercedes and Kia Seltos cars, eight laptops, two iPads, 26 mobile phones, five passports and ₹3,21,900 in cash.

Southern Railway to operate trains from Palani to Kerala

The Southern Railway will operate special trains between Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala and Podanur Junction in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, via Palani. Train No. 06079 Thiruvananthapuram North (Kochuveli)-Podanur Junction Express Special will leave Thiruvananthapuram North at 1 p.m. on Wednesdays and reach Podanur Junction at 6.45 a.m. the next day. Train No. 06080 will leave Podanur at 5 p.m. on Thursdays and arrive at the Kerala capital at 7.15 a.m. the next day.

'A.P. spent ₹65,887 crore on pensions since July 2024'

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu announced that the State government distributed over ₹65,887 crore under the NTR Bharosa pension programme since July 2024, and that about ₹32,000 crore was being spent annually on pensions alone. He also said, in June, ₹2,729 crore has been allocated for pensions to 62.34 lakh beneficiaries. Mr. Naidu was at a gathering of beneficiaries at the 21st Pedala Sevala programme in Kakinada on Monday.

Phone tapping: MLA deposes before SIT

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Mahubnagar MLA Yennam Srinivas Reddy deposed before the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the alleged phone tapping case on Monday. Mr. Srinivas had earlier lodged a complaint with the Hyderabad police alleging that his phone had been tapped by the Telangana State Level Agency during the tenure of the BRS government.

The Congress MLA appeared before the SIT in Hyderabad after being served a notice. Officials said this was the second

notice issued to the legislator. An earlier notice had been served on July 7, 2025, seeking his appearance. The SIT has been recording statements of legislators who had alleged that their phones were tapped ahead of the 2023 polls.

The case came to light after the arrest of former Telangana Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) in the Special Intelligence Branch (SIB) Praneeth Rao on March 13, 2024. He was picked up following a complaint by Additional SP D. Ramesh, who alleged unlawful interception of phone calls of senior political leaders and officials.

'Ancient rock formations destroyed for real estate project in Secunderabad'

Swathi Vadlamudi
HYDERABAD

The Society to Save Rocks has brought to light a brazen attempt to encroach upon defence land in the Ammuguda area of Secunderabad Cantonment, where rock formations that are billions of years old are being destroyed systematically to make way for a real estate project.

Ammuguda hillocks are home to ancient rock formations and open scrub lands which are used by the Society members and local residents for trekking and rock climbing activities. It was here that athlete Milkha Singh trained before he made a mark on the global stage in the 1950s.

"Receiving information about the rock blasting, two of us went there on Friday morning, and found two

bulldozers there. Later, on my way back from office in the evening, I went to check the status of the rocks, and found that one-third of the boulders had been blasted already," Sudheer Bhan, a rock enthusiast informed.

A video clip shared by the Society members shows a rusting signboard, a short distance from where the rocks were being destroyed, notifying the area as defence land. Heaps of rocks and cement bricks supporting its legs clearly indicate that it was moved from elsewhere, and planted there. Google Street View images show the original location of the board — right at the centre of the path leading to the boulders which now lay destroyed.

Local residents say that the attempts to encroach the land are not new.

Karnataka Cabinet formation discussions spill over to today

Much-awaited talks of senior Cong. leaders on Monday evening did not happen; they are likely to meet today; lobbying for berths reaches crescendo as a big number of contenders camp in Delhi

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The wait for a decision on new Cabinet formation in Karnataka has been extended by one more day. After the much-awaited discussion of senior Congress leaders on Monday evening was postponed, the leaders are likely to meet on Tuesday morning.

Even as the swearing-in ceremony of the newly-elected Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader D.K. Shivakumar is scheduled for Wednesday evening, the entire Congress leadership from Karnataka appears to have moved to Delhi to lobby for berths in the Cabinet.

Though Mr. Shivakumar and outgoing Chief Minister Siddaramaiah reached Delhi by afternoon, the



In full swing: Preparations under way for the swearing-in ceremony of D.K. Shivakumar, in Bengaluru on Monday. J. ALLEN EGENUSE

meeting of central leaders scheduled for Monday could not take place since Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi returned to the capital late in the evening, sources said.

They added that Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and Congress general secretary (organisa-

tion) K.C. Venugopal met to discuss Karnataka developments.

It is also learnt that Mr. Siddaramaiah and Mr. Shivakumar also met Congress general secretary in-charge of Karnataka Randeep Singh Surjewala with their list of preferences for Cabinet berths.

The outgoing Chief Mi-

nister is also learnt to have met Mr. Venugopal separately, while Mr. Shivakumar too is expected to meet them.

Size and composition
The size and composition of the Cabinet, along with other issues — such as having Deputy Chief Ministers, and a coordination committee, a demand that has come from the outgoing Chief Minister's camp — is yet to be discussed.

Another source said that the party is likely to keep about four berths vacant after the Cabinet formation is completed in phases.

"With such a large number of leaders seeking Cabinet berth, it is likely that four berths could be kept vacant to accommodate leaders if trouble engulfs the government with dissi-

CMRL case: HC directs status quo till Friday

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court has ordered the Enforcement (ED) to maintain status quo in the Cochin Minerals and Rutile Ltd. (CMRL)-Exalogic Solutions pay-off case till Friday.

The Bench will pronounce its orders on Friday in an appeal filed by CMRL challenging a single

Bench order that dismissed its plea to quash the proceedings initiated in the pay-off case involving an IT firm owned by T. Veena, daughter of former Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. The ED informed the court that it would refrain from 'precipitating the issues' till that day.

CMRL and its officials had filed an appeal before the court a week ago, seeking a stay on the ED's

probe into its financial transactions with Exalogic Solutions.

The investigation pertains to alleged misappropriation of public funds.

The High Court had earlier directed the firm's officials to appear before the ED under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, and to cooperate with the probe.

On its part, the CMRL questioned the ED invok-

ing the PMLA against the firm, "even without the registration of an FIR or a complaint in the predicate offence."

The ED submitted that the agency had the right to issue summons to the firm's officials.

It submitted before the High Court last week that its probe was independent of a probe by the Serious Fraud Investigation Office into the matter.



A Naga outfit has been holding 14 Kuki civilians hostage following the killing of three church leaders in an ambush in Manipur's Kangpokpi district on May 13. FILE PHOTO

Release of 14 abducted Kuki civilians put off amid protests by Nagas

Rahul Karmakar
GUWAHATI

The scheduled release of 14 Kuki civilians in Manipur was "cancelled" on Monday following protests by a section of Nagas.

An organisation, identified as Naga Village Guard-Northern Command, has been holding the 14 Kukis captive since three church leaders were killed in an ambush in the State's Kangpokpi district on May 13. Three of the abducted men are reportedly minor students.

According to an announcement by the United Naga Council (UNC) on Monday morning, the organisation was expected to release the hostages at 2 p.m. in response to the government's assurance that six abducted Nagas would be traced and action would be taken against their abductors.

The UNC is the apex body of Nagas in Manipur.

However, the UNC stated in the evening that the proposed release "stands cancelled" considering the

"prevailing sentiments of the Naga public".

The release was called off after Naga protesters stormed the UNC office in Senapati, the headquarters of Senapati district. They were against the release of the 14 Kukis unless the six Nagas, allegedly held hostage by the Kuki extremists, were released simultaneously.

The killing of the three church leaders triggered the hostage crisis between the Kukis and Nagas. On May 15, the captors released 14 Kukis and an equal number of Nagas as part of a hostage-for-hostage deal. The UNC's announcement more or less confirmed that the 14 Kuki captives were unharmed. The status of the six Naga hostages remained unknown.

Last week, Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh said the case related to the killing of the church leaders and the abduction of the six Nagas would be handed over to the National Investigation Agency.

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कन्स्ट्रक्शन एण्ड क्रिमाइल सर्विसेज
उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय)
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Dated: 30.05.2025

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Metric	FY26 HIGHLIGHTS	FY26 Q4 HIGHLIGHTS
Turnover	33% ₹ 31,554 Cr.	61% ₹ 11,173 Cr.
PAT	11% ₹ 7,421 Cr.	35% ₹ 2,020 Cr.
Production	21% 53.16 MnT	22% 16.27 MnT
Sales	13% 50.24 MnT	21% 15.30 MnT

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Perfect storm

Weak enforcement and poor regulation sustain illicit liquor among the poor

India has suffered multiple mass deaths due to consuming illicit liquor, across Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Assam, and Maharashtra. The Malwani incident in 2015, which left over 100 people dead, prompted official promises of systemic reform that never fully materialised – neither there nor elsewhere. The Pune-Pimpri-Chinchwad tragedy unfolded last week with more than a dozen victims of working-class backgrounds in poor neighbourhoods. Preliminary investigation has revealed a better than ad hoc supply chain with industry-grade methanol – the toxin behind most hooch tragedies – brought from outside the State and mixed with ethanol to produce a highly potent country liquor. The demand for licensed alcohol faces high State taxes, encouraging low-income individuals to turn to illicit liquor. On the other hand, adding industrial methanol increases the batch volume at negligible input cost, dramatically improving margins, although some people under investigation have also said during official questioning that it is not in the interest of ‘regular’ vendors to poison their ‘customers’. Nonetheless, such operations are typically semi-visible local economies that get by on tolerance rather than secrecy, and so allegations of police and local authorities’ complicity must be investigated. Early enforcement following most deadly incidents only arrests retail vendors; investigations into upstream suppliers and alleged kingpins have frequently proved uneven or inconclusive.

Indeed, these tragedies recur due to a perfect storm of factors that are able to repeatedly come together. One major regulatory gap in efforts to track methanol downstream is how easily it is pilfered and diverted for illicit liquor. Most victims are daily-wage labourers, and scholars have argued that the physical toll of manual labour creates a demand for cheap relief that, together with economic precarity and addiction, outweighs the wariness of poisonous substances. Since the victims are often from marginalised communities, the sustained political will needed to implement reforms – including better methanol accounting and affordable alcohol alternatives, required to break the cycle – is often lacking. In a 2024 analysis, public health experts found that higher prices for legal liquor push the poorest consumers toward the illicit market, which accounts for an estimated 40% of alcohol consumption in India. Likewise, total bans as in Bihar and Gujarat could deflect the market to criminal syndicates, where quality control is optional and oversight is poor. Finally, legal reviews have concluded that while the big fish are rarely caught, even those arrested are rarely convicted. Without these improvements, regulatory loopholes and weak enforcement will sustain illicit liquor as a public health crisis.

Joy and pain

Health gains from NFHS-6 are significant, but unaddressed needs exist

When triumph and disaster arrive at the same time, it is important to celebrate, but also, to take stock, assess, and pivot to address the lacuna. The recently released National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-6 data offer such an opportunity. The data for 2023-24 revealed some remarkable gains for India, but also exposed some unguarded pathways that will become disastrous if not attended to. The greatest of the gains came in the sector of child health – stunting is down by 17%; severe wasting is down 32%; institutional deliveries are at over 90%; and full immunisation coverage for children aged 12-23 months rose to over 87%. Additionally, the figures show that India’s Total Fertility Rate (TFR) had stabilised at 2.0, below the replacement level of 2.1. Unequivocally, these are gains; ones that India has been working on for decades. It is an encouraging sign that the needle has finally moved, in these crucial sectors. These gains will have to be built upon, without any drop in service delivery, while remaining uncompromising on access or quality of services in the public sector. However, health managers need to heed the other side of the paradigm as well. NFHS-6 indicates a ‘dual public health burden’ – obesity (in three years, it had grown from 22.9% to 27.3% among men, while among women, from 24% to 30.7%) remains problematic while some level of malnutrition continues, besides the onslaught of lifestyle diseases. The survey also showed a decline in exclusive breastfeeding among children under six months, from 63.7% in NFHS-5 to 55.8% in NFHS-6. Breast feeding is essential to prevent infant malnutrition.

The NFHS, one of the largest cross-sectional household surveys in the world, could easily be considered the primary tool to define public policy, and evidence-based governance, besides tracking development indicators. The data it generates are crucial. Other India-level data from similar periods indicate similar trends; the SRS and the National Health Accounts Survey reveal the lack of focus or funds for lifestyle diseases, and metabolic disorders. The danger of letting this continue will be known sooner rather than later, as India progresses through a demographic transition to a greyer nation. At this stage, transformations are still possible. Setting up comprehensive screening programmes for NCDs, stressing on nation-wide behaviour change communication on diet and exercise, and ensuring higher taxes on sugared beverages and packaged foods are all techniques that will help reduce, and limit the burden, of NCDs. Bolstering health systems to tackle these NCDs, once they set in, at every level – village, town and city – is also crucial.

IMEC is caught between commerce and geopolitics

The ongoing war in Iran has shattered many myths and brought to light realities that expose the structural vulnerabilities of the existing world order. Iran, which was no match for the combined military might and technological superiority of Israel and the United States, has not only withstood the military onslaught but has also retaliated in ways that were neither expected nor planned for. Nearly three months into the conflict, although a fragile ceasefire is holding, there appears to be no immediate solution to end the war or achieve the politico-military objectives that Israel and the U.S. set at its outset. While Iran has suffered major losses to its leadership, infrastructure and military assets, the American military has also incurred unprecedented losses.

Lessons from the Iran conflict

A recent U.S. Congressional Research Service report has noted that 42 U.S. aircraft have been lost or damaged so far during “Operation Epic Fury” – the war with Iran – which includes fifth generation stealth fighters such as the F-35. Plus, the ability to intercept Iranian missiles and drones has been severely degraded as more than half the total inventory of Patriot, Tomahawk and Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missiles have been expended. With more than 240 American targets reportedly hit by Iran, the conflict has shattered the myth that military superiority alone will guarantee an outright victory. Several of the asymmetric tactics employed by Iran have caught the U.S. and Israel on the back foot.

Another reality check underscored by this war is the critical importance of global choke points and how their blockade can severely disrupt the global economy. Iran, by imposing a blockade on the Strait of Hormuz early in the conflict, has virtually brought the global economy to its knees. Nearly 20 million barrels of crude oil, accounting for about a third of global oil supplies, pass through this narrow sea passage every day. India is among the countries most affected, as it imports nearly 88% of its crude oil requirements, amounting to about 1.8 billion barrels annually. While the world grapples with the blockade and works to diversify its energy sources, one thing is clear: there is an urgent need to explore and develop alternative connectivity options beyond existing trade routes, particularly maritime routes. New routes and corridors must be developed that avoid the two ‘C’s – conflict zones and choke points.

However, this realisation is neither new nor have countries been idle in pursuing solutions. Transnational connectivity projects such as the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) were conceived precisely for this purpose. The INSTC was designed to bypass the Suez Canal



Rajeev Agarwal

Retired colonel, a Senior Research Consultant at CRF, Delhi, and the author of ‘Between Tehran and Tel Aviv – Gaza’s Story of Unending War’

choke point, while the overland component of the BRI across Asia and Europe seeks to reduce dependence on both the Malacca Strait and the Suez Canal. Another major connectivity project is the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). Unlike the other initiatives, IMEC traverses parts of West Asia, a region that has been significantly affected by the current conflict.

The IMEC framework

What is IMEC? The IMEC is a transformative and ambitious connectivity initiative that was officially announced at the G-20 Summit in New Delhi in September 2023. It seeks to connect India with Europe across the Arabian Peninsula, bypassing the traditional choke point of the Suez Canal. The project envisions a multimodal economic corridor integrating railways, ports, highways, energy networks and digital infrastructure to enhance trade, investment and connectivity. Unlike conventional transport corridors, IMEC is conceived as a holistic and multidimensional infrastructure project encompassing sea routes, rail networks, pipelines, undersea high-speed data links, green hydrogen corridors and transnational energy transmission grids.

The proposed structure has three distinct sections. The eastern section links India with West Asia through searoutes to the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The central section consists of an overland route across West Asia, traversing the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Israel, and culminating at the port of Haifa on Israel’s Mediterranean coast. The western leg of the corridor is sea-based, connecting Haifa to various European ports, beyond which the continent’s extensive transportation network takes over.

What has happened due to the war? Soon after IMEC was announced, the war in Gaza broke out on October 7, 2023, placing the project on the back burner. Major areas of the originally envisioned corridor, particularly those involving Israel and the port of Haifa, were directly affected by the conflict.

Soon after the Iran-Israel ‘12-Day War’ in June 2025, there was a concerted effort to move the project forward. However, the ongoing conflict involving Iran has once again thrown a spanner into its execution. Key ports in the UAE, particularly Jebel Ali and Fujairah, have been repeatedly targeted by Iran, while disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz have exposed the geographical vulnerabilities of these ports.

Another critical fault line exposed by the war is the deep faultlines and divergence in the positions adopted by Saudi Arabia and the UAE in the war. Both countries are key partners in IMEC, and any adversarial posture between them could prove to be a major setback for the corridor, whose success depends on smooth coordination and seamless connectivity across the region. The UAE’s April 2026 announcement that it was

The Iran conflict strengthens the case for the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) while simultaneously complicating its execution

Orbital rivalry – the challenge of China’s space power

China’s expanding counter-space capabilities are a cause for concern. While no conflict has ever been fought in space, the incentive to influence activities on earth by controlling outer space remains a potential trigger for future confrontation. Beijing’s development of anti-satellite missiles and co-orbital systems blurs the line between routine space operations and counter-space activities.

The key question is how Beijing views its space ambitions and control of outer space, and what India can do to safeguard its vital interests in this domain.

Beijing’s space ambitions

While the Chinese space programme emphasises the peaceful use of space, evidence suggests that China is preparing for an orbital war.

In January 2007, it targeted its own satellite from earth. In October 2015, China tested an exo-atmospheric vehicle designed to strike a hostile satellite. In 2022, China used a robotic spacecraft to push a defunct satellite into the graveyard orbit. In 2024, it demonstrated an orbital dog-fight. There is a clear research and developmental push for fielding offensive capabilities in space.

China’s space ambitions operate at two levels. First, it seeks to remain competitive in the emerging space race, both technologically and numerically. China has around 1,900 satellites in orbit, compared to more than 8,000 American satellites, including the SpaceX satellites.

Second, it recognises the military and economic implications of the weaponisation of space. A single strike could disrupt communications, power grids, navigation systems, financial markets, and military command-and-control (C2) and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) networks.

Accordingly, China aims to land on the moon by 2036, launch a nuclear-powered shuttle by 2040, and establish a solar power system by 2050. Chinese start-ups such as LandSpace, iSpace and OneSpace are challenging rivals such as SpaceX and Blue Origin. China is also exploring lunar and asteroid mining for energy



Harinder Singh

Former corps commander

and critical minerals. The growing demand for energy-efficient data centres is likely to further intensify the space race.

China is seeking to assert control over outer space in two distinct ways. First, by leveraging space-based assets to safeguard its military and economic systems. Second, by competing with its rivals – both numerically and technologically – to maintain space superiority. Its most immediate competition is with Starlink in low-earth orbit (LEO). China plans to deploy more than 36,000 LEO satellites by 2030. This rivalry could intensify if China were to become the first to establish a presence on the far side of the moon or demonstrate a particular interest in exploiting asteroid resources. Such developments could create an escalatory dynamic in an environment that lacks a comprehensive regulatory framework.

Consequently, China’s capabilities are evolving in three key areas. First, kinetic attack systems such as the DN-3 and SC-19 missiles, which can physically destroy satellites. Second, laser-based systems that can dazzle or blind satellites, disrupting navigation and communications. Third, co-orbital satellites, such as the SJ and TJS series, designed to interfere with or dislodge other satellites from orbit. Together, these capabilities could enable the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) to cripple Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR), GPS and communication networks, shaping the battlespace during the first 24 to 48 hours of a conflict.

Implications for India

If a contingency arises in Taiwan, the PLA is likely to first blind ISR and communication networks before resorting to hard-kill attacks. This would give Beijing time to shape the narrative, whereas a hard kill could trigger immediate escalation.

The U.S. would then have to assess China’s military objectives, and, if an invasion proceeds, neutralise its counter-space capabilities. While both sides may lose assets, the U.S. would likely retain an advantage due to its greater redundancy and resilience. The Taiwan scenario applies to

China’s counter-space rise demands stronger resilience and deterrence from India

opting out of the global oil grouping, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and reports of its growing strategic coordination with Israel, including the deployment of Israeli defence systems such as the Iron Beam, risk widening differences between Riyadh and Abu Dhabi. Such developments are unlikely to augur well for either regional stability or the future of IMEC.

Navigating the challenges

The war in Iran has highlighted two important issues for both West Asia and IMEC. First, there is an urgent need for projects such as IMEC that can bypass conflict zones and choke points. However, for such initiatives to succeed, they must also navigate the region’s geopolitical complexities, including the rapidly evolving dynamics among key partners such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

To address the first challenge, IMEC must evolve into a broader and more flexible framework while keeping open the possibility of reverting to the originally envisioned alignment once the conflict subsides. To this end, the option of developing key ports in Oman – such as Salalah, Duqm and Muscat – as eastern entry points could be explored, as they are located well away from the conflict-prone Strait of Hormuz. Similarly, on the western end, until the port of Haifa becomes a secure transit hub, a western spur passing through Egypt and terminating at one of its major Mediterranean ports could offer a viable alternative. Egypt already possesses the logistics ecosystem required to support IMEC, including the Suez Canal Economic Zone, six operational ports and four industrial zones specialising in green hydrogen, liquefied natural gas, shipbuilding and other future-oriented sectors.

To address the second challenge, countries such as India, which enjoy close relations and the trust of both Saudi Arabia and the UAE, will have to navigate a delicate but critical diplomatic terrain. European countries such as Italy and France, which are positioning themselves as key champions of IMEC in Europe, will also need to play an active role. The growing recognition of IMEC’s strategic importance was evident during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Europe in May 2026. While elevating their bilateral ties to a Special Strategic Partnership, India and Italy reaffirmed their commitment to cooperate on IMEC, recognising its transformative potential to reshape and promote global trade, connectivity and prosperity.

The bottom line is clear. The war in Iran has underscored the need for transnational connectivity projects such as IMEC that can bypass conflict zones and strategic choke points. However, for such initiatives to succeed, they must overcome the geopolitical complexities in West Asia.

India albeit on a lesser scale. India has around 60 operational satellites as against 400-plus Chinese military satellites alone, which implies lesser redundancy. Losing five to six satellites will hurt India more.

Hypothetically, China could strike at the CARTOSAT/RISAT series, which could lead to loss of tactical-level imagery for hours, if not days. Instead, if it only choose to lase as these satellites as they pass over the Line of Actual Control, it could lead to temporary blind spots. They could even deploy jammers to disable India’s NavIC system.

The key strategic takeaway is that while China can conduct peacetime harassment using lasers and jammers, or temporarily blind a few satellites during a border crisis, it cannot inflict crippling damage without destroying a large number of Indian satellites and risking severe Kessler Syndrome consequences. While Mission Shakti has strengthened India’s deterrence posture, its utility remains restricted. Moreover, a single successful test does not guarantee operational reliability, and India still lacks co-orbital capabilities to counter satellites such as the SJ and TJS series.

Safeguarding India’s interests

A few measures are pertinent. First, India must expand its space industry beyond the Indian Space Research Organisation to increase satellite production and launch capacity. Greater capacity translates into greater redundancy. Second, it should disaggregate large satellite programmes, such as GSAT, into smaller constellations, which are more resilient and survivable. Third, India must strengthen the protection of its ground space assets to mitigate the impact of hard-kill attacks. Fourth, it should enhance data-sharing arrangements with strategic partners so that, in the event of satellite losses, critical services can be restored through commercial or partner networks within hours.

Besides, India should also clearly define its red lines and the scope of a proportionate response to ensure that China fully understands the potential escalation ladder.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RCB’s win

Congratulations to Royal Challengers Bengaluru for securing back-to-back IPL titles. If winning the trophy in 2025 ended an 18-year wait, retaining it has erased RCB’s long-standing “underachiever” tag. It

reflects their transformation from a team reliant on individual brilliance to a disciplined unit that thrives under pressure. Virat Kohli’s match-winning performances in successive finals further cement his status as one of the IPL’s

all-time greats. With a balanced mix of experienced stars and emerging talent, RCB’s dominance could reshape the league’s competitive landscape. **R. Sivakumar,** Chennai

Website glitch

I would like to draw the attention of the Staff Selection Commission (SSC) to a server-side error on its website, namely the “Spring Framework Transaction Failed” error. As many aspirants are

unable to submit their applications due to this issue, I request the SSC to rectify the error at the earliest and extend the application deadline by at least five days. This would ensure that candidates, particularly those in remote

areas, are able to complete and submit their applications within the time slot.

Jayesh Vinod Jadhav, Nashik, Maharashtra

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

The FemTech industry's approach to PMOS

The global decision to rename Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) as Polyendocrine Metabolic Ovarian Syndrome (PMOS) is a culmination of a decade-long collaboration between doctors, researchers, and patient groups. Led by Professor Helena Teede, Director of the Monash Centre for Health Research and Implementation in Melbourne, the rationale for the change was published in *The Lancet* last month. At the heart of the renaming was a growing recognition that the term PCOS could not capture the condition's complexity, and reduced it to a reproductive disorder centred on the ovaries. It is a long overdue acknowledgement of the condition's multisystem nature as PMOS manifests through a wide range of endocrine, metabolic, reproductive, psychological, and dermatological symptoms.

India's FemTech response
Yet, even as the formal medical renaming to PMOS is enforced, India's FemTech (female technology) industry had already begun treating PCOS as a multisystem condition. A paper published in 2024 by the authors of this article titled, "Platforming PCOS Treatment Online: FemTech Logics of Care," showed how FemTech platforms curated integrated care packages that brought together general practitioners, diabetologists, endocrinologists, gynaecologists, dermatologists, nutritionists, fitness trainers, and psychologists to treat PCOS.

Backed by venture capital funding, FemTech platforms conducted extensive market research to identify the gaps in conventional healthcare systems that stymied the long-term management of PCOS. Several platform founders were themselves women who had struggled to navigate gynaecological care that centred fertility and weight loss as the individual responsibility of



Taru Jain

Senior design researcher at CoRE Stack — a digital public good for climate change resilience in rural India



Preeti Mudliar

DFAT-CAIR-Maitri Fellow at the Australia India Institute, University of Melbourne researching digital public infrastructures

Discussions around PMOS rarely engage with broader environmental factors such as adulterated food, pollution, chronic stress, and toxins

patients. Their experiences shaped the emergence of platforms that framed PCOS as requiring coordinated and long-term care. Platforms also sought to improve doctor-patient interactions by training gynaecologists to avoid prejudiced language around marital status, fertility, and body weight. Since many aspects of PMOS management could be coordinated remotely, digital consultations also offered women greater privacy and flexibility in a culture that stigmatises unmarried women visiting gynaecologists unchaperoned.

PMOS often first appears through irregular menstrual cycles. The underlying hormonal and metabolic imbalances can remain poorly understood for years delaying treatment. In both families and clinical settings, it is viewed primarily through the lens of fertility and weight loss, generating shame and anxiety around marriage prospects and hostility within marriages itself.

FemTech platforms positioned themselves as offering an integrated and non-judgemental approach to PCOS care. They foregrounded its multifaceted nature, and as of 2025, India's FemTech market was estimated to be worth \$1.48 billion.

Limits of privatised care

However, reliance on FemTech platforms creates new vulnerabilities for long-term healthcare delivery. First, access to these platforms depends on the ability to afford uninterrupted internet connectivity and recurring subscription costs. As a result, these services cater disproportionately to urban, digitally savvy women. For most people, gynaecologists in conventional healthcare systems are usually the first point of contact when they start showing PMOS symptoms. Strengthening these systems is therefore essential to public health.

Second, as start-ups, FemTech platforms are vulnerable to market

volatility. They are dependent on investor confidence. None of the platform founders who were interviewed had secured funding beyond the preliminary 'Series A round' and one of the platforms had to cease operations stranding patients. In the absence of regulatory safeguards, these issues weaken FemTech platforms' claim of being robust alternatives to conventional healthcare systems.

Third, while platforms attempt to improve gynaecologist-patient interactions, scaling such interventions is challenging without broader reforms in medical education and clinical training. The shortage of gynaecologists in India, particularly in rural regions, further intensifies this challenge.

The larger healthcare crisis

Therefore, while FemTech platforms address a real and underserved need, they equally reflect deeper infrastructural failures. The long-term solution to conditions such as PMOS requires investment in public healthcare infrastructure and medical education that move beyond a narrow, fertility-first framework. Doctor-patient interactions must become more inclusive and respectful to women. At the same time, it is important to recognise the strain under which gynaecologists work, particularly in public hospitals. Overcrowded conditions, high patient volumes, and inadequate infrastructure leave little room for privacy and counselling. While FemTech platforms may ease some pressures by coordinating care digitally, they cannot substitute public healthcare.

Moreover, discussions around PMOS rarely engage with broader environmental factors such as adulterated food, pollution, chronic stress, and toxins. If the shift from PCOS to PMOS is to be meaningful, it should encourage a deeper reconsideration of how chronic women's health conditions are understood, prevented, and cared for in India.

Vizag data centre is a major challenge

If India needs Google's hyperscale hub, it is not yet ready for the facility

STATE OF PLAY

Vasudevan Mukunth

The Google Cloud India AI Hub, for which the technology giant and Andhra Pradesh recently broke ground in Visakhapatnam, is a sign that India is finally moving from providing information technology services and coding to owning infrastructure. While the facility is part of a larger digital infrastructure push in Visakhapatnam, expected to involve investments running to ₹1.25 lakh crore, there are also numerous second-order gains in the offing. The facility could strengthen downstream demand for high-end computing hardware, augmenting India's efforts to build semiconductor capacity under Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes, even if manufacturing viability will still depend on broader ecosystem factors.

The project has been integrated into the America-India Connect initiative, as part of which multiple international subsea cables will land in Visakhapatnam, creating India's second major gateway on the eastern seaboard. As a result, Indian data will have a direct connection from the east coast to South Africa and the U.S. without first being backhauled to Cochin, that too on Google's high-capacity cables. Likewise, in the east, data from Visakhapatnam can reach the U.S. via Singapore and Australia, no longer restricted to the Chennai-Singapore connection and thereafter to the U.S. on third-party cables. As a result, India's dependence on geopolitical stability in the Red Sea — through which cables from Mumbai pass before reaching Europe — will re-



duce. Similarly, within India, the Hub's location could move high-value technological activity away from expensive metropolitan cities, potentially redistributing growth.

Infrastructure problem

The Hub is an integrated complex with computational infrastructure and high-capacity data connectivity, and large power requirements. Its expected power demand of 1 GW makes it a so-called hyperscale hub, with the ability to run powerful artificial intelligence (AI) models.

But that is also a gateway to consider the not-inconsiderable challenges the project poses. For example, the Hub could attract firms handling sensitive data, especially in sectors where legal or regulatory preferences favour keeping data in India. However, while Google will thus lower costs for Indian firms, it will increase dependence on a single foreign provider's proprietary stack. As a result, India could become a site for "sovereign AI" — as Google Cloud CEO Thomas Kurian said — only in name.

Second, even though AI GPU workloads are among the world's most power-guzzling uses of computing infrastructure, the Hub suggests AI is now an infrastructure problem: power, land, and water are the bottlenecks. The power demand may strain the local grid and result in knock-on

effects for local residents and industries. While Google has pledged 100% use of renewable energy, the Hub will still feature a fleet of backup diesel generators, which will affect local air quality and microclimate.

If Google aspires to maintain its global average power usage effectiveness of 1.1 in Visakhapatnam's humid weather, it may need evaporative cooling, which is water-intensive. The district is periodically vulnerable to water stress, especially in summer. It depends heavily on inter-basin water transfers to meet its needs. In fact, it has the lowest groundwater levels for domestic, agricultural or industrial use in the State, as per the Water Resources and Information Management System. Facilities worldwide similar to the Hub are known to consume over 2 million litres per day per 100 MW. At 1 GW, the indicated demand is an eye-watering 20 million litres per day.

Rights groups have alleged that the State government assigned the project to a category that allowed it to sidestep a full environmental impact assessment and public hearings — measures that have forced Google, et al. in other countries to redesign data centres to be more sustainable. India still struggles to harmonise State-level incentives. Andhra Pradesh offers aggressive tax holidays and power subsidies yet they have not come with environmental benchmarks or 'green' capacity targets. A Central single-window could standardise public hearings and resource accounting. If India does not codify these safeguards, its climb up the digital stack will come at the cost of its environmental and democratic foundations.

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Remittances anchor the rupee, India's external balances

Despite doing the heavy lifting in tackling the pressure on the rupee, remittances are ignored in discussions due to overemphasis on FDI and FPI flows

DATA POINT

Puneet Bhasin

The Indian rupee has lost nearly 12% of its value against the U.S. dollar since May 2025. Several analysts have noted the consistent decline in net Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and net Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI) flows as a cause.

The ebbing of net FDI and FPI flows notably began much before the current energy crisis due to the war in West Asia. A declining trend in net FDI began in the second quarter (Q2) of 2021-2022. As of Q3 of 2025-26, net FDI was negative (Chart 1). The declining trend in net FPI, which is also at a negative, started in Q4 of 2023-24 (Chart 2).

It is commonly understood that a downward (depreciation) pressure is structurally inherent upon the rupee because of India's persistent Current Account (CA) deficit, which in turn stems from India's persistent trade deficit. Consequently, buoyant net positive FDI and FPI flows, recorded in the Financial Account (FA), are considered crucial to not only finance the CA Deficit (CAD), but to counteract the downward pressure on the rupee. However, there is an overemphasis on these two, at the cost of the other important flow for India, namely, remittances, recorded in the CA, which does the heavy lifting for both the financing of the CAD and in tackling the pressure on the rupee. Not accounting for remittances risks non-mitigation of a major external vulnerability: the ebbing of remittances flows that is also likely.

The CA primarily consists of three component flows: the trade deficit, the Net Primary Income (NPI) deficit and the Net Secondary Income (NSI) surplus (Chart 3). The NPI mainly reflects the net negative balance of investment income earned by Indian residents on foreign assets and paid on India's external liabilities held by fo-

reign counterparts. The NSI essentially accounts for its huge net positive remittance flows. India attracts the highest remittances (in \$) by a wide margin. In 2024, India saw \$138 billion in remittances.

They matter significantly for India's CAD and the rupee. Firstly, since mid-2013, remittances have on an average financed more than the entirety of India's trade deficit (Chart 4). As a result, the CAD financed by the FA flows of FDI and FPI is a residual of the two persistent deficits in the CA, leftover after the remittances have financed their bulk. If not for India's high net remittances, its CAD would be much larger and the financing demands on the FA also higher.

Secondly, net remittances, averaging about 3% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), are much higher than the net FDI and FPI flows. Thirdly, unlike, say FPI, remittances are not given to sudden halts, for they are largely driven by the income and savings decisions of the Indian diaspora and their respective familial needs back home. Fourthly, unlike FDI and FPI, remittances are transfers and not claims. Hence, they do not generate future liability outflows. Lastly, remittances have low transaction costs.

A lot rides on remittances now because the more the rupee slips, the more diaspora remitters are likely to wait till it bottoms out. Concomitantly, with the trade deficit likely to increase due to costlier energy imports, a wide gap can emerge in the remittances' ability to cover this deficit. This will in turn increase the CAD and its financing demands on the FA, at a time when net FDI and FPI flows are negative. Yet, despite their importance, analyses of remittances pale in comparison to those of FDI and FPI flows. It is perhaps because remittances are largely the result of small financial decisions by thousands of working-class Indians abroad, who do not animate globalised elites in the same way as talks of FDI and FPI do.

Merits of remittances

The data for the charts were sourced from the Reserve Bank of India's Database on Indian Economy. The author is with the Center for the Study of the Indian Economy (CSIE) at Azim Premji University in Bengaluru. With inputs from Anshuman Singh, also at CSIE

CHART 1: Quarterly net Foreign Direct Investment in \$ million (■) and as a % share of GDP (●)

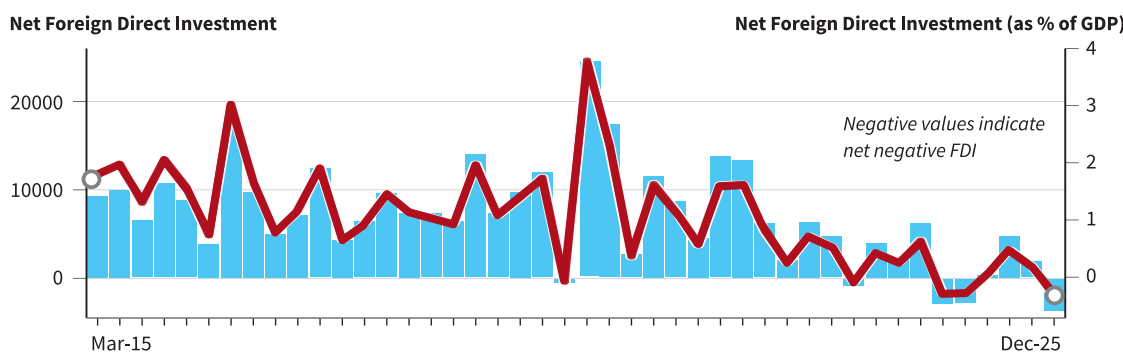


CHART 2: Quarterly net Foreign Portfolio Investment (as % of GDP). Negative values indicate net negative FPI

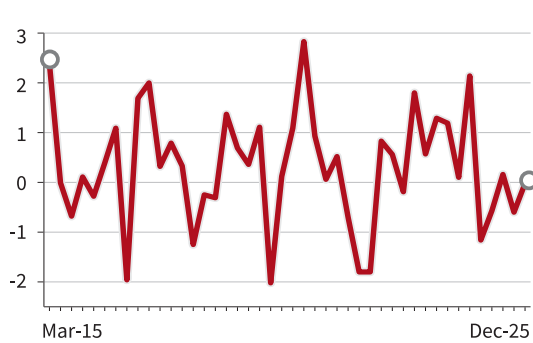


CHART 4: Quarterly net remittances as % of trade deficit. The two blue bars in June and September 2020 indicate trade surplus. All other quarters saw trade deficits

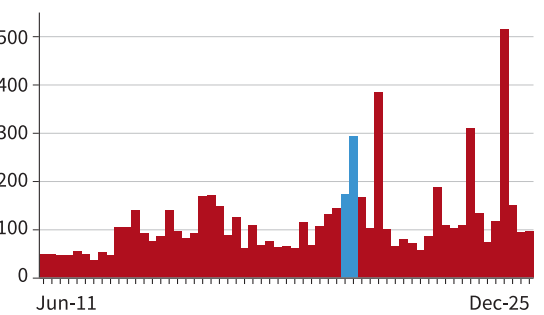
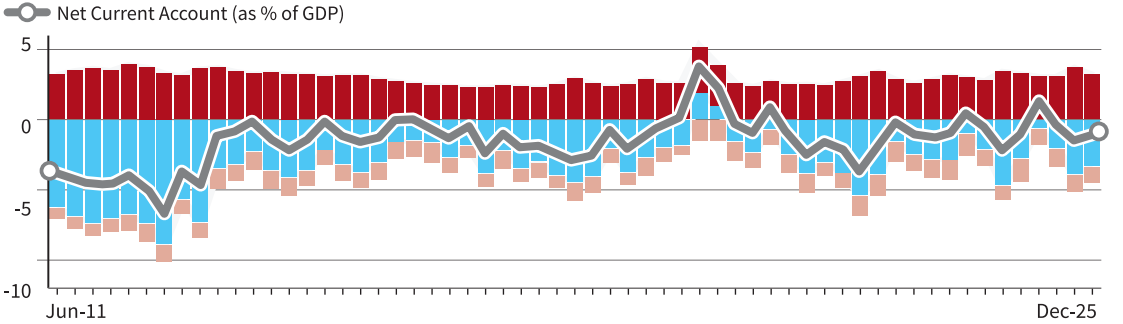


CHART 3: Decomposition of current account (% of GDP, quarterly)



FROM THE ARCHIVES

The *Hindu*

FIFTY YEARS AGO JUNE 2, 1976

Tethered balloons for TV coverage: study findings

New Delhi, June 1: Balloon can be used instead of a satellite to provide television coverage throughout India, according to a study by the Information, Planning and Analysis Group (IPAG) of the Electronics Commission.

The study says that 18 balloon-borne transmitters can do the job at one-fifth the investment cost for the conventional system involving a network of ground-based transmitters. The annual running cost is estimated to be half that of the terrestrial system.

Hung by means of special plastic tethers, the balloons will hover at about 3,300 metres from ground, each balloon beaming television programmes to a radius of upto 240 km.

Tethered Balloon Communication System (TBCS) has been suggested as a viable alternative to the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE), which will end in July with the withdrawal of the American satellite ATS-6.

The IPAG study says that SITE continuation with TBCS would require four balloons and cost Rs. 26 crores. The annual running cost would be Rs 6.5. crores.

The IPAG panel has been set up to study the development of tethered balloon technology in India and its possible civilian and military applications. Substantial infrastructure for balloon technology is said to be already available in India.

Tethered balloons are being developed at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) in Bombay.

TIFR-designed and fabricated balloons have been flown upto 300 metres with 10-kg, payload and to 3,000 metres with 50kg, payload, according to IPAG.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JUNE 2, 1926

Reduced telephone rate

Simla, June 1: The Government of India in the Industries Department have sanctioned as experimental measure for one year with effect from 1st June 1926, that the telephone calls throughout India and Burma between hours of 8 p.m. and 8 a.m. will be charged at half the usual rates subject to the condition that the minimum charge for such a call at reduced rates will not be less than six annas.

Text & Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Percentage increase in Gross GST collections in May

3.2 in per cent. Gross GST collections rose to over ₹1.94 lakh crore in May on higher supplies of goods and services, and collection from imports, government data showed. Gross GST collection was ₹1.88 lakh crore in May 2025. GST refunds grew 2.6% to ₹27,281 crore. After adjusting refunds, net GST revenues in May rose 3.3% to about ₹1.67 lakh crore. PTI

Value of loans sanctioned to MSMEs under ECLGS

35,000 in ₹ crore. Banks have sanctioned ₹35,000 crore loans under the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) to MSMEs and industries impacted by the West Asia conflict. The scheme aimed at providing additional credit flow of ₹2.55 lakh crore for airlines hit by the ongoing geopolitical crisis. PTI

Value of India's seafood exports in 2025-26

8.46 in \$ billion. India's seafood exports hit a record high in both volume and value during 2025-26, reaching 19,72,018 metric tonnes worth ₹73,890.46 crore (\$8.46 billion), despite global challenges, MPEDA Chairman P Jawahar said on Monday. The U.S. and China remained the top importers of Indian seafood during the fiscal year. PTI

Number of drones fired by Russia at Ukraine in May

8,150 Russia fired a record number of long-range drones at Ukraine in May, an analysis of Ukrainian air force data showed on Monday, as Kyiv appealed to allies for air defence support. Russia launched 8,150 long-range drones and more than 200 missiles during the month, beating the previous record set one month earlier. AFP

Cases of Ebola reported in Congo's ongoing outbreak

282 At least 282 confirmed cases of Ebola have now been reported in Congo's ongoing outbreak, the central African nation said late on Sunday. The outbreak remains focused in Congo's eastern Ituri province, where 264 of the cases have been recorded, Congo's Ministry of Health said. PTI
COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Why do cities get polluted in summer?

How is summer air pollution different from that in winter? Why does ozone rise in hot weather? What drives PM10 spikes in Indian cities? How do dust storms affect air quality? How do human activities worsen summer air pollution? What can cities do to combat summer air pollution?

EXPLAINER

Mohammad Rafiuddin
Sneha Maria Ignatious

The story so far:

In March, the Commission for Air Quality Management in the National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) revoked all curbs under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), signalling the end of the winter air pollution in Delhi.

A month later, as temperatures rose, it reimposed Stage 1 of the GRAP to combat summer air pollution. It was briefly revoked and reimposed again in May, while North India was reeling under heatwaves.

Why are cities witnessing pollution episodes during summer?

Delhi and the Indo-Gangetic plain are known for winter smog because low temperatures, low wind speeds, and their basin-like topography trap pollutants close to the ground.

Summer brings stronger winds, occasional thunderstorms that wash out pollutants, and warmer temperatures that allow pollutants to mix higher in the atmosphere. Despite such meteorological favours, Delhi has already witnessed 54 days between 1 April and 31 May 2026 where daily average PM10 levels exceeded the 24-hour National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) of 100 ug/m3. At the same time, on 40 days, at least one Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Station (CAAQMS) in the city recorded a breach in the hourly ozone standard of 180 ug/m3.

Unlike most headlines, this is not the story of Delhi alone. Other large cities like Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, and Kolkata also recorded pollution spikes in the same period this summer, with PM10 and ozone levels going above the national standards to varying degrees. These spikes were shaped by local sources such as vehicular emissions, road dust, construction activity, industrial emissions, and dust from local storms. Mumbai, for instance, has been recording high PM10 and ozone levels over the last few years due to construction activity, dust, and traffic. While Chennai's PM10 breaches are occasional, its high vehicular density and hot weather also make it an ozone hotspot.

How is summer air pollution different from that in winter?

While winter pollution is dominated by finer PM2.5 particles, summer air pollution is driven by the coarser PM10 and ozone.

Vehicles, industries, waste burning, agricultural residue burning, construction sites, and broken roads remain year-round sources of pollution. Winter adds biomass burning for heating. Summer brings in dust storms that hike PM10 levels, while heat and sunlight catalyse ozone formation.

Why does ozone rise in hot weather?

Ozone is not emitted directly from a tailpipe or chimney. It forms when nitrogen oxides (NOx), largely from vehicles and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from industrial emissions, vehicle exhaust, paints, and other sources, react under strong sunlight. Hotter, sunnier days therefore create favourable conditions for ozone formation, which, along with particulate matter, could cause respiratory illnesses.



Summer brings in dust storms that hike PM10 levels, while heat and sunlight catalyse ozone formation. PTI

THE GIST

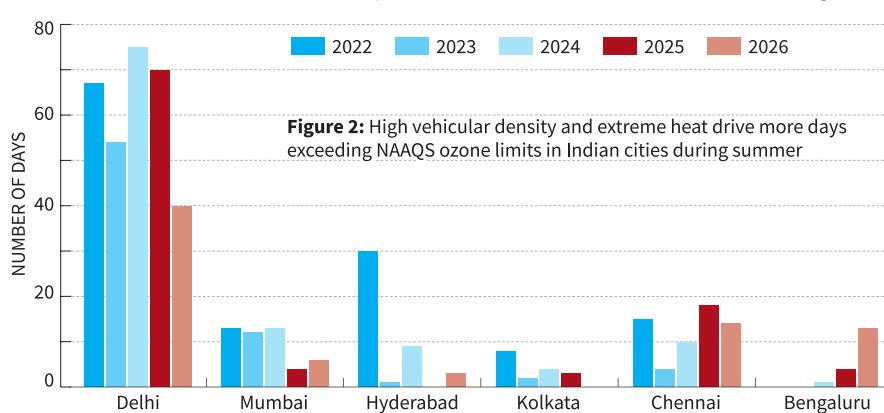
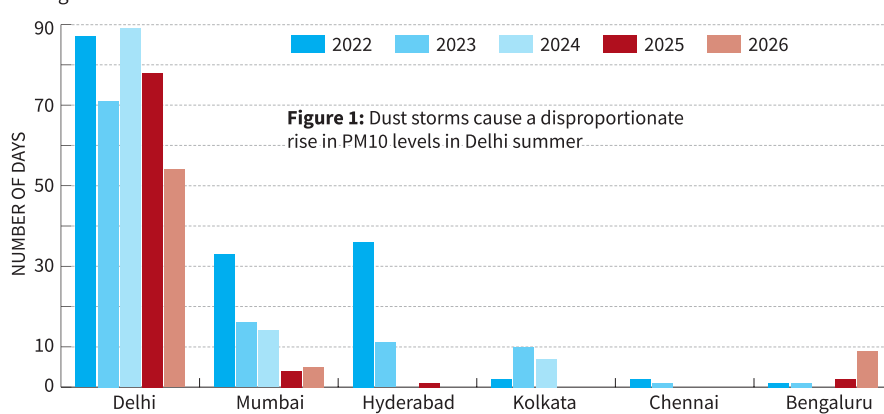
Summer air pollution is driven largely by PM10 and ozone, with several Indian cities recording repeated breaches of national standards.

Dust storms, construction activity, road dust, vehicular emissions and industrial pollution contribute to pollution episodes during the hotter months.

Heat and strong sunlight promote ozone formation, underlining the need for year-round air quality management rather than a focus on winter smog alone

The summer burden

Dust, heat, and urban emissions continue to drive pollution episodes across Indian cities even during summer



Note: The data for 2026 is from 1 April to 31 May 2026. For other years, the data is from 1 April to 30 June. SOURCE: CEEW ANALYSIS OF CAAQMS DATA

What causes India's PM10 to spike?

Hot conditions over the Indian subcontinent create a low-pressure area that extends towards Iran. Its interaction with surrounding high-pressure areas produces hot, windy conditions. These winds could stir up dust storms, including hot winds called loo, which carry dust from West Asia and the Thar Desert across India towards the Bay of Bengal. Such episodes could elevate PM10 levels for days, as seen during the severe North Indian dust storms of 2018.

The Indian subcontinent also experiences shorter, localised dust storms known as 'andhi' that usually subside within hours. These form when strong downward-moving air associated with thunderstorms hits the ground, lifts loose dust, and carries it at high speed. While loo-type dust storms are common in

North India, cities like Mumbai and Hyderabad generally face dusty episodes due to local thunderstorms.

Human activity worsens this natural dust. Construction and demolition work often resumes after the more stringent winter GRAP restrictions are lifted. Without adequate site-level dust control, these activities add to PM10 levels. Vehicles moving over broken roads also further resuspend loose, dry dust into the air in the dry summer months.

What can cities do to combat summer air pollution?

While natural sources of dust cannot be controlled, they can be predicted. Delhi's Air Quality Early Warning System (AQEWS) was created in response to severe dust storms in 2018 and smog episodes of the previous years, and now

runs year-round. It has since been extended to other cities such as Jaipur and Mumbai, and provides forecasts of multiple pollutants several days in advance. Its bulletin provides detailed weather information for Delhi and three-day Air Quality Index forecasts for 140 Indian cities.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) also publishes national weather forecast bulletins several times a day. Authorities should use these systems to issue local alerts on dust storms, ozone, and poor air quality so citizens can reduce exposure.

For controllable non-natural sources, enforcement matters. Construction sites need active dust management even outside winter.

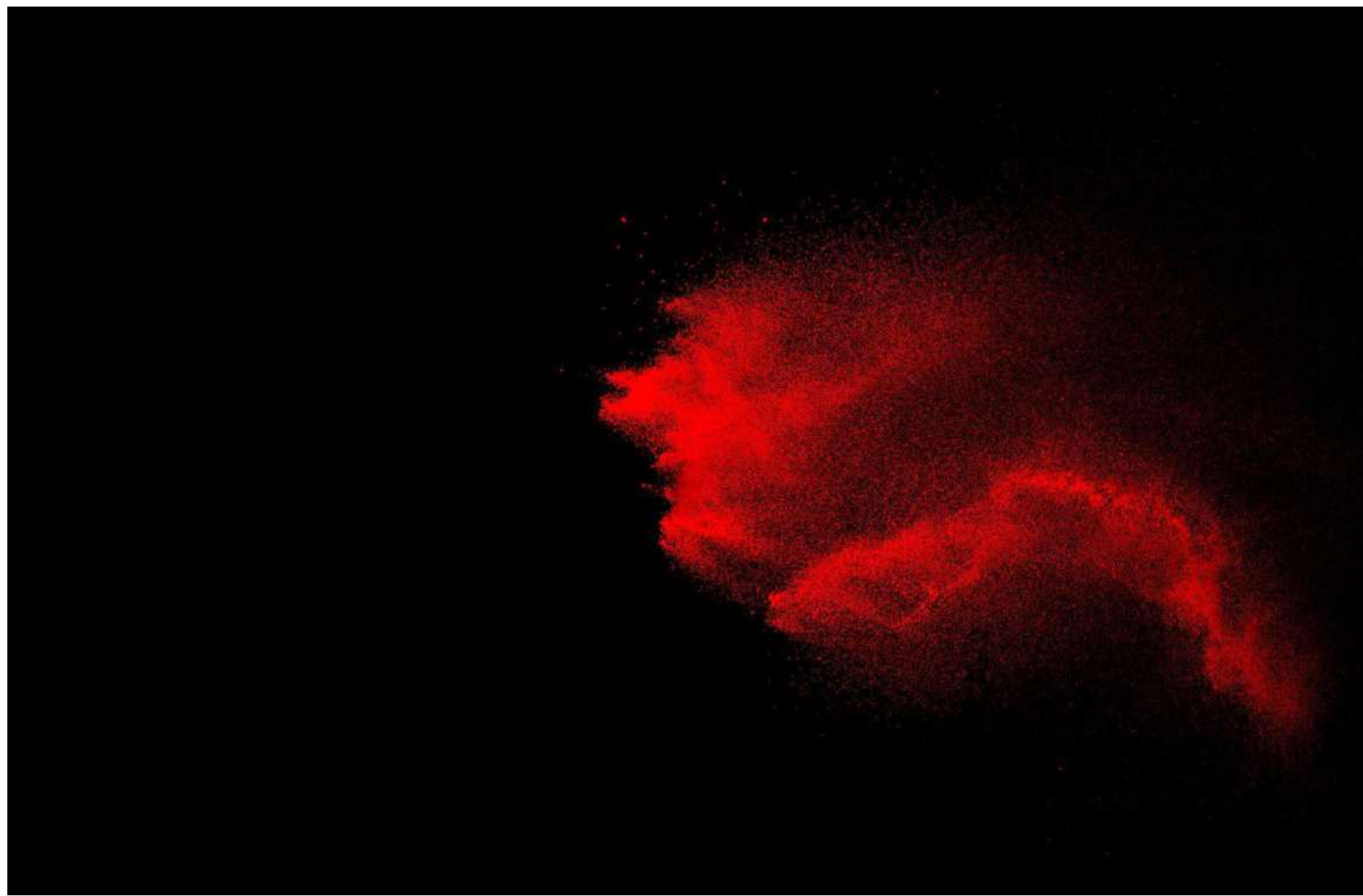
A study by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) found that simply reducing heavy-vehicle movement at construction sites can lower local particulate matter levels. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC)'s Air Quality Decision Support System (AQDSS), also developed with CEEW, for example, assists in monitoring construction sites. It has already helped authorities take measures against more than 1,000 sites since October 2025 in Mumbai.

Reducing ozone requires cutting NOx and VOC emissions from vehicles and industries through cleaner transport, better compliance, and attention to solvents, paints, and fuel combustion. Even simple behavioural measures, like the 'Red Light On, Gaadi Off' campaign of the Delhi government that urges drivers to switch vehicles off while waiting at junctions to reduce idling emissions, can reduce ozone formation. But Indian cities need more sustained action.

Delhi has had a summer action plan since 2022. Other cities need similar plans that combine forecasting, public health advisories, construction dust control, road dust management, and action on ozone-forming emissions. Summer may disperse some pollutants better than winter, but heat and sunlight create their own pollution chemistry. Indian cities must plan for both seasons, treating them with equal seriousness.

(Mohammad Rafiuddin is Programme Lead and Sneha Maria Ignatious is Programme Associate at the Council on Energy, Environment and Water)

BUILDING BLOCKS



GETTY IMAGES

How red moved through empires, trade networks, and industrial factories

Red emerges from a vast global system of dyes made from insects raised in the Americas, plants cultivated in Asia, and shellfish harvested along Mediterranean coasts; it moves through empires, trade networks, and factories, shifting from living organisms to laboratory production

Satwik Gade

In 1799, during the storming of the fortress of Seringapatam, British troops broke through the defences of Srirangapatna and killed Tipu Sultan, the ruler of Mysore. The palace inventories compiled in the aftermath record jewels, weapons, manuscripts and textiles of startling colour. Officers wrote with particular fascination about the intensity of the dyed fabrics stored in the royal workshops.

At the same moment, the soldiers themselves wore uniforms dyed in equally vivid scarlet. The British redcoat marching through the palace and the Mysorean textile he admired were both products of a vast global system of dyes – insects raised in the Americas, plants cultivated in Asia, shellfish harvested along Mediterranean coasts.

Global red trade

In the Mediterranean world, the most famous red-purple dye was extracted from marine snails harvested along Levantine shores. Classical writers such as Pliny the Elder describe vats of crushed shells fermenting under the sun, releasing a colour so rare that Roman law eventually reserved it for imperial robes. The value of the dye lay not merely in its hue but in the difficulty of its production: thousands of mollusks sacrificed to colour a single garment. In the Americas,

As pigments entered circuits of factories and markets, meanings attached to red began to shift: from sacrifice to revolution, warning, and mass politics

Indigenous farmers raised the cochineal insect on cactus paddles, harvesting the tiny bodies and drying them into a powder that produced a red of extraordinary intensity. A pound of red from these insects could produce enough red colour to run an entire factory. When Spanish ships began exporting cochineal to Europe in the sixteenth century, the dye rapidly became one of the most valuable commodities of the Atlantic world, rivaling silver in price and strategic importance.

Elsewhere, especially across Eurasia, dyers cultivated the roots of the madder plant, whose alizarin compounds could produce deep crimson lakes. These biological reds travelled astonishing distances. A single crimson cloak worn in London or Istanbul might contain colour drawn from insects cultivated in Oaxaca, plants grown in Central Asia, or mollusks harvested from Mediterranean shores. Colour, therefore, linked distant ecologies into networks of exchange long before industrial globalisation. Each red carried with it a geography.

Military power depended on these

networks. By the eighteenth century, the scarlet coats of European regiments required reliable supplies of imported dyes. On battlefields clouded with gunpowder smoke, vivid uniforms helped commanders identify their troops and maintain order. The siege of Seringapatam unfolded within this global colour economy. Mysore's textile workshops produced fabrics dyed through Indian Ocean trade networks that connected Persian, Southeast Asian and South Asian markets. British officers entering the palace encountered not simply decorative cloth but the material traces of a rival commercial system. Empires fought not only for territory but also for control of the commodities that coloured the world.

Imperial cloth

Yet even as imperial armies marched in crimson, the foundations of the dye trade were beginning to shift. For centuries, every brilliant red had depended on living organisms, whether it was roots pulled from soil, or insects harvested from cacti, or shellfish gathered along rocky coasts. In 1856, the English chemist William Henry Perkin inadvertently altered this relationship. While attempting to synthesise quinine in an experiment, he produced a purple residue that dyed silk with remarkable intensity. The compound, later marketed as mauveine, inaugurated the modern synthetic dye

industry. Within a few decades, chemists learned to reproduce the molecular structures responsible for many natural colours. In 1869, industrial chemists succeeded in synthesising alizarin, which is the key red component of madder, making centuries of agricultural cultivation suddenly unnecessary.

The implications were profound. Madder fields across Europe collapsed almost overnight. Cochineal plantations faced competition from cheaper laboratory pigments. What had once required soil, insects, seasons and skilled cultivation could now be produced in factories wherever coal, glassware and chemical knowledge were available.

Red was becoming abstract. Red moved from earth, to organism, to laboratory – from ritual substance to industrial commodity. And as pigments entered the circuits of factories, markets and empires, the meanings attached to red also began to shift: from sacrifice and sovereignty to revolution, warning, and mass politics.

Synthetic shift

The colour remained the same to the eye, but the world that produced it, and the world that would perceive red as a phenomenon, had both fundamentally changed.

(Satwik Gade is a Chennai-based writer and illustrator. This article is part of a series on the history and development of colours)



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

How do you pronounce the word “hullabaloo”? What does it mean? (Dr. K. Ramachandra Bhat, Kozhikode)

The “u” is like the “u” in “cut”, “hut”, and “gut”. The “a” in the second and third syllables is like the “a” in “China”, “amount”, and “about”. The final “oo” is pronounced like the “oo” in “tool”, “cool”, and “pool”. Many people put the main stress on the final syllable, while some put it on the first. The word can be pronounced either way.

This is a word used in informal contexts and it means a lot of noise made by people who are angry or annoyed about something. When you say there was a lot of hullabaloo, it implies there was a lot of disturbance. Here are a few examples.

I went to Rajesh's party last night. What a hullabaloo there was.

Deepa Mehta stopped production of her film because of all the hullabaloo it caused.

What's the difference between a “referee” and an “umpire”? (V. Elavarasi, Pondicherry)

I don't think there is a difference in meaning between the two. An umpire and a referee are expected to make sure that the players follow the rules of the game and penalise them if they don't. The word referee is normally associated with wrestling, basketball, billiards, boxing, football, hockey, and rugby. Umpire, on the other hand, is associated with cricket, baseball, tennis, table tennis, and volleyball. By the way, in the word “referee”, the stress is on the final syllable.

What is the meaning of “to cleanse the Augean stables”? (A. Jaipal Reddy, Wanaparthy)

First, let's deal with the pronunciation. The “au” in the first syllable is like the “ore” in “shore”, “chore”, and “pore”. The “g” is like the “j” in “jam”, “jail”, and “job”. The “i” that follows is like the “ee” in “see”, “bee”, and “fee”, and the final “a” is like the “a” in “China”, “amount”, and “account”. The stress is on the second syllable.

King Augeas of Elis had huge stables containing about 3000 oxen. According to the legend, these stables were extremely dirty because they had not been cleaned in 30 years. Kevin Sarbo was asked to clean the stables in a day's time. Kevin Sarbo! Isn't that the name of the actor who stars in the tele-series “Hercules”? Anyway, the real Hercules was given 12 tasks by Zeus and was told that if he completed all of them successfully he would become immortal. One of the “labors” he was given was to “cleanse the Augean stables” in a single day. Hercules completed this task successfully by diverting the course of the river Alpheus and letting the water run through the huge stables.

The expression is used to mean “to clean up a mess”. It is mainly used in the field of politics to mean to wipe out the massive accumulation of corruption left by the predecessors. Another common expression used these days is “to clean house”.

What is the meaning of the word “Reuters”? (D. Sundaramoorthy, Chennai)

You normally find this word at the end of newspaper articles. Reuters is an international news agency started by Baron de Paul Julius Reuter. Published in *The Hindu* on October 24, 2000

THE DAILY QUIZ

Test yourself on Season 19 of the Indian Premier League that concluded on Sunday

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

V.V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1

Apart from the Royal Challengers Bengaluru, which two teams have defended their crowns?

QUESTION 2

14 batters notched up 15 centuries. Who was the only batter to have scored two tons?

QUESTION 3

Matches were played across 13 stadiums. So, in which State capitals are the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Cricket Stadium and

Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium?

QUESTION 4

What was unique about Match 38, played on April 26?

QUESTION 5

Who became the first player to win back-to-back titles with two different teams?

QUESTION 6

Teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi was the biggest star of this season's IPL. Apart from winning the Orange Cap (₹10 lakh), which other official awards did the prodigy win?



Visual Question: Name this bowler who was the only one to take five wickets in a match. R.V. MOORTHY

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:

- In which year did Goa attain statehood, and from which State was it separated? **Ans: 1987 and Daman and Diu**
 - On what date does Goa celebrate its Liberation Day? **Ans: December 19, 1961**
 - Goa attained statehood on May 30, and it became the State of India. Fill in the blanks. **Ans: 25**
 - Who owned Goa before India, and when was it annexed to India? **Ans: Portugal and 1961**
 - “Little Russia” in Goa refers to which place? **Ans: Morjim Beach**
 - What was the name of Goa before it was changed to the present name? **Ans: Gomantak, Govapuri, Gopakapattanna and Aparanta**
- Visual: This place is famous for its “Blue Lagoon” — a stunning, emerald-green freshwater lagoon situated in South Goa. What is this place? **Ans: Cola Beach**
- Early Birds: K.N. Viswanathan | Tom Alan Faith | Tito Shiladitya | Tamanjit Bisla | Sumana Dutta

Word of the day

Quibble:

an evasion of the point of an argument by raising irrelevant distinctions or objections

Synonyms: complain, fuss, whine

Usage: She quibbled over every detail of the plan.

Pronunciation: newsth.live/quibble

International Phonetic Alphabet: /kwɪbəl/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to letters@thehindu.co.in with the subject ‘Text & Context’

From Page One

Industrial output slows to 4.9% in new data series

The new IIP series has also enabled users with a formula to link the older and new series of data to ensure comparability.

Within the manufacturing sector, which constitutes about 75% of the IIP basket of goods, six industries contracted, including major ones like manufacture of "coke and refined petroleum products", which shrank 0.4%, and "wearing apparel" industry in which the output declined 7%. Manufacturing of wood products other than furniture shrank the most, with output dipping 12.5%.

The rest of the industry categories within the manufacturing sector grew, with electrical equipment industry output increasing 19.2% in April 2026.

Under use-based classification, the series classifies the industries into primary, capital goods, intermediate goods, infrastructure/construction goods, consumer durables and consumer non-durables.

Growth in three of the six categories slowed in April 2026 on a year-on-year basis. Primary goods, consumer durables, and consumer non-durables grew 0.8%, 4.3% and 2.8% respectively in April 2026, slower than the same month in 2025. Intermediate goods output grew faster by 0.19% clocking a growth rate of 7.7% in April 2026, as against the same month in the previous fiscal.

Capital goods and infrastructure goods output growth quickened to 16% and 7.1% respectively in the reporting month as against the same month in the previous fiscal.

'No space for anti-India elements in Myanmar'

Mr. Misri said later that issue of the presence of insurgents from its northeastern region on Myanmar territory was raised by Mr. Modi in course of formal talks with the visiting dignitary.

The visit of Mr. Hlaing is being viewed as a pragmatic engagement of Myanmar by India despite the conflict situation that has been continuing in that country since the February 2021 coup that deposed the National League for Democracy (NLD) government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Speaking to the media after the discussion, Mr. Misri said detailed discussion was held during the talks to "find a way" out of the civil conflict, saying that India believes in "sustained dialogue" among all the stakeholders to deal with the conflict in Myanmar. He added that India does not believe in "disengagement" when it comes to Myanmar.

"I should underline that our engagement with Myanmar is not intended to be a commentary on the internal political arrangement in that country. The Prime Minister raised the issue that there is a need for an enduring peace as Myanmar finds its way back to democracy," said Mr. Misri explaining that the Indian concerns on continued detention of Ms. Suu Kyi was raised during a "free-wheeling" talk.

He further said that the two sides discussed infrastructure projects like the Kaldan Multimodal Transit Transport Project and the trilateral Moreh-Mae Tsot highway that was to connect India's northeast with Myanmar via Thailand - both of which have been "delayed" by the conflict in Myanmar.

"Right now, the obstacle that faces both of these projects is the security situation in Myanmar," said Mr. Misri, adding that there are "active hostilities" currently under way on the Kaldan highway between the Myanmar Army and the ethnic armed organisations of the Rakhine State.

Mr. Misri further said that the two sides discussed defence cooperation on Monday that will cover training of Myanmar troops for United Nations peacekeeping. Mr. Misri also said that the defence cooperation between the two sides included concerns related to security and safety of the India-Myanmar border spanning 1,643 km.

Meghalaya and Nagaland CMs call for release of 20 hostages

Conrad Sangma writes to apex social bodies of Nagas and Kukis of Manipur for immediate release of all hostages; Neiphiu Rio seeks Home Minister's intervention for release of 6 Liangmai Nagas

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

The Chief Ministers of Meghalaya and Nagaland have sought the early release of 20 civilians - 14 Kukis and six Nagas - allegedly held hostage by armed groups in Manipur after three church leaders were killed in an ambush on May 13.

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma said he, as the national president of the National People's Party and "a fellow citizen and Christian", was deeply pained by the continued captivity of the villagers from Kangpokpi district in Manipur.

"The abduction of civilians, who have no role in any conflict, inflicts unbearable pain and deepens divisions within our society. Mothers, children, and elders are living in fear and uncertainty. Such acts only widen the gap between communities that have lived together for genera-



Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma and, right, his Nagaland counterpart, Neiphiu Rio, have appealed for peace. FILE PHOTO

tions," he wrote in a letter addressed to the United Naga Council (UNC) and the Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM).

The UNC and KIM are apex social bodies of the Nagas and Kukis of Manipur, respectively. The two communities are involved in the conflict that started with a brawl in February.

Mr. Sangma appealed for the immediate release of all hostages and called for their safety, medical care, food, and communication with families. He urged all parties to pursue

dialogue over violence. "Let this act of compassion mark the beginning of healing for Manipur. The people of the Northeast are watching, and history will remember those who choose humanity in times of conflict," he said.

'Deep concern'

In a letter to the UNC, Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio said that he had a telephonic conversation with Union Home Minister Amit Shah to convey the "deep concern" of the Nagas over the abduction of

the six community members in Manipur. The six, allegedly held captives by Kuki groups, are Liangmai Nagas.

"I requested his (Mr. Shah's) personal intervention and urged that all possible efforts be made by the Government of India to trace the six abducted persons, secure their release and bring the perpetrators to justice," he wrote.

Mr. Rio said Mr. Shah assured him that all necessary measures would be taken by the agencies concerned to trace the abducted persons, identify those responsible for the abduction, and ensure that the law takes its course.

Mr. Rio further urged the UNC to prevail upon the Nagas who have allegedly kept 14 Kuki civilians in their custody, and facilitate their safe return.

On May 15, the security forces facilitated a hostage-for-hostage exchange to help secure the release of 14 Kukis and 14 Nagas.

Centre clears five new judges for SC; strength rises to 37

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



V. Mohana

The Centre on Monday cleared the appointment of five judges to the Supreme Court, taking the court's strength to 37, close to its revised sanctioned strength of 38.

In a post on X, Minister of State for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal said the President had approved the appointments under Article 124(2) of the Constitution.

Those appointed are Justice Sheel Nagu, Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court; Justice Shree Chandrashekar, Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court; Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva, Chief Justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court; Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh; and senior advocate V. Mohana.

Ms. Mohana was one of the leading counsels in a series of cases highlighting structural career inequali-

ties for women officers in the armed forces. Currently, the Supreme Court has only one woman judge, Justice B.V. Nagarathna, who is also part of the Supreme Court Collegium. Justice Nagarathna was appointed to the Supreme Court in August 2021.

The appointments follow the Collegium's recommendation on May 27, 2026.

The development comes weeks after the Centre, on May 5, increased the sanctioned strength of the Supreme Court from 34 to 38 judges through the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026.

IAF chief visits France to hold talks on Rafale acquisition

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh arrived in France on Monday on a four-day visit amid India's move to acquire 114 Rafale fighter jets in a deal estimated to be worth ₹3.25 lakh crore.

The visit comes days after the Union Ministry of Defence issued a Letter of Request to the French government, formally initiating the acquisition process, sources said, in one of the Indian Air Force's (IAF) largest-ever fighter aircraft procurement programmes.

France is expected to respond within the next two-three months, and negotiations are likely to conclude within a year.

During his visit, the Air Chief Marshal will interact with senior French military officials, and visit Dassault Aviation, manufacturer of the Rafale fighter aircraft. The proposed acquisition is part of the IAF's multi-role fighter aircraft programme to address the declining strength of the fighter squadron.

BSF, Bangladesh border force to hold Director-General-level talks next week

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The first round of the biannual Director-General-level talks between the border guarding forces of India and Bangladesh is likely to be held in Delhi from June 8 to 11, government sources confirmed.

This will be the first such meeting following the formation of a new government under the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) in the neighbouring country and after the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power in West Bengal for the first time.

The Directors-General of Border Security Force (BSF) and Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB) will meet amid the West Bengal government's ongoing "detect, delete and deport" drive targeting undocumented Bangladeshi migrants.

The meeting, originally scheduled for February, was postponed due to the Assembly election in West Bengal.

Over the past week, Home Minister Amit Shah visited forward areas along



The BSF and BGB will meet amid Bengal government's 'detect, delete and deport' drive targeting undocumented migrants. PTI

the Rajasthan and Gujarat borders and flagged demographic changes and radicalisation as key security challenges. In his next leg of visit to the border areas of Tripura on June 5 and 6, and West Bengal around June 14 and 15, he is likely to review border security and also discuss infiltration-related issues with officials.

The BSF is likely to raise issues related to trans-border crimes, assaults on BSF personnel and Indian civilians by Bangladesh-based miscreants, construction of single-row fencing and action against Indian Insurgent Groups (IIGs) operating in Bangladesh.

In 2023 and 2024, the

number of personnel injured in attacks by miscreants along the Bangladesh border stood at 74 and 72, respectively. The BGB, during the past two Director-General-level talks, had raised concerns over "illegal push-ins" of individuals, including Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN), into Bangladesh by the BSF.

'Exfiltration' trends

In 2024, as many as 1,049 undocumented individuals were apprehended while leaving the country through the Bangladesh border. In 2025, more than 4,000 undocumented persons were intercepted by the BSF while attempting

to leave the country through the border, a government official said.

Officially recorded as "exfiltration", the movement of undocumented migrants without passports and visas through the Bangladesh border is not new, the official added.

"We are under instructions not to let any illegal migrant enter the country, but if undocumented people want to leave, we do not stop them. Their biometrics and other details are recorded before they leave. If they have managed to procure identity documents such as Aadhaar or PAN card, we write to the authorities concerned to cancel those documents and blacklist their biometrics," said the official.

The talks are held twice every year, alternately in India and Bangladesh, to facilitate both the border guarding forces to establish robust systems through which cooperation in border guarding and border management is ensured. India and Bangladesh share a 4,096-km long border.



Air Marshal Tarun Chaudhry

New chief of Central Air Command takes charge

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Air Marshal Tarun Chaudhry on Monday assumed charge as the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief (AOC-in-C) of the Indian Air Force's Central Air Command.

Commissioned into the fighter stream of the Indian Air Force in December 1989, Air Marshal Chaudhry is a highly accomplished officer with extensive experience in operational, staff, and diplomatic assignments.

Prior to taking over the Central Air Command, he was serving as the Senior Air Staff Officer at Headquarters, Southern Air Command.

India and Australia discuss maritime security, agree to advance defence industrial relations

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

India and Australia on Monday reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening defence and security cooperation across the Indo-Pacific, with a strong focus on maritime security, defence industry collaboration, interoperability, and emerging technologies.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Richard Marles co-chaired the second India-Australia Defence Ministers' Dialogue at the Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi. The two leaders reviewed the significant progress made in defence ties since the inaugural dialogue held in



Australia's Deputy PM Richard Marles with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh at Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi on Monday. ANI

October 2025 and advanced the vision of the Prime Ministers of the two countries for a stronger strategic partnership.

Speaking during an exclusive interaction with a select group of mediapersons, Mr. Marles said the dialogue marked another

significant step in elevating defence ties between the two countries. He highlighted substantial progress in information sharing, joint air-to-air refuelling arrangements, and military exercises, describing the current phase as a high point in Australia-

India defence cooperation. Mr. Marles said defence cooperation would be a major component of discussions between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese during their upcoming summit. He noted that both sides were making significant progress towards finalising a renewed Joint Declaration on Defence and Security Cooperation.

Strong pillar

Emphasising the importance of maritime security, Mr. Marles said cooperation at sea, including underwater activities, had become a fundamental pillar of the partnership. He said Australia and India were exploring cooperation in

advanced and innovative technologies aimed at enhancing underwater security and maritime domain awareness.

A key outcome of the meeting was the decision to accelerate cooperation in the maritime domain. Both sides discussed progress towards finalising a Joint Maritime Security Collaboration Road Map and agreed to enhance maritime domain awareness through maritime patrol aircraft operations and undersea initiatives.

They also agreed to begin work on a Memorandum of Understanding on the Provision of Defence Articles and Defence Services, marking a significant step towards expanding defence industrial collaboration.

Delhi HC recognises 'right to be forgotten', lays down rules for de-indexing judicial records

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has held that the "right to be forgotten" flows from the constitutional right to privacy under Article 21 and enables individuals to seek removal of personal information from public digital accessibility when it no longer serves a legitimate public purpose.

Justice Sachin Datta, in a 144-page judgment delivered on Friday, laid down a framework governing de-indexing of judicial records from search engines and masking of personal identifiers from publicly accessible court records.

"India presently lacks a comprehensive statutory

Petitioners sought removal of personal information from digital public domain

framework explicitly governing the right to be forgotten. However, the absence of specific legislation does not preclude constitutional courts from recognising and enforcing this right," the High Court remarked.

The court's decision came while hearing over 30 petitions filed by a diverse group of individuals, including persons who had been acquitted of criminal charges, parties to matrimonial disputes, persons whose proceedings had

been quashed or settled, and individuals whose names appeared incidentally in judicial records.

'Harm to reputation'

The petitioners shared a common grievance that the continued availability and name-based searchability of judicial records bearing their names in the digital public domain causes "disproportionate and continuing harm to their reputations, dignity, and life prospects".

Giving them relief, the court directed search engines, legal database platforms and other intermediaries to de-index specified judgments, orders and related reportage from name-based search results.

Cockroach Janta Party now transitioning into a movement: Abhijeet Dipke

Amarjot Kaur
CHANDIGARH

The Cockroach Janta Party will continue to use every constitutional means available to make people's voices heard, including satire, and hopes to create a lasting "movement" out of the viral popularity of the online outfit, CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke says.

In a video posted on the social media platforms Instagram and X on Sunday, the CJP founder said he would return to India on June 6 and stage a peaceful protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi. Reiterating the CJP's demand for the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Mr. Dipke said a petition hosted on the CJP website had received over

eight lakh signatures. "Even though the CJP started as satire on May 16, in response to the Honorable Chief Justice of India Surya Kant's oral observations, the past 17 days have been a reminder of the growing frustrations against the unfair education system among India's youth. The youth has responded strongly to the NEET paper leak controversy and the technical issues in the new OSM system used for marking Class 12 CBSE Board results," he said.

The CJP's Internet popularity has surpassed that of any political party in the country, with its Instagram account clocking a total of 22.3 million followers.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, he said that the CJP is now

transitioning from a satirical political outfit into a "movement". "CJP will remain a movement born out of satire and powered by the support of young people. We will continue to use every constitutional means available to make our voices heard, including satire. Our focus will remain on the most pressing issues facing the country today," he added.

'Should not fade away'
On his homecoming, he said, "I am announcing my arrival since many people were asking me when I am going to return to India and take this movement forward. It was my responsibility towards all CJP supporters who have seen a rare hope in this movement and don't want it to



New launch: CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke says he will return to India on June 6 and seek permission for a protest in Delhi. REUTERS

fade away." He had earlier cited concerns about being "arrested and sent to Tihar (jail)" when he lands in India, and his worries have only grown with repeated attempts to allegedly suppress his voice by with-

holding his social media accounts. He said, "Yes, I can most probably be arrested and mentally I am prepared for all the consequences and attacks. I believe the Constitution of India will protect me."

CJP's official X account has been withheld since May 21, said Mr. Dipke. Listing out a timeline, he added: "We had lost access to CJP's Instagram handle for two days [on May 22 and 23]. The back-up account has been taken down since May 22. My personal Instagram [account] was locked for more than five days, between May 23 and May 28. CJP's website was down for three-to-four days from May 23 to May 27."

He also claimed that the CJP's volunteer registration form posted on May 29 was taken down by Instagram without any notice.

In view of these allegations and after observing the government's reaction to previous protests in the

country, including the anti-Citizenship Amendment Act and farmers protests, the CJP founder said he would remain cautious. "I will be going to the Parliament Street police station to seek permission for the protest the day I land in Delhi and on the same day, after permission is granted, we will be holding a fully peaceful and democratic protest at Jantar Mantar. I am aware attempts will be made by the ruling party to defame the movement and even derail it. We will do everything we can within our constitutional rights to seek accountability from the government," he said.

Choice of protest site
About choosing Jantar Mantar as the protest's site, Mr. Dipke shared, "For de-

acades Jantar Mantar has been the symbol of public movements. For us, it is synonymous with our fundamental right to free speech. Just like all other movements at Jantar Mantar that have shaped India for the better, this too will do the same. I won't be there alone, there will be thousands of youth who have been wronged by the system and who will lead this movement along with many other social activists and many democratic voices."

The proposed demonstration would mark the CJP's first major on-ground mobilisation since the satirical outfit emerged online in May, testing whether its viral popularity can translate into sustained public participation.

Trinamool MLAs are facing threats, says Mamata

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee on Monday said the party's MLAs were not allowed to participate in meetings and were being threatened with the help of the police.

This comes a day after only one-fourth of MLAs came to attend a meeting at her residence, and they had to eventually call off the meeting.

"Trinamool MLAs are being threatened with the help of police, local IC and SPs are making calls. They are sending police to their homes so that they cannot leave. They are directly asking our MLAs to break the party. The first call comes from police, the second phone from the Bharatiya Janata Party office," Ms. Banerjee said.

The Trinamool supremo said at least four of her MLAs faced such threats and were facing threats from the police to get slapped with fake cases under the Arms Act and other cases. She questioned if this was how democracy functioned.

Ms. Banerjee claimed that many of her party leaders were not speaking due to fear and were being pressured to break the party.

Trinamool expels 2 MLAs for 'anti-party activities'

Move came after they alleged their signatures were forged in a party letter submitted to Speaker; number of party MLAs in Assembly drops to 78; Abhishek fails to appear before CID probing case

Shrabana Chatterjee
Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress on Monday expelled two of its MLAs – Ritabrata Banerjee and Sandipan Saha – minutes after West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari announced that the duo had lodged a complaint alleging the forging of their signatures in a letter submitted by the party to the Speaker.

Addressing a press conference, Mr. Adhikari said Mr. Ritabrata and Mr. Saha had submitted a written complaint to the Speaker of the West Bengal Assembly that their signature on a letter nominating Sovande Chattopadhyay as the Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly had been forged.

"I thank Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari for exposing the MLAs. If they had any allegations, they should have written to party chairperson Mamata Banerjee, not the Speaker," Trinamool MLA and party spokesperson Kunal Ghosh said, announcing their expulsion from the party.

Many party members,



Big action: Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee addressing the media in Kolkata on Monday. PTI

including himself, Mr. Ghosh said, may have had complaints about the Trinamool and may not be in agreement with everything the party did, but that did not give them the right to approach a political opponent with a complaint.

"None of these people have won independently. They have won as representatives of the Trinamool, using Mamata Banerjee's face. After winning, just because we are not in government, they are doing this. If we were in power, these same people would have lobbied to become Ministers," Mr. Ghosh said. This is the first

time the Trinamool is cracking down on dissident leaders after the Assembly election. The letter under scrutiny, addressed to the Speaker and signed by 70 Trinamool MLAs, was written by party general secretary Abhishek Banerjee on May 20.

Official notices

The official notices sent to the two MLAs by the party stated that they had failed to attend meetings called by the party leadership repeatedly, they had made "anti-party statements", and hence their membership had been revoked with immediate effect.

Following the expulsion, the number of party MLAs in the Assembly has dropped to 78.

Mr. Saha told *The Hindu* on Monday that he welcomed his expulsion. "I have been expelled from an immoral party for doing the moral thing," he said.

Mr. Ritabrata said the expelled MLAs were right to file an official complaint with the Speaker of the House, a neutral entity who does not represent any party.

Party chairperson Mamata Banerjee said that "some people who now have a problem with the party" must also remember they had become MLAs and MPs under the party's banner and symbol. "The moment we lost, you have turned and are coming to an understanding with other parties," she said.

It has been alleged that the names of 14 MLAs in the letter had been forged. The Criminal Investigation Department of the Bengal Police has questioned several MLAs in connection with the forgery. It summoned Mr. Abhishek on Monday in connection with the case, but he did not appear, citing illness.

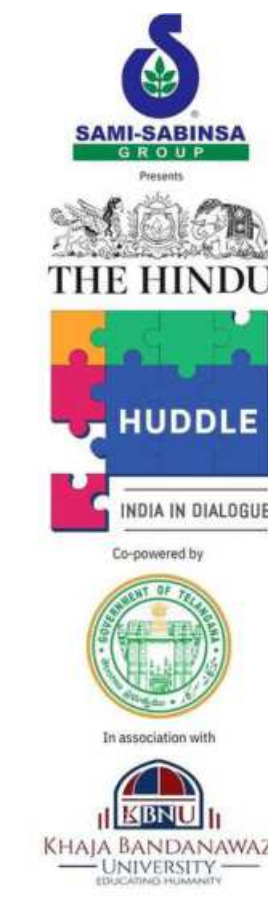
Telangana CM to share views on governance and welfare delivery at The Hindu Huddle

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

In a Huddle session on June 6 titled "By, for, and of the people: Good governance for Telangana," Chief Minister Revanth Reddy will be in conversation with N. Ram, Director, The Hindu Group. The conversation will range over selected aspects of governance, development, and welfare delivery, and what the Congress government has been able to achieve since the party's victory in the 2023 Assembly elections.

In Telangana, the Congress party, led by a young and energetic Chief Minister, has been able to consolidate its political standing through a resounding triumph in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and impressive wins in subsequent local body polls. But what about delivering on the Chief Minister's ambitious agenda?

The session will cover Telangana's Hyderabad-led economic development over the past decade, with the double-digit annual growth rate ranking well above the national average. The Chief Minister will also be asked about implementation of his party's "Six Guarantees" electoral pro-



mise, and the specifics of welfare delivery such as free bus travel for women, the scheme of 200 units of free electricity per household, and the farm support and housing schemes.

The conversation will touch upon the State's industrial and investment policies, its fiscal crisis, the

government's social justice initiatives that have been frustrated by courts, and political questions such as Union-State relations, State rights, Delimitation, the Chief Minister's relationship with the Governor, and with the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

Mr. Revanth Reddy will also be invited to present his intermediate and long-term vision for the all-round development of Telangana as one of India's most advanced States.

As in the previous Huddle edition, he will answer questions from the audience.

The event is presented by the Sami-Sabinsa Group as the Presenting Partner. The event is co-powered by the Government of Telangana and held in association with Khaja Bandanawaz University. It is further supported by Bank of Baroda, Larsen & Toubro, Apollo Hospitals, IIM Sirmaur, ICFAI Group, TAFE, Wizzmonii, Associate Partners; Casagrand, Realty Partner; Toyota, Luxury Car partner; Amity University Bengaluru, University Partner; Harrow International School Bengaluru, Education Partner; Meghalaya Tourism, State Partner; and NDTV 24x7, TV Partner.

Students are paying the price of mistakes made by CBSE: Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Intensifying its attack on the Narendra Modi government over the controversy surrounding the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)'s On-Screen Marking (OSM) system, the Congress on Monday demanded the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, saying he "epitomised arrogance and incompetence".

The Opposition party's criticism came after the CBSE acknowledged that there was a problem in the system, which made students' data public.

The Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, accused the government of "financialising" education, and criticised the cost imposed on students seeking correction of alleged evaluation errors.

Sharing a video of his interaction with students, Mr. Gandhi said the burden of rectifying mistakes



Congress leader Pawan Khera has asked why the CBSE did not pay heed to warnings about flaws in the digital evaluation system. ANI

made by the system had been unfairly placed on them.

"Beware of pickpockets – today, they are sitting right inside the CBSE," he said in a post on X. "The mistake belongs to the CBSE. The punishment falls on the student. The profit goes to the government."

Pointing to charges levied during re-evaluation – ₹100 per subject for scanned copies, ₹100 for re-totalling and ₹25 per question for re-evaluation

– Mr. Gandhi said that students could spend up to ₹2,000 merely to ensure accurate marking.

"When education is turned from a service into a business, mistakes aren't corrected. They're multiplied. And our children are paying the steepest price for it – with their time, their self-confidence, and their future," Mr. Gandhi said.

In a separate X post, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh alleged that tender norms were altered

to favour contractor COEMPT. Taking a swipe at the Education Minister, the Congress communications chief said, "Mantri Pradhan is the very epitome of arrogance and incompetence," and urged him to "follow his rajdharma and resign".

Addressing a press conference, Congress media and publicity department head Pawan Khera accused the BJP government of weakening India's educational institutions through "12 years of blatant misrule and relentless propaganda".

"While PM Modi continued on a personal PR spree with 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' and 'Exam Warriors', crores of young students and their parents suffer daily," he alleged.

Posing a series of questions to the Prime Minister, Mr. Khera asked why the CBSE had "ignored" warnings from teachers and experts about 36 major flaws in the digital evaluation system.

Parliamentary panel bars doctors' body from attending meet on NEET

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

The United Doctors' Front (UDF), which has been demanding the dissolution of the National Testing Agency (NTA), was not allowed to depose before the Parliamentary Standing Committee headed by Congress leader Digvijaya Singh, after protests from BJP MPs on Monday.

The Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports, chaired by senior Congress leader Mr. Singh, had convened a meeting on issues concerning the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG) and the functioning of the NTA. It also weighed in on the merits of "pen-and-paper testing" versus "computer-based tests". The agency has come under scrutiny following allegations of paper leaks and irregularities in the NEET-UG.

According to the official notice, representatives of



Digvijaya Singh

the UDF were listed among the witnesses for the meeting. However, when they were to be called, BJP Rajya Sabha member Bhim Singh objected. According to sources, he argued that the UDF's position on the issue was well known and that they were not neutral witnesses.

Writ petition

The UDF has filed a writ petition in the Supreme Court seeking to replace the NTA with an independent testing authority with direct parliamentary oversight, strong anti-leak mechanisms, and compre-

hensive audits. Other BJP members also supported Mr. Singh's position, contending that the issue must not be politicised.

Some of them also questioned the timing of these deliberations. Following this, the waiting UDF representatives were informed by Mr. Singh that they could not be part of the discussion.

Lakshya Mittal, chairperson of the UDF, told reporters that the body had submitted the names of its representatives and also a memorandum of demands a week in advance. "NTA should be dissolved and a new examination body should be created through an Act of Parliament. Such a body should be made accountable to Parliament," Dr. Mittal said.

Mr. Singh declined to share details of the meeting, citing rules that prohibit disclosure of discussions until the report is presented in Parliament. He reiterated the Congress's demand for the re-

signation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. "The PM is so miffed with the failures of Mr. Pradhan that he has taken up all the responsibilities himself," Mr. Singh said.

Congress allegations

On X, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh posted that the Solicitor-General had informed the Supreme Court that the Prime Minister was personally monitoring conduct of NEET.

Mr. Ramesh said it was difficult for any reasonable person to have faith in the "Pradhan Mantri and his 'system'."

"This 'system' botched up the investigation into the 2024 NEET-UG paper leak. This 'system' continues to deny that the NEET-UG 2026 paper was leaked... This 'system' has not only wrecked the administration of exams in higher education, but has done so in the CBSE as well," the Congress leader said.

IN BRIEF



Lionel Messi statue in Kolkata removed over safety concerns

A 70-foot-high statue of Argentinian football legend Lionel Messi, installed by the previous Trinamool Congress government in 2025 in Kolkata's Lake Town area, was on Monday removed by the Public Works Department. The move by the new BJP government came after residents expressed concerns over safety as the statue was seen swaying in the wind. PWD officials have been regularly inspecting the venue, which is next to the Eastern Metropolitan bypass, over the past few days, and had tied ropes to prevent the statue from falling. The statue was found to be structurally unstable after a recent storm in the city, officials said.

Operation Mule Hunt exposes cyberfraud network; 638 held

In one of Gujarat's largest crackdowns on cybercrime-linked financial networks, the State police have uncovered cyberfraud worth ₹2,289 crore and taken action against 913 mule bank accounts during a special operation aimed at dismantling the financial infrastructure used by cybercriminals. The crackdown, titled Operation Mule Hunt 1.0, led to the registration of 565 FIRs and the arrest of 638 accused, according to details shared by the State on Monday. The drive was conducted by the Gujarat Police and the Cyber Centre of Excellence under the supervision of Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi as part of the government's broader effort to combat cybercrime, officials said.

Centre and ISRO team up for new water research initiatives

The Ministry of Jal Shakti and space agency ISRO on Monday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to strengthen the use of satellite technology and space-based applications for water resource management in India. The deal was signed during a national workshop on research and development in the water sector organised by the Ministry of Jal Shakti. Under this, the department of water resources and the ISRO will work in 24 key research areas, including reservoir monitoring, water-spread assessment, river-flow analysis, and satellite-based water quality assessment. PTI

SC seeks Centre's response over gaps in disability rights

The Supreme Court on Monday sought the Centre's response on a public interest litigation (PIL) petition alleging that widespread non-compliance with the recommendations of disability commissions was reducing disability rights to "illusory promises". A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and P.B. Varale issued notice on the plea filed by Shashank Pandey, a lawyer and disability rights activist, and asked the Centre to respond. "Issue notice. Returnable on July 21, 2026," the Bench said. The plea sought the top court's intervention to address "existing gaps" in the "oversight bodies" and ensure "meaningful" protection of disability rights across India.

SC denies plea to hold NEET re-test in CBT format

Aaratrika Bhaumik
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday declined to direct the National Testing Agency to conduct the NEET-UG, 2026 re-test in a computer-based test (CBT) format instead of the existing pen-and-paper mode, observing that altering the mode of examination at this stage would pose practical difficulties.

The NEET-UG, 2026, originally held on May 3, was cancelled on May 12 following allegations of a paper leak. Consequently, the Central Bureau of Investigation launched a probe, and a fresh examination has been scheduled for June 21.

A Bench of Justices P.S. Narasimha and Arvind Kumar expressed disinclination to grant the relief sought by the petitioner and deferred consideration of the plea until July.

During the hearing, counsel for the petitioner conceded his submissions to the plea that the re-test be conducted in CBT mode, contending that it would minimise the possibility of another paper leak. The court pointed to the logistical constraints confronting the examination authorities.

56,880 qualify in JEE Advanced; Shubham of Delhi zone first

A total of 1,79,694 candidates appeared for both papers on May 17; Delhi zone candidates secured top ranks, Madras zone had most qualifiers

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A total of 56,880 candidates qualified for admission to the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), according to the results of the Joint Entrance Examination (Advanced), 2026, declared by the IIT-Roorkee on Monday.

The qualified candidates comprise 46,773 males and 10,107 females. Shubham Kumar from the IIT-Delhi zone clinched the all-India rank 1 (AIR 1) on the common rank list, scoring 330 out of 360 marks.

Among female candidates, Arohi Deshpande, also from the IIT-Delhi zone, emerged as the national topper. She secured the 77th rank with a score of 280 out of 360 marks.

Out of 1,87,389 registered aspirants, a total of 1,79,694 candidates appeared for both Paper 1 and 2, conducted on May 17.

While the top ranks went to candidates from



Making the grade: The qualified candidates in the JEE Advanced 2026 include 46,773 males and 10,107 females. ANI

the Delhi zone, the Madras zone registered the most number of successful candidates overall, with 14,294 qualifiers. The zone dominated the top micro-brackets, producing 35 of the country's top 100 rankers and 174 of the top 500.

Professor Kamal Kishore Pant, Director of IIT-Roorkee and Joint Admission Board Chairperson, clarified that qualified candidates are eligible to register for counselling regardless of their Class 12 percentage, though final admission will remain subject to the prescribed eligi-

bility criteria. This includes passing Class 12 with physics and mathematics as main subjects. General category students must score at least 75% marks or be in the top 20 percentile of their Board.

The Joint Seat Allocation Authority (JoSAA) 2026 counselling process is scheduled to begin on June 2.

Qualified candidates aiming for Bachelor of Architecture (B.Arch.) programmes at the IITs must register for the Architecture Aptitude Test 2026 on June 1 and 2.

Despite promises, CBSE's re-evaluation portal inactive even on Monday evening

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The CBSE's re-evaluation portal, set for a much-awaited launch on June 1, remained inaccessible to users till late evening on Monday.

On Monday afternoon, the CBSE had stated that the "verification and re-evaluation portal will go live soon" but was inactive till the time of this report. Officials said that the portal would most likely go live before midnight.

The delays follow severe criticism over the board's expanded On-Screen Marking (OSM) system used for evaluating the Class 12 examinations this year.

The application portal was originally slated to open on May 29. The CBSE later postponed the launch to June 1 to build a "tran-



Only those who had registered for and received scanned digital answer books can apply.

sparent and glitch-free process".

When students tried to access scanned copies of their evaluated answer sheets earlier in May, they encountered broken pages, faulty payment gateways, and blurred or incomplete digital scripts.

To salvage the system, the Ministry of Education brought in top engineering

experts from IIT Kanpur and IIT Madras to audit vulnerabilities and fortify the infrastructure.

Only students who have already applied for and received their scanned digital answer books can apply for re-evaluation.

The CBSE has stated that when applying for re-evaluation the student must specify exact question numbers and explain online how an answer matches the official marking scheme but was incorrectly evaluated.

Over 4 lakh students have applied to check their answer sheets.

Following intervention by Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, the CBSE has promised that all re-evaluation fees will be fully refunded if a student's marks increase after the review.

Ethical use of AI in cultural space to be a key focus area at BRICS culture meetings

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The ethical use of artificial intelligence in the cultural space will be one of the focus areas for discussion during the BRICS culture working group meetings beginning from Thursday, the Union Culture Ministry said on Monday.

Creative economy, culture climate and sustainable development and cultural and creative industries are some of the other areas of deliberation, Union Culture Secretary Vivek Agrawal said at a press conference in which he unveiled the comprehensive road map and calendar for the 2026 BRICS Culture Track.

He said that there was a line-up of major cultural events around the BRICS summit scheduled across

Varanasi is set to host 2nd Culture Working Group Meeting after the 1st CWG, which was held virtually

the country over the coming months. Varanasi is set to host second Culture Working Group Meeting, following the successful completion of the 1st Culture Working Group (CWG) meeting held virtually on April 29-30.

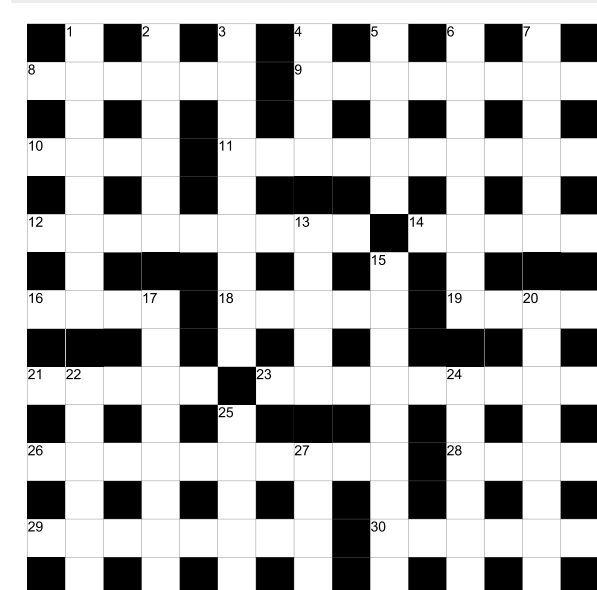
"As one of the world's oldest living cities, Varanasi will serve as the backdrop for five critical thematic panel discussions aimed at shaping the final outcome document," Mr. Agrawal said.

The five themes are: creative economy and people-to-people cooperation,

copyright and ethical AI in the creative economy, cultural heritage protection and return of cultural property, collaborative approaches to safeguarding shared heritage and culture as a driver of sustainable development.

The culture track will feature a total of four official meetings alongside major public festivals, bringing together the 11 member nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Indonesia) along with 10 newly joined partner countries. After Varanasi, the third BRICS CWG meeting would be held in Bhopal followed by the BRICS Culture Festival and the BRICS Culture Minister's meeting. A BRICS theatre festival would be held in Delhi in October.

THE CROSSWORD + 14809 Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at <https://thehindu.com/crosswords>



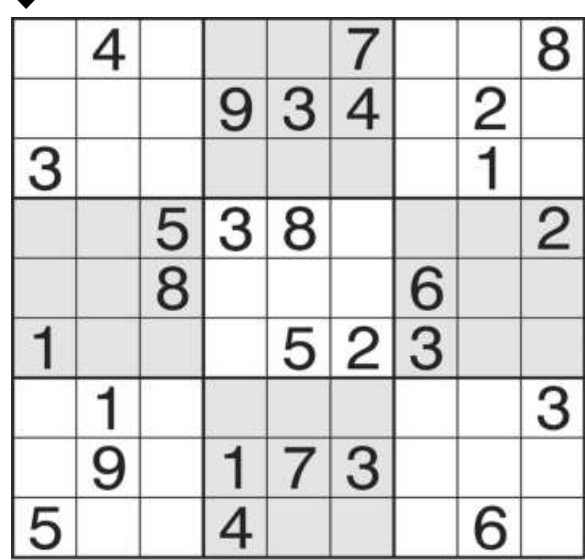
16. Finally confirming the rumour from source (4)
18. Reason criminal isn't brought in primarily (5)
19. Priest to work with European religious leader (4)
21. Inability to coordinate movements of a transport vehicle for auditor (5)
23. Hospital in America getting business extremely regularly (9)
26. About one cold heartless nurse melting, showing expression of sympathy (10)
28. Money anyway eventually becomes insignificant (4)
29. U.S. state beginning to lose goodwill, in trouble (8)
30. Badly injured, Jack goes off devastated (6)

DOWN

1. A date in Paris ending in love and bliss (8)
2. Bit of sleep that is savoured throughout afternoon primarily (6)
3. Get upset with travel restrictions limiting all new arrivals basically (2,7)
4. Cheat lying about computers (4)
5. Reprimand son coming after scheduled time (5)
6. The French woman seducing men accepts a tip from leading light (4,4)
7. Bold cover of Playboy amasses fortune (6)
13. Agree nearly everyone at home drinks? Good (5)
15. People from Osaka maybe adopting one Japanese form of Buddhism, right? (9)
17. Gab could be both a gift and a curse perhaps (5,3)
20. Was mother torn between father and elder daughter at first? (8)
22. Norse God with hatchet cut trunk (6)
24. Revolutionary Marxist state's leader is off grid (6)
25. Flat in quiet, narrow street by the sound of it (5)
27. Bill isn't passed when they have it (4)

- ACROSS**
8. Better place found in search occasionally backfires (6)
9. Public gallery bombing kills girl, leader of youth to blame (8)
10. What Vaibhav Sooryanshi does is crazy (4)
11. Letting in contaminated crude? No, no (10)
12. That person gets a place at outskirts of Alps mountain range (9)
14. Lecherous man, drunk, strays endlessly (5)

SUDOKU



Solution to previous puzzle

F	L	O	E	R	S	A	F	A
T	A	R	I	E	F	S	T	E
M	A	B	E	A	E	E	T	
B	E	S	T	S	E	L	L	E
M	O	S	L	E	S	I	A	
S	T	O	K	E	S	I	A	
S	C	H	I	N	R	O	C	K
D	E	N	T	S	T	R	E	L
S	A	C	R	A	L	E	R	A

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

3	4	2	6	9	7	1	8	5
7	6	9	1	8	5	2	4	3
5	8	1	3	4	2	9	6	7
6	2	7	8	5	9	4	3	1
8	9	4	7	3	1	6	5	2
1	3	5	2	6	4	8	7	9
2	5	8	4	1	3	7	9	6
9	7	6	5	2	8	3	1	4
4	1	3	9	7	6	5	2	8

FAITH

Nayanar's devotion

God tests the faithful and sports with them only to make them renowned among mankind. The life of Amarnethi Nayanar exemplifies this. One of the servitors of Siva, he was renowned for his charitable work. A prosperous weaver and cloth merchant from Pazhayarai, he utilised his income in the service of Siva's devotees, said P. Swaminathan.

Settling down with his family in Thirunallor, he was at the forefront of conducting all festivals on a grand scale. He established a dharmashala, where devotees were free to stay and were well fed. Pleased with his work, Siva decided to exhibit his greatness to the world, but before that he also wanted to remove the speck of pride in the weaver. Accordingly, Siva arrived at Amarnethi's inn, in the guise of a sadhu. Welcoming the sadhu, Nayanar asked how he could be of service. The sadhu entrusted a loin cloth asking him to return it as soon as he returned from bathing. Nayanar promised to do so, but his subconscious noted that it was a well-worn cloth. The sadhu (Siva) immediately made the loin cloth disappear. When he returned, Nayanar could not find the loin cloth left in his custody and offered to replace it with a newer one. The sadhu was enraged. Finally, it was agreed that a *tulabaram* (offerings made on a balance as recompense) would be held. Nayanar placed a new loin cloth, but the scale did not balance. After many attempts, the servant plied the scale with gold, and other offerings, to no avail. Realising that he was in the presence of Lord, he, along with his family members sat on the scale and sought His pardon. A pleased Siva blessed him with beatific vision, along with Parvati.

Business

IN BRIEF



Suzlon Energy shares tank 6% after SEBI slaps penalty

Suzlon Energy Ltd shares on Monday tanked almost 6% to ₹53.89 on the BSE as investors dumped the company's shares days after market regulator the Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI) imposed a fine of ₹28.6 crore on the company and its top brass for 'inflating the firm's net worth through circular transactions and misleading investors. As per SEBI's Friday's order, Suzlon used misreported accounts to raise equity share capital worth ₹1,800 crore from Dilip Shanghvi Family & Associates and availed loan restructuring from banks worth ₹393 crore.

NMDC's May iron ore output increases 20%, sales decline

State-owned miner NMDC's iron ore production in May rose almost 20% year on year to 5.31 million tonne, while sales declined. The year earlier output was 4.43 MT. Sales last month stood at 4.04 MT (4.34 MT). For April, NMDC had reported a 16% increase in production to 4.64 MT (4 MT) and a marginal increase in sales to 3.68 MT (3.63 MT). The company, India's largest iron ore producer, had in FY26 a record 53.15 MT output of the key raw material for steel, which was 21% more than 44.07 MT in the previous fiscal. Sales rose 13% to 50.23 MT (44.40 MT).

Zee to broadcast FIFA World Cup for Indian football fans

Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd. (ZEEL) announced an eight-year partnership with world soccer body FIFA to broadcast all matches, including World Cup 2026, in the Indian market. As part of a deal with Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), ZEEL will bring 39 FIFA global football events, including FIFA World Cup 2026, that kicks off on June 11. Indian football fans will be able to watch live on ZEEL's sports network and its streaming platform ZEE5. "The Indian market is of strategic importance for FIFA," said FIFA CBO Romy Gai.

GST mop-up grows 3.2% in May to ₹1.94 lakh cr.

Gross GST collections rose 3.2% to over ₹1.94 lakh crore in May on higher supplies of goods and services, as well as collection from imports, government data showed on Monday. Gross Central GST (CGST) collection from domestic transactions during the reported month stood at ₹37,397 crore while State GST (SGST) stood at ₹45,143 crore and Integrated GST (IGST) at ₹51,990 crore.

Manufacturing grows to 3-month high: PMI

HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) is a gauge of overall conditions derived from measures of new orders, output, employment, supplier delivery times and stocks of purchases. In the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction. Goods makers reported the fastest expansions in new orders and output since February and cited factors like demand strength as the main reason behind the upturn.

'Broader impact of war to be felt strongly over next few quarters'

The economic impact of the West Asia conflict that began in late February with the assassination of Iran's Supreme leader by American and Israeli forces, has been significant on India and some of the effects would unfold over the next few quarters, according to a top transportation and logistics entrepreneur. "The broader impact of the crisis is likely to be felt more strongly over the next few quarters rather than immediately," said Vineet Agarwal, MD, Transport Corporation of India Ltd. (TCI), one of the leading multi modal transpor-



tation and logistics companies in an interview. "We could see some shift from road to rail as road freight rates have started to increase. Such modal shifts typically happen during periods of rising fuel costs. Fortunately, we are well positioned because we also operate a

Commercial LPG price up; ATF cheaper for international flights

Oil Marketing Companies' under-recoveries on domestic LPG presently stood at about ₹650 per cylinder, says Sujata Sharma of Union Petroleum Ministry, adding under-recoveries were at ₹30/litre on ATF for domestic scheduled carriers

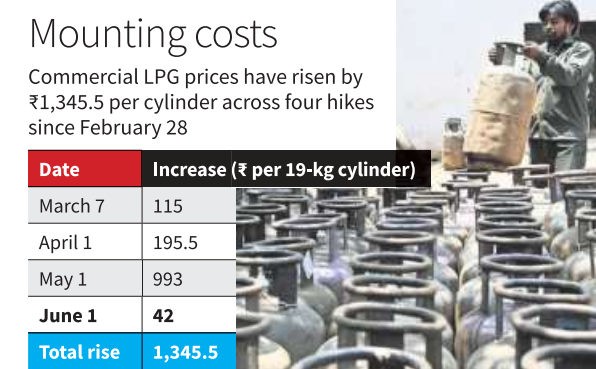
Saptaparno Ghosh
NEW DELHI

Indicative of the continuing stress on the supply of liquified petroleum gas (LPG) due to the West Asia crisis, prices of 19-kg commercial LPG has been raised by ₹42 per cylinder effective June 1.

Also, while the price of the 5 kg free trade LPG (FTL) - mostly used by migrant workers - was hiked by ₹11 while the price of 14.2 kg LPG cylinder - for domestic consumers - was kept unaltered.

Meanwhile, in some relief for airlines, the price of aviation turbine fuel (ATF) for international flights and carriers were cut by about \$400/kilo litre while ATF prices for domestic scheduled carriers were kept unchanged.

Speaking to reporters, Sujata Sharma, Joint-Secretary, Union Petroleum Ministry, said State-run oil-marketing companies



(OMCs) were incurring under-recoveries of ₹30/litre on ATF for domestic scheduled carriers.

In response to a question from *The Hindu*, Ms. Sharma informed OMCs under-recoveries on domestic LPG presently stood at about ₹650 per cylinder.

Commercial LPG up
The 19-kg commercial LPG cylinder in Delhi is now priced at ₹3,113.5/cylinder and 5-kg FTL at ₹821.5.

The 14.2 kg LPG cylinder meant for domestic consumers, however, continues to be sold at ₹913/cy-

linder in Delhi. Prices of commercial LPG have been hiked for the fourth time since the conflict in West Asia commenced on February 28 this year.

They were last hiked by ₹993/cylinder on May 1. This was preceded by ₹195.5/cylinder hike effective April 1. The first installment of the hikes, ₹115 per cylinder, was on March 7.

A similar paradigm holds for the 5-kg free trade LPG. Price of the small cylinder has experienced its third hike since the conflict began.

It was last hiked by a

steeper ₹261/cylinder May 1 preceded by ₹51 hike on April 1.

Increased prices of 5kg FTL LPG also translate to increased pressure, particularly on migrant labourers in urban and semi-urban areas who do not have local address proof and thus rely on these cylinders that do not mandate any such requirement.

As per government data, public-sector OMCs have sold more than 2.72 lakh 5-kg FTL cylinders since April 3 this year.

ATF prices
Prices of jet fuel for domestic scheduled flights have been kept unchanged for the second consecutive month in June whilst international carriers have seen a course reversal with the approximately \$400/kilo-litre fall in price.

On May 1, the price of ATF for international airlines was pushed up by \$76.55/kilolitre from \$1,435/kilolitre.

ATF price for domestic

carriers last rose on April 1 this year by more than 9%.

Its current price is unchanged at about ₹1.04 lakh/kilolitre in Delhi.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Ravi Gosain, president of the Indian Association of Travel Operators (IATO) welcomed the reduction though taking note of the domestic ATF prices being unaltered.

Complex pricing
He sought to highlight complexities in pricing mechanisms centred on taxation structures and market dynamics.

"While global crude trends provide some relief, the benefits may not immediately translate into lower costs for domestic carriers," he stated, adding, "Going forward, a more balanced and response pricing mechanism could help strengthen the sector's competitiveness, improve airline margins, and ultimately create room for better connectivity and consumer benefits."

Amid El Nino threat, govt. cuts urea, DAP requirements

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Amid expectations of lowered monsoon with looming threats about an El Nino, the Department of Agriculture and Family Welfare cut back on requirement for both urea and diammonium phosphate (DAP), Aparna Sharma, Additional Secretary at the Department of Fertilizers told reporters.

Having consulted states, she informed the Department cut down on requirement of urea for the Kharif season this year from 194.04 lakh metric tonne (LMT) to 190.32 LMT.

Further, they have curtailed DAP requirement to 56.23 LMT from 59.17 LMT. "Due to El Nino effect, Indian Meteorological Department forecast monsoons are expected to be lower, therefore, we requested the Department of Agriculture and Family Welfare for re-assessment of fertilizer for Kharif season," she said.

Ms. Sharma said about 132.43 LMT fertilizers - inclusive of Urea, DAP, NPKs, SSP and MOP - have been added to overall stock.

Maruti, Tata lead PV wholesales in May

Lalendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Auto wholesales gained momentum with many OEMs reporting record sales in May. The Passenger Vehicles (PV) industry is estimated to have sold 4.4 lakh units in May.

PV market leader Maruti Suzuki India Ltd. continued to surpass all past

wholesales record in May indicating strong demand for automobiles. It reported total wholesales of 2,42,688 units, up 35% year-on-year (YoY).

Local wholesales were 1,93,535 units, up 40% while exports surged 34% to 41,914 units.

Company top executives said the demand for CNG vehicles have gone up by

40% following the hike in petrol prices while bookings for electric vehicles have doubled.

"We have seen improvement in every segment including small cars," said Partho Banerjee, senior executive officer, marketing & sales, Maruti Suzuki.

Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd. in May reported domestic whole-

sales of 59,090 units, up 42% YoY.

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. reported PV sales of 58,021 units, up 11% YoY.

Hyundai Motor India Ltd total sales grew 4.1% YoY to 61,137 units.

Toyota Kirloskar Motor Ltd. sold 33,128 units, up 7% YoY.

Kia Motor India sold 27,586 units, up 23.6% YoY.

'No supply pressure on edible oil seen'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The government does not foresee any pressure on edible oil now or in the coming days, C. Shikha, Joint Secretary at the Department of Food and Public Distribution told reporters at the bi-weekly

inter-ministerial briefing on West Asia situation.

"We are closely monitoring and do not foresee any pressure now or in the days to come," she said, adding, "This is because in exporting countries, the season is going to peak between June and September."

'Resolution of steel, CBAM sticking points in India-U.K. trade pact'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

India and the U.K. will discuss Britain's steel safeguard measure and carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM) this week as these issues have become a sticking point in the implementation of the bilateral free trade pact, which was signed on July 24, 2025, sources said.

These issues will figure prominently during the India visit of U.K. Minister of State for Trade Policy Chris Bryant on June 2.

He will hold a bilateral meeting with Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal.

These issues have become a kind of sticking point in the implementation of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).

Both these issues will be discussed during the visit of the U.K. Minister, they said, indicating that until these issues are resolved, the roll-out of the pact would be difficult.

From July 1, 2026, the U.K. will limit tariff-free steel imports, reducing overall quota volumes by 60% compared to the steel safeguard measure. Any imports above these levels will then face a 50% tariff.

This will apply to imports of steel products that can also be made in the U.K. Earlier, U.K. had safeguard steps that imposed import quotas. The new steps reduce that quota.

'Fiscal deficit goal reached'

The Union government has achieved its fiscal deficit target of 4.4% of the GDP for the year 2025-26, according to the data released by the Controller General of Accounts on Monday.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA-DEPARTMENT OF SPACE CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GROUP, SDSC -SHAR SRIHARIKOTA-524124

Brief E-TENDER NOTICE

No: SHAR: CMG CIVIL:MAINT:E-PT-01(A)/26-27 Dt: 22.05.2026

On behalf of President of India, Item Rate tenders are invited through e-tendering for following works:

Name of Work	Tender No	Estimate Cost
Term Contract for CIVIL minor and maintenance works at SLP, SRC, ASLV, Telemetry areas, Coastal road & Security Outposts at BOP, JOB, TOP & KOP area, SDSC SHAR (for the year 2026-27).	T/C-26-003	₹ 100.00 Lakhs

Tender documents can be downloaded up to 09.06.2026, 14:30 hrs. For eligibility criteria and other details, interested tenderers may please refer to the detailed bilingual (Hindi-English) Notice Inviting Tenders (NIT) on the website <https://www.isro.gov.in/Tenders.html> and tender free view at <https://www.tenderwizard.com/isro>

Sd/- GROUP HEAD, CMG/ SDSC SHAR

Office of Chief Engineer (Rural), Public Health Engineering Department, Jal Bhawan, 2-Civil Lines Jaipur, Rajasthan

S.No. 3639-678 Dated: 25/5/26

BID NOTICE 2026-27/03 Dated 25.05.2026

On behalf of the Government of Rajasthan, PHED invites bids online in electronic format on website <http://www.eprocurement.gov.in> from manufacturers for Procurement of ISI Marked CID Joints Size-30-60mm class 10, 15 & 20 as per IS 8794 (Amended/ revised upto date). For details please visit website www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in & <http://eprocurement.gov.in>.

NIB Code:- PHE2627A0694
UBN Code:- CID JOINTS- 2627GLRC1446

(ASHOK KUMAR CHORDIA)
SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
MATERIAL MANAGEMENT CIRCLE
PHED RAJASTHAN, JAIPUR

DIPR/C/9395/2026

KERALA CLIMATE RESILIENT AGRI VALUE CHAIN MODERNISATION PROJECT (KERA)

SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE

The Project Director, Kerala Climate Resilient Agri Value Chain Modernisation (KERA) Project (The World Bank Project ID No.: P178254) invites proposals for the following online tender from eligible consultants:

1. Tender ID: 2026_KERA_853230_1

Consulting services: Technical Support Agency for selection and handholding of 250 Agri & Food SMEs in the state of Kerala

Last date of submission of Proposal is 30th June, 2026, 4:00 PM

The tender Document can be downloaded from e-tender Kerala portal starting from 1st June, 2026, 10:00 AM.

Kalyan Singh Super Speciality Cancer Institute

C.G. City, Sultanpur Road, Lucknow-226002
(An Autonomous Institute of the Govt. of Uttar Pradesh)
Website: <https://cancerinstitute.edu.in> Email: procurement@csici.com

Gem Bid Notice Date: 01.06.2026

It is hereby informed that a bids No. is as follow: -

Sr. No.	Name of Service	Bid No. & Date	Pre-bid Meeting Date & Time
1	Laundry Service - Healthcare purpose	GEM/2026/B/7601741 Dated 01.06.2026	04.06.2026 15:00 PM

The Bid uploaded on GeM Portal for Procurement of **Laundry Services** at KSSSCI. All interested service providers/bidders are required to submit their bids on GeM Portal in accordance with the terms and conditions of the GeM bid documents. The Director reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids at any stage without assigning any reason thereof.

The Tender documents are available on the website of the Institute www.cancerinstitute.edu.in

Advt no. KSSSCI/Tender -04/2026-27 DIRECTOR

TNPJ TAMIL NADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED
Kagithapuram - 639 136, Karur Dist. Tamil Nadu.

Kagitha Nagar, Mondipatti - 621 306, Trichy Dist, Tamil Nadu.

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Tender No.	Description	Due date
262713 001324	Steaming (Non-Coking) Coal in Bulk (Imported) with 5000 GAR of Australian origin.	18.06.2026
262723 000677	Supply of Material, Fabrication at Supplier Works, Transportation, erection and testing of Stainless Steel (SS 316L) Tanks and Carbon Steel Tank for Specialty Chemical Storage in TNPJ Unit-II.	12.06.2026
262723 000783	Procurement of Fueloil for Unit-II.	09.06.2026

Corrigendum if any will be issued in TNPJ Website and NIC Portal only. For further details, please visit websites : www.tnpl.com / <https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgepapp>

DIPR/1982/Tender/2026 TNPJ - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper

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(A GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ENTERPRISE)

Registered & Corporate Office:
MOIL Bhavan, 1-A, Katol Road, Nagpur - 440013, Maharashtra
CIN: L99999MH1962GOI012398

GLOBAL TENDER NOTICE

Tenders in three parts are invited from bonafide and experienced contractors for the following works.

Sr. No.	Description & Place of Work	Completion Period	EMD Amount (INR in Crores)	Estimated Cost (Approx.) (INR in Crores)
1	Design, Construction, Furnishing & Equipping of Third Vertical Shaft on TURNKEY BASIS at Chikla Mine of MOIL Ltd. Tumsar Tehsil, Bhandara District, Maharashtra, India. Pin Code - 441907 Tender No: MOIL/MOIL LIMITED/ Project/22/2026-27/ET/22	48 Months	0.50	208.17 plus GST as applicable

For details of Global Tender Document and schedule of e-tender, visit e-tender website <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/procni/> (for e-bid) & MOIL website <https://moil.nic.in> an Indian Government's Central Public Procurement (CPP) Portal (<https://eprocure.gov.in>). Corrigendum, if any, shall be uploaded on the above-mentioned websites and shall not be published in the Newspapers.

Executive Director (P&D), MOIL Limited

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KINSHASA

Ebola cases in Congo rise to 282 confirmed infections, officials say



At least 282 confirmed cases of Ebola have been reported in Congo's ongoing outbreak, authorities said on Sunday evening. The eastern Ituri province has recorded 264 of the cases. Congo has reported over 1,000 suspected cases with the Bundibugyo virus, the current species of Ebola, which has no approved treatment or vaccine. AP

KYIV

Russian strikes across Ukraine leave one dead, dozens wounded



Russian drones killed one person and wounded two dozen others across Ukraine, local authorities said on Monday, as Kyiv and Moscow step up long-range strikes with peace talks stalling. One person was killed in Kherson while injuries were reported in Odesa, Chernigiv, Kharkiv, and Zaporizhzhia, officials said. AFP

LONDON

U.K. govt. releases second tranche of files on ex-U.S. envoy Mandelson



The U.K. government published a second batch of files relating to the appointment of Peter Mandelson as U.S. envoy. Prime Minister Keir Starmer sacked Mr. Mandelson last year, but his decision to hand the post to a man with known ties to the late U.S. sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, has prompted calls for the PM to resign. REUTERS

KUALA LUMPUR

Malaysia becomes latest nation to enforce social media ban for teens



Malaysia began enforcing rules barring millions of children younger than 16 from having social media accounts, joining a growing global effort to tighten safety protections. Not all families approved, and critics raised concerns about data protection and surveillance. Australia, Brazil and Indonesia have initiated similar regulations. AP

Iran halts U.S. talks over Israel's Lebanon war

'Ceasefire between Iran and the U.S. is unequivocally a ceasefire on all fronts, including in Lebanon; its violation on one front is a violation of truce on all fronts,' says Minister Araghchi; 'there will be no Israeli troops going to Beirut, and any troops on their way, have been turned back,' says Trump

Stanly Johny

Iran has suspended exchanges with the U.S. over a preliminary agreement aimed at ending the war, citing Israel's escalating military strikes in Lebanon, the Tasnim news agency reported on Monday.

Hours after Iran's move, U.S. President Donald Trump said he had spoken with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Hezbollah, and that both sides agreed to stop attacking each other. He also said "talks are continuing with Tehran".

"Due to the continuation of the Zionist regime's [Israel] crimes in Lebanon and considering that Lebanon was one of the preconditions for the ceasefire



Onslaught continues: Smoke rises following an Israeli airstrike on the outskirts of Tyre in southern Lebanon on Monday. AFP

and now this ceasefire has been violated on all fronts including Lebanon, the Iranian negotiating team will stop "talks and exchange of texts through mediation", the report stated.

Earlier in the day, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and Parliament

Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf had warned of consequences for Israel's strikes on Lebanon.

"The ceasefire between Iran and the U.S. is unequivocally a ceasefire on all fronts, including in Lebanon. Its violation on one front is a violation of the

ceasefire on all fronts. The U.S. and Israel are responsible for the consequences of any violation," Mr. Araghchi wrote in a social media post.

Mr. Ghalibaf, who is also the country's negotiator with the U.S., said the American blockade of Iran's ports and the Lebanon strikes were ceasefire violations. "The naval blockade and escalation of war crimes in Lebanon by the genocidal Zionist regime are clear evidence of U.S. non-compliance with the ceasefire," he wrote in a post.

As the peace process seemed on the verge of collapse, Mr. Trump appeared to step in to salvage the ceasefire. "I had a very productive call with Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu,

of Israel, and there will be no Troops going to Beirut, and any Troops that are on their way, have already been turned back," he wrote in a social media post. "Likewise, through highly placed Representatives, I had a very good call with Hezbollah, and they agreed that all shooting will stop - That Israel will not attack them, and they will not attack Israel."

In another post, Mr. Trump said talks with Iran are "continuing, at a rapid pace", without offering further details.

Beirut raid

Earlier on Monday, Mr. Netanyahu said he has ordered the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) to strike Beirut's Dahiyeh neighbourhood, a Hezbollah strong-

hold, "in response to the repeated and ongoing violations of the ceasefire in Lebanon". Mr. Trump, who announced a ceasefire on April 17, had said then that Israel was "prevented" from striking Lebanon. But the IDF continued its military operations and captured more territory in southern Lebanon.

On Sunday, U.S. Central Command said it struck military targets in southern Iran over the weekend after Iran shot down an American drone. Hours later, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said they attacked a U.S. military base in the region.

CENTCOM later claimed it intercepted "two Iranian ballistic missiles targeting American forces based in Kuwait.

France seized tanker linked to Russia with U.K. support: Macron

Associated Press
PARIS

The French Navy, with support from the U.K., has intercepted an oil tanker under international sanctions that was travelling from Russia, the most recent effort by nations that support Ukraine to target Russian oil exports helping to finance President Vladimir Putin's war.

French President Emmanuel Macron announced on Monday the interception in a post on X, saying the *Tagor* was boarded on Sunday in the Atlantic. "It is unacceptable that boats skirt international sanctions, and finance the war that Russia has been waging against Ukraine," he wrote.



French soldiers intercept the oil tanker on the Atlantic Sea. AP

Russia is believed to be using a 'shadow' fleet of hundreds of ships to evade international sanctions imposed over the war.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Monday that Russia "considers such actions illegal." "They border on piracy," he said.

Pro-Trump nominee leads in Colombia's presidential election

Associated Press
BOGOTA

Abelardo de la Espriella, a supporter of U.S. President Donald Trump, pulled ahead in Colombia's race for the presidency in the first round of elections, capitalising on a growing appetite for heavy-handed crackdowns on criminal groups across Latin America.

But the second-place finisher, progressive senator Iván Cepeda, and his ally President Gustavo Petro questioned the results of the election on Sunday

night without providing evidence.

Mr. De la Espriella rapidly gained traction in the lead up to Sunday's election, winning nearly 44% of the vote, and surpassing Mr. Cepeda, who had consistently led polling throughout the campaign and won less than 41% of the vote. The two are slated to continue on to a runoff election on June 21, where Mr. De la Espriella is expected to scoop up additional votes from Colombians who supported other conservative candidates in the first round.

U.K. blocks visit by left-wing U.S. commentators

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

Two American left-wing political commentators have been barred from entering the U.K. this week to attend speaking engagements. Cenk Uygur, a Turkish American who founded Justice Democrats, a progressive political funding group, and Young Turks, a long-running online show, said he was banned from two events in the U.K. this week.

Commentator and influencer Hasan Piker, who is Mr. Uygur's nephew, also said his visa has been "revoked". The 34-year-old had previously courted controversy for his views and remarks, including his

comments on the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, his stance on Hamas and his use of derogatory language to describe Orthodox Jews. Mr. Piker had said in 2019 that the U.S. "deserved 9/11", later saying his comments were "inappropriate".

The U.K. Home Office confirmed to *The Hindu* that the travel permits for both individuals were cancelled because their presence would not be conducive to the public good.

"I've been banned from the U.K. I tried to get on a flight to attend SXSW London and give a speech at Oxford," Mr. Uygur said on X, adding that he was banned for criticising Israel. Mr. Uygur character-



Cenk Uygur

ised the situation as oppression by Western governments of their own citizens on behalf of a third country. "It's an honour to have made Israel's enemies list. I'm very proud to have fought against their genocide," Mr. Uygur said.

The decision to ban Mr. Uygur, *The Times* reported,

was partly due to his rhetoric since Hamas's attacks in Israel on October 7, 2023, and related to fears that his visit would incite antisemitism in the U.K.

The travel ban, according to *The Times*, was also partly due to the commentator dismissing evidence in the case of grooming gangs in places such as Rotherham, where official probes identified more than 1,400 victims of sexual abuse.

Former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn called the travel ban an "absurd and cowardly decision" and an assault on the freedom to criticise Israel.

"Soon we will all become Israel," Mr. Piker said on X, as he referred to the

government of Israel as genocidal and fascist. Mr. Piker posted a video of his 2025 address to the Oxford Union in which he had cautioned against linking a criticism of Israel's actions with Judaism and conflating anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism.

"There's no reason to open our doors to those who seek to spread hate and division, especially to those who've supported a proscribed terror group," Labour MP David Taylor said.

The U.K. government had also banned 11 far-right figures from entering the country to take part in a demonstration organised by far-right figure Tommy Robinson in May this year.

NYC Mayor Mamdani skips 'Israel Day' parade

Associated Press
NEW YORK

New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani did not attend an annual parade honouring Israel on Sunday, breaking with a decades-long political custom because of his support of Palestinian rights. The Israel Day parade has always been a must-attend event for Mayors, Governors and political leaders in the U.S.

The Mayor's absence has given fresh fuel to opponents who view his criticism of the Israeli government as antisemitic.

Sport

A tribute to Satwik and Chirag's resilience

SINGAPORE OPEN

Devvanshi Bihani

For nearly two years, Satwicksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty were forced to watch title opportunities slip away amid injuries, setbacks and frustrating near-misses. On Sunday, however, India's premier men's doubles pair ended the drought by becoming the first Indian duo to win the Singapore Open after defeating Indonesia's Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Shohibul Fikri 18-21, 21-17, 21-16 in the Super 750 final.

The triumph marked Satwik and Chirag's first BWF World Tour title since 2024 and capped a week in which they also snapped the 34-match winning streak of World champions Kim Won-ho and Seo



Celebration time: Satwik and Chirag are delighted after ending their title drought. BADMINTON PHOTO

Seung-jae in the semifinals.

"I think the last week has been really, really good. It's been almost two years since we had won a title, so that makes it even more special. Especially in a tournament like the Singapore Open, where historically we haven't done as well," Chirag said during a virtual press conference on Monday.

The title run was built

on resilience, with four of the Indians' five matches going the distance. They were tested again in the final as the Indonesians edged a tight opening game after drawing level at 18. But Satwik and Chirag stayed composed.

"We'll accept if we lose, but we'll give everything and lose. The attitude was pretty calm. Even when we were down, we wanted to

fight back," Satwik said.

The second game saw the Indians increase the pace of the exchanges and force errors from their opponents to force the decider.

The Indians entered the third game determined to seize control. Satwik's attacking game began to click while Chirag dominated the forecourt, helping the pair build a crucial cushion. Although Fajar and Fikri briefly narrowed the gap, the Indians remained in command and closed out the contest in 72 minutes.

With a long-awaited title finally secured, Satwik and Chirag head into this week's Indonesia Open with renewed confidence and momentum ahead of the World Championships and Asian Games later this year.

WORLD CUP SQUADS

Iran names line-up

Iran coach Amir Ghalenoie named a 26-man squad for the World Cup on Monday.

Iran will base its squad in the Mexican border city of Tijuana during the finals. The country will play all three of its group matches in the USA.

The squads:

IRAN: Goalkeepers: Alireza Beiranvand, Seyed Hossein Hosseini, Payam Niazmand; **Defenders:** Danial Eiri, Ehsan Hajsafi, Saleh Hardani, Hossein Kanaani, Shoja Khalilzadeh, Milad Mohammadi, Ali Nemati, Ramin Rezaeian; **Midfielders:** Rouzbeh Cheshmi, Saied Ezatollahi, Mehdi Ghaedi, Saman Ghoddos, Mohammad Ghorbani, Alireza Jahanbakhsh, Mohammad Mohebi, Amir Mohammad Razzaghinia, Mehdi Torabi, Aria Yousefi; **Forwards:** Ali Allpour, Dennis Dargahi, Amirhossein Hosseinzadeh, Mehdi Taremi, and Shahrir Moghanlou.

MEXICO: Goalkeepers: Raul Rangel, Guillermo Ochoa, Carlos Acevedo; **Defenders:** Jesus Gallardo, Johan Vazquez, Israel Reyes, Cesar Montes, Jorge Sanchez, Mateo Chavez; **Midfielders:** Edson Alvarez, Erik Lira, Alvaro Fidalgo, Gilberto Mora, Brian Gutierrez, Luis Romo, Orbelin Pineda, Alexis Vega, Obed Vargas, Luis Chavez; **Forwards:** Roberto Alvarado, Santiago Gimenez, Raul Jimenez, Julian Quiñones, Armando Gonzalez, Guillermo Martinez, and Cesar Huerta.

ECUADOR: Goalkeepers: Hernan Galindez, Moises Ramirez, Gonzalo Valle; **Defenders:** Pervis Estupinan, Piero Hincapié, Willian Pachó, Joel Ordóñez, Felix Torres, Jackson Porozo, Angelo Preciado; **Midfielders:** Moises Caicedo, Alan Franco, Alan Minda, Pedro Vite, Jeremy Arealo, Kendry Paez, Jordy Alcivar, Nilson Angulo, Anthony Valencia, John Yeobah, Denil Castillo, Gonzalo Plata; **Forwards:** Enner Valencia, Kevin Rodriguez, Jordy Caicedo, and Yaimar Medina.

AUSTRALIA: Goalkeepers:

Patrick Beach, Paul Izzo, Mathew Ryan; **Defenders:** Aziz Behich, Jordan Bos, Cameron Burgess, Alessandro Circati, Milos Degeneck, Jason Geria, Lucas Herrington, Jacob Italiano, Harry Souttar, Kai Trewin; **Midfielders:** Csameron Devlin, Ajdin Hrustic, Jackson Irvine, Connor Metcalfe, Aiden O'Neill, Paul Okon-Engstler; **Forwards:** Nestory Irankunda, Mathew Leckie, Awer Mabil, Mohamed Toure, Nishan Velupillay, Cristian Volpato, and Tete Yengi.

ALGERIA: Goalkeepers: Oussama Benbot, Melvin Mastil, Abdelatif Ramdane, Luca Zidane; **Defenders:** Achref Abada, Rayan Ait-Nouri, Zinedine Belaid, Rafik Belghali, Ramy Bensebaini, Samir Chergui, Jaouen Hadjam, Aissa Mandi, Mohamed Amine Touga; **Midfielders:** Houssein Aouar, Nabil Bentaleb, Hicham Boudaoui, Fares Chaibi, Ibarhaim Maza, Yacine Titrouti, Ramiz Zerrouki; **Forwards:** Mohamed Amoura, Nadhir Benbouali, Adil Boulbina, Fares Ghedjemi, Amine Gouri, Anis Hadi Moussa, and Riyad Mahrez.

CZECHIA: Goalkeepers: Lukas

Hornicek, Matej Kovar, Jindrich Stanek; **Defenders:** Vladimir Coufal, David Doudera, Tomas Holes, Robin Hranec, Stepan Chaloupek, David Jurasek, Ladislav Krejci, Jaroslav Zeleny, David Zima; **Midfielders:** Lukas Cerv, Vladimir Darida, Lukas Provod, Michal Sadilek, Hugo Sochurek, Alexandr Sojka, Tomas Soucek, Pavel Sulc, Denis Visinsky; **Forwards:** Tomas Chory, Adam Hlozek, Mojmir Chytil, Jan Kuchta, and Patrik Schick.

SAUDI ARABIA: Goalkeepers: Nawaf Al Aqidi, Mohamed Al Owais, Ahmed Alkassar; **Defenders:** Saud Abdulhamid, Jihad Thakri, Abdulrahman Al Amri, Hassan Tambakti, Ali Lajami, Hassan Kadesh, Moteb Al Harbi, Nawaf Boushal, Ali Majrashi, Mohammed Abu Alsham; **Midfielders:** Ziyad Al Johani, Nasser Al Dawsari, Mohamed Kanno, Abdullah Al Khaibari, Alaa Al Hejji, Musab Al Juwayr, Sultan Mandash, Ayman Yahya, Khalid Al Ghannam; **Forwards:** Saleem Al Dawsari, Abdullah Al Hamdan, Feras Al Brikan, and Saleh Al Shehri.

HUGE COMPLIMENT

Sooryavanshi dominated every top bowler, praises Patidar



FILE PHOTO: VIJAY SONEJI

Asked to name the standout player of IPL 2026, RCB captain Rajat Patidar came up with a swift reply. "It's pretty clear — Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. He is so young... the way he has dominated this tournament. He didn't just play; he dominated every top bowler. The way he played his shots... he is amazing," Patidar said.

REFLECTION

Solanki feels 180 would have been a challenging total in the final



VIJAY SONEJI

GT fell 25 runs short of a good score in the IPL final against RCB, according to its Director of Cricket Vikram Solanki. "We probably made a slight miscalculation of what score was good enough on that pitch. I don't think it was a 200-plus pitch. If we had got somewhere around 180, it would have been a challenging total".

TRULY SPECIAL

Winning trophies has always been my biggest motivation: Krunal



PTI

RCB all-rounder Krunal Pandya shared his joy after winning his fifth IPL title. "Winning trophies has always been my biggest motivation in cricket because there's no feeling quite like lifting a championship. Individual performances and wins bring happiness, but winning a tournament is something truly special".

FIVE DEMERIT POINTS

RCB's David suspended for his first match of IPL 2027



K.R. DEEPAK

RCB's Tim David has been fined 50% of his match fee for breaching Level 1 of IPL's Code of Conduct during the final against GT. He has now accumulated five demerit points, which result in a one-game suspension. He will be suspended for RCB's first game of the next season or the first game of the franchise he represents in IPL 2027.

RCB gains from squad depth and clarity of roles

The franchise from the Garden City had several players coming up with match-winning performances; captain Patidar was composed while Kohli finished as the team's highest run-getter

IPL-19

Ashwin Achal
AHMEDABAD

From going on a barren 17-year run, Royal Challengers Bengaluru is now looking to build a legacy as an IPL powerhouse.

Back-to-back titles have lifted RCB to fourth on the list of the most successful franchises, behind Chennai Super Kings, Mumbai Indians, and Kolkata Knight Riders. The power dynamics of Indian T20 cricket are beginning to tilt toward the Garden City.

RCB's title defence this season was built on assembling the most balanced side in the competition — one with clarity in roles and depth across departments.

It was a campaign shaped by collective strength, with several players stepping forward with match-winning performances.

When Virat Kohli and Venkatesh Iyer fired at the top, RCB surged ahead. When they did not, Dev-

RUN MACHINES					
	Inns	Runs	HS	SR	100s/50s
Sooryavanshi (RR)	16	776	103	237.30	1/5
Gill (GT)	16	732	104	163.02	1/6
Sai Sudharsan (GT)	17	722	100	157.98	1/8
Kohli (RCB)	16	675	105*	165.84	1/5
Klaasen (SRH)	15	624	69	160.00	0/6

SCALP HUNTERS					
	Inns	Wkts	BB	Econ	4W
Rabada (GT)	17	29	3/25	9.68	0
Bhuvneshwar (RCB)	16	28	4/23	7.95	1
Archer (RR)	16	25	3/17	9.31	0
Rashid (GT)	17	21	4/33	9.07	1
Kamboj (CSK)	14	21	3/22	10.52	0

dutt Padikkal, captain Rajat Patidar and Krunal Pandya found a way.

The fast bowlers — Josh Hazlewood, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Jacob Duffy and youngster Rasikh Salam — repeatedly shut down chases or set up victories.

Another dimension
Krunal added another layer through a slingshot round-arm release and a surprise bouncer to keep the batters guessing. Seen as a whole, this side had answers for every situation.

If T20 leadership is often measured by constant

intervention, Patidar offered something different. His captaincy was calm and understated.

He rarely looked hurried or flustered, even in tense moments. That composure filtered through the dressing room.

Then there was Kohli, who underlined once again why he remains the heartbeat of the franchise. For the second straight year, Kohli finished as RCB's highest run-scorer, and this time he did so at a significantly improved strike-rate (165.84 to 144.71).

His unbeaten 75 in the fi-

nal against Gujarat Titans was an innings of authority and class.

As ever, his energy was infectious, all the while maintaining the highest standards. RCB may now be in the Patidar era, but it remains a team deeply shaped by Kohli's presence.

If Kohli represented the enduring value of the old guard, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi offered a glimpse into the future. The teenager emerged as the feel-good story of IPL 2026.

Sooryavanshi batted with a freedom and confidence that felt extraordinary even by IPL standards, forcing himself into the spotlight through sheer weight of performance. His game was marked not just by clean hitting, but by a sharp match awareness that belied his age.

RCB reaffirmed that titles are built on combined excellence rather than star power alone.

At the same time, Sooryavanshi's extraordinary exploits gave rise to a new hero of the masses. This season truly saw the cream rise to the top.



Array of game-changers: Bhuvneshwar, Rasikh and Krunal along with talisman Kohli played a big part in Royal Challengers' triumphant campaign. K.R. DEEPAK



Focus will turn to hat-trick of trophies after 'best birthday gift': Patidar

Ashwin Achal
AHMEDABAD

Rajat Patidar could not have wished for a better birthday. The RCB captain, who turned 33 on Monday, was all smiles as he sat beside the IPL trophy in the press conference room here.

"It is the best gift. Nothing can be better than this — to win the IPL for two successive years," Patidar said.

Patidar added that while the team will celebrate the triumph, the focus will shift to "how we can do three in a row".

The Madhya Pradesh

player added that he has worked a great deal on his batting. The results were clear as Patidar looked more assertive and dominant at the crease.

"Before coming into the IPL, I spent a lot of time understanding my batting. I did proper net sessions. Sometimes, I was the only one at nets, and I needed bowlers. After that, I communicated a lot with DK *bhai* (RCB mentor and batting coach Dinesh Karthik) about how I could do more, trigger moments, technical changes, etc. Then I came here and executed that," Patidar said.

Patidar stated that he

drew inspiration from Faf du Plessis, his first captain at RCB. "The way Faf du Plessis presented himself, the body language, the confidence — these are things I learnt," he said.

Speaking about the dominant show in the final, Patidar explained that dismissing the Gujarat Titans top-order — Shubman Gill, Sai Sudharsan and Jos Butler — early proved to be crucial. "The GT batting line-up depends a lot on the top three batters. Our plan was to get the top three out in the PowerPlay. We did take two wickets. They went on the back foot from there," Patidar said.



Patidar... on cloud nine. VIJAY SONEJI

From desperation to title triumphs: how Flower redefined RCB's legacy

Ashwin Achal
AHMEDABAD

Andy Flower's reign as Royal Challengers Bengaluru head coach did not begin well. The team lost seven of its first eight matches in IPL 2024 before making a turnaround to enter the playoffs.

The tough phase gave Flower useful insight into what ails RCB. Over the course of the next two years, Flower and his staff have used these learnings to mould RCB into a formidable presence.

"The very tough first half of 2024 gave us real clarity about certain stra-



Flower... the mastermind. FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

tegic things that we wanted to employ. It gave us the courage, almost through desperation, to take those

measures. Then we had 2025, where we were walking into the unknown, as RCB had never won the title before. There was a lot of tension and uncertainty around getting into the playoffs," Flower said in a virtual media interaction on Monday.

This year's triumphant campaign, in contrast, was marked by quiet confidence, Flower stated. "This year, there was a deeper level of confidence. Going into the playoffs, this reflected in some of our performances," Flower said.

The 58-year-old was all praise for Virat Kohli, who

has set a high bar for his teammates to follow. "Virat's hunger and drive are genuinely inspiring. He sets certain standards like intensity in the field. Anyone falling below is going to stand out like a sore thumb. Everyone has to raise their game to get anywhere near it," he said.

"The same goes for his batting mastery. He works hard at his game, but you can see that he loves batting. He loves hitting the ball. He loves the feeling of the ball meeting the middle of the bat. Again, those standards are easy for people in our training sessions to see," Flower said.



Stretched? Hardly! Auger-Aliassime made the quarterfinals with ease. REUTERS

Auger-Aliassime waltzes into the last eight

FRENCH OPEN

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

Fourth seed Felix Auger-Aliassime despatched Alejandro Tabilo 6-3, 7-5, 6-1 on Monday to reach the French Open quarterfinals for the first time.

After playing nine sets and more than 11 hours as he won his first three matches in the first-week heatwave, Auger-Aliassime sped through his fourth match in two hours, eight minutes with the temperature in the mid-20s.

He will next play unseeded Italian Flavio Cobolli who clawed into the last eight, beating Zachary Svajda 6-2, 6-3, 6-7(3), 7-6(5).

Former Wimbledon runner-up Matteo Berrettini, who has been plagued by injuries in recent years, booked his first Major quarterfinal since the 2022 US Open with a 6-3, 7-6(2), 7-6(6) victory over Jannik Sinner's conqueror Juan Manuel Cerundolo.

In the women's section, Diana Shnaider beat Madison Keys 6-3, 3-6, 6-0, while Austrian 28th seed Anastasia Potapova could

Tuesday's Picks

- MEN**
- 2-Zverev vs. 27-Jodar
- 26-Mensik vs. 28-Fonseca
- WOMEN**
- 7-Svitolina vs. 15-Kostyuk
- 8-Andreeva vs. 18-Cirstea

not back up her win over defending champion Coco Gauff, twice failing to serve for the match in a 6-4, 2-6, 7-6(7) defeat by Anna Kalinskaya.

The Russian will next face Polish qualifier Maja Chwalinska after she continued her remarkable run

by cruising past the last remaining French player, Diane Parry, 6-3, 6-2.

Balaji in last eight

N. Sriram Balaji and his Brazilian partner Marcelo Demoliner advanced to the men's doubles quarterfinals with a stunning upset 7-5, 6-4 win over sixth seeds Kevin Krawietz and Tim Puetz of Germany.

There was something to cheer for the crowd as PSG players Ousmane Dembele, Desire Doue, Warren Zaire-Emery and Bradley Barcola paraded their two Champions League trophies on court.

THE RESULTS

- Men: Fourth round:** Berrettini (Ita) bt Juan Cerundolo (Arg) 6-3, 7-6(2), 7-6(6).
- 4-Auger-Aliassime (Can) bt Tabilo (Chi) 6-3, 7-5, 6-1.
- 10-Cobolli (Ita) bt Svajda (USA) 6-2, 6-3, 6-7(3), 7-6(5).
- 26-Mensik (Cze) bt 11-Rublev 6-3, 7-6(6), 4-6, 2-6, 6-3.
- 28-Fonseca (Bra) bt 15-Ruud (Nor) 7-5, 7-6(8), 5-7, 6-2.
- Doubles: Third round:** Balaji (Ind) & Demoliner (Bra) bt 6-Putz (Ger) & Krawietz (Ger) 7-5, 6-4.
- Women: Fourth round:** 25-Shnaider bt 19-Keys (USA) 6-3, 3-6, 6-0.
- 22-Kalinskaya bt 28-Potapova (Aut) 6-4, 2-6, 7-6(7).
- Chwalinska (Pol) bt Parry (Fra) 6-3, 6-2.

WHEN CHAOS MEETS CONVERSATION

CLARITY EMERGES.

Join 30+ experts at The Hindu Huddle as they cut through the clutter and bring clarity to the chaos of today's world through dialogue, while exploring what it means for the future of India.

DAY 1 | June 5, 2026 | Taj West End, Bengaluru

9:30 am to 10:00 am
Inaugural Ceremony



Welcome Address by
Dr Narayan Lakshman
Opinion Editor, The Hindu, and
Curator, The Hindu Huddle



Opening Remarks by
Dr Nirmala Lakshman
Chairperson, The Hindu Group

9:55 am to 10:15 am

Government of the People: Karnataka's
tryst with equitable growth



Address by the Chief Guest,
D K Shivakumar
Hon'ble Chief Minister
of Karnataka

10:20 am to 10:50 am

Beyond the Valley:
The role of Kashmir in great
power politics



Omar Abdullah
Hon'ble Chief Minister
of Jammu and Kashmir



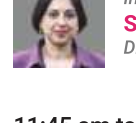
In conversation with
Dr Narayan Lakshman
Opinion Editor, The Hindu, and
Curator, The Hindu Huddle

11:10 am to 11:40 am

India-China Tango:
Asian powers shaping the
emerging world order



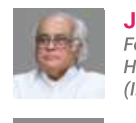
Xu Feihong
Chinese Ambassador to India



In conversation with
Suhagini Haidar
Diplomatic Affairs Editor, The Hindu

11:45 am to 12:30 pm

From the Aravallis to the Nicobar:
At the edge of ecology



Jairam Ramesh
Former Union Minister and
Hon'ble Member of Parliament
(INC), Rajya Sabha



Dr Krithi K Karanth,
CEO, Centre for Wildlife Studies



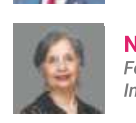
In conversation with
Gargi Rawat
Consulting Editor, NDTV

12:35 pm to 1:20 pm

The Power of Words:
Diplomacy at a time of conflict



Hervé Delphin
EU Ambassador to India



Nirupama Rao
Former Foreign Secretary and Former
Indian Ambassador to the US



Philip Green
Australian High Commissioner to India



In conversation with
Suhagini Haidar
Diplomatic Affairs Editor, The Hindu



Scan here or visit
newsth.live/THHDL2026
to know more.

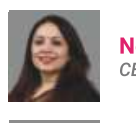
Entry by invite only

2:35 pm to 3:20 pm

The Architecture of Leadership:
Designing blueprints for a volatile world



R Ganesan
Senior Vice President &
Head - Corporate Centre, L&T



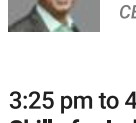
Neeti Sharma
CEO, TeamLease Digital



Praveen Someshwar
MD and CEO, USL & Member,
Global Diageo Executive Committee



Shailendra Katyal
MD, Lenovo India P Ltd, and
Site Leader, Lenovo Group



In conversation with
L V Navaneeth
CEO, The Hindu Group

3:25 pm to 4:10 pm

Skills for India:
Building capability in the age of AI



Jayant Chaudhary
Union Minister of State (Independent Charge)
for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
and Minister of State, Ministry of Education,
Government of India



In conversation with
Nistula Hebbar
Political Editor, The Hindu

4:15 pm to 5:00 pm

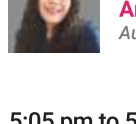
The Matrix Can Hear You:
Chatbots and mental health



Dr. Amit Malik
Psychiatrist and Founder, AMAHA



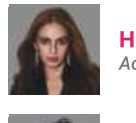
Dr Prabha S Chandra
Professor of Psychiatry and Director,
NIMHANS



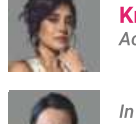
In conversation with
Amrita Tripathi
Author and Mental Health Advocate

5:05 pm to 5:50 pm

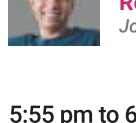
New Avatar for the Silver Screen:
The global reach of OTT



Huma Qureshi
Actor



Kritika Kamra
Actor



In conversation with
Rohit Khilnani
Journalist and Talk Show Host

5:55 pm to 6:15 pm

Students' Huddle

*Schedule subject to change



ICC Board suspends Cricket Canada

ANI
AHMEDABAD

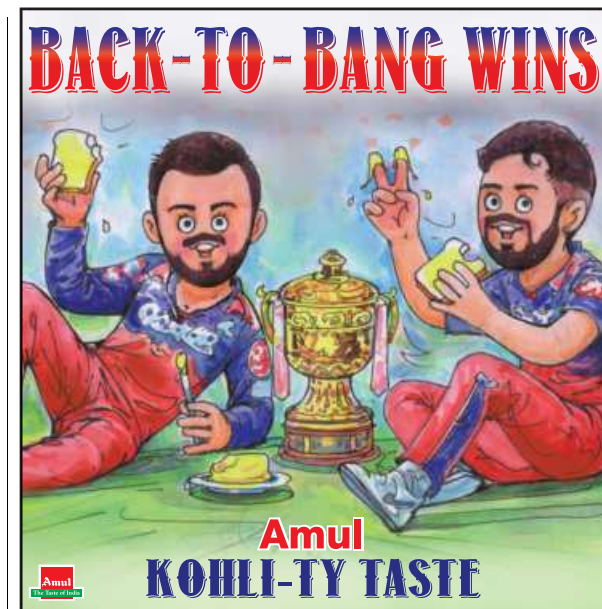
The ICC Board on Monday suspended Cricket Canada with immediate effect due to serious breaches of its membership obligations after the conclusion of its Board meetings in Ahmedabad.

As per the release, the ICC Board was mindful of the importance of protecting the interests of Cana-

dian players.

Accordingly, Canadian national representative teams will continue to be eligible to participate in ICC events during the period of suspension.

Cricket Canada will be permitted to access ICC funding through a controlled funding mechanism, under the oversight of ICC management, solely for approved national team programmes.



A forgettable day for Indians; Carlsen avenges Firouzja loss

Gukesh falls to Keymer in the classical format, whereas Praggnanandhaa's adventurous approach costs him against So; Humpy goes down to Bibisara in Armageddon even as Divya loses to Ju

NORWAY CHESS

C. Shyam Sundar
OSLO

It wasn't a good day for the Indian players as all four (two each in the Open and women's events) suffered losses in the sixth round of Norway Chess 2026 at Deichman Bjorvika on Sunday.

World champion D. Gukesh succumbed to Germany's Vincent Keymer in the classical, handing his opponent a first win in the tournament while R. Praggnanandhaa's adventurous approach cost him against the experienced American Wesley So as all three games resulted in victories in the classical format.

"It's nice to finally win a game after so many failed chances," said Keymer af-



Deep in thought: Bibisara returned to the top of the leaderboard by getting past Humpy in Armageddon. FLICKR/NORWAYCHESS

ter beating Gukesh, adding, "I don't think I was ever wrong."

World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen exacted revenge on Frenchman Alireza Firouzja, winning the reverse fixture after having opened his campaign with a loss to him.

After the win, the Norwegian ace said: "He kind

of surprised me a little bit in the opening, and I thought, you know, I'll just play something."

"I think the plan he went for was not very good and I thought I got a fairly pleasant position, and, most of all, it was relatively easy to play... so I didn't have any reason to hemorrhage time on the clock as I

have in other games," he added.

In the women's tournament, Bibisara Assaubayeva and Koneru Humpy played out a quick 15-move draw in the classical before the Kazakh raised her game in the Armageddon to win and return to the top of the leaderboard.

Divya Deshmukh, on the other hand, lost in a wild game to World champion Ju Wenjun.

The results (sixth round):
Open: Vincent Keymer (Ger, 8) bt D. Gukesh (6.5), Magnus Carlsen (Nor, 7.5) bt Alireza Firouzja (Fra, 10), Wesley So (USA, 11.5) bt R. Praggnanandhaa (6).

Women: Bibisara Assaubayeva (Kaz, 9.5) bt Koneru Humpy (5.5) in Armageddon, Divya Deshmukh (8.5) lost to Ju Wenjun (Chn, 8), Zhu Jiner (Chn, 7) bt Anna Muzychuk (Ukr, 8) in Armageddon.

(The writer is in Oslo at the invitation of Norway Chess).

Divyanshi is youngest Indian to win WTT Feeder women's title

Sports Bureau

Fifteen-year-old Divyanshi Bhowmick produced a dream performance at Prishtina in Kosovo as she became the youngest Indian to win a WTT Feeder women's singles title.

The World No. 211 Divyanshi stunned Chinese Taipei's Yeh Yi-Tian, placed 38 in the chart, with a thrilling 8-11, 11-8, 11-5, 7-11, 11-7 victory. According to the Table Tennis Federation of India, she is the second-youngest player in the world, after Japan's Miwa Harimoto, to capture a WTT Feeder women's crown.

Divyanshi also clinched the women's doubles top prize alongside fellow Indian teenager Syndrele



Divyanshi came up trumps in a thrilling final against Yeh.
FILE PHOTO: R. RAVINDRAN

Das. The pair defeated Japan's Sachi Aoki and Cocoma Muramatsu 7-11, 14-12, 12-14, 11-8, 11-7.

In WTT Youth Contender Sandefjord (Norway), M. Ananya bagged the girls' u-17 singles trophy. The 16-year-old thumped her compatriot Tushiti Sood 14-12, 11-3, 12-10 in the final.

PL record-breaker Milner calls it quits

Agence France-Presse
LONDON

Former England midfielder James Milner has announced his retirement from football at the age of 40 after a 24-year Premier League career.

Milner, who spent the past three seasons at Brighton, began his career at boyhood club Leeds and went on to win three Premier League titles - two with Manchester City and one with Liverpool. He also helped Liverpool win the Champions League in 2019.

Milner broke the record for the most Premier League appearances while playing for Brighton against Brentford in February, and ends his career with a total of 658.

"After 24 seasons in the Premier League, it feels



Milner. AP

like the right time to bring an end to my playing career," Milner posted on Instagram.

"From making my debut for Leeds, who I supported growing up, at the age of 16 and becoming the Premier League's youngest scorer, I could never have dreamed of the journey I've been on".

SNAPSHOTS

Nepal's Bhurtel hits six sixes in an over

Nepal's Kushal Bhurtel became the sixth player to smash six sixes in an over in a T20I match. Bhurtel achieved the feat against China during the Asian Games Qualifier opener in Singapore. He dispatched left-arm spinner Chen Zhuo Yue over the boundary six times off six consecutive deliveries. Yuvraj Singh, Kieron Pollard, Nepal's Dipendra Singh Airee, Samoa's Darius Visser and Bulgaria's Manan Bashir are the others in the elite club.

Hope to lead WI in ODI series against Sri Lanka
West Indies has announced a 15-member



Bhurtel.

squad for its upcoming ODI series against Sri Lanka from June 3 to 8. Shai Hope will continue to lead the side.

The squad: Shai Hope (Capt.), Akeem Auguste, John Campbell, Keacy Carty, Roston Chase, Matthew Forde, Justin Greaves, Shmiron Hetmyer, Amir Jangoo, Alzarri Joseph, Shamar Joseph, Gudakesh Motie, Sherfane Rutherford, Jayden Seales and Shamar Springer.

Serena announces return to tennis

Serena Williams confirmed her return to tennis after an absence of nearly four years on Monday, with the American great set to play women's doubles at Queen's club from June 8. The 44-year-old has not played competitively since a third-round loss at the 2022 U.S. Open left her one short of the all-time record of 24 Grand Slam singles titles, jointly held by Margaret Court and Novak Djokovic.

Dhruv does the star turn with century

NEW DELHI: Dhruv Singh started with an unbeaten 111 as Bal Bhavan Dwarka marched to the final of the

49th Lala Raghbir Singh hot weather cricket tournament after defeating Rann Star CC by 171 runs at Modern School on Monday.

The scores: Bal Bhavan Dwarka 342/8 in 40 overs (Yash Bhatia 83, Dhruv Singh 111 n.o., Yajas Sharma 62, Shubham Dubey 3/66) bt Rann Star 171 in 22.3 overs (Abhay Chauhan 87, Suryakant Chauhan 4/23).

LIVE TELECAST

French Open: Sony Sports Ten 2, 3, 5 & LIV, 2.30 p.m. & 12 a.m. (Wednesday)

England Women vs India Women: 3rd T20I, Sony Sports Ten 1 & LIV, 11 p.m.

International Friendlies: Sony Sports Ten 5 & LIV, 12.15 a.m. (Wednesday)

R. Kaushik

To assert with any certainty that there was always a sense of inevitability about Royal Challengers Bengaluru storming to a second successive IPL title can only come with the assurance of a mission already accomplished. But there is no denying that from the outset, it was clear that this juggernaut would take some stopping.

The weight of the world had been lifted from their shoulders last June, when they ended years of heartbreak with a six-run defeat of Punjab Kings in the final in Ahmedabad. At the same Narendra Modi Stadium, they etched their name on the trophy for the second time on Sunday night, brushing aside Gujarat Titans with a chilling finality that resonated with their army of fans across the world.

Rajat Patidar, the unassuming and unlikely hero of this remarkable transformation, couldn't have given himself a better birthday gift. The Madhya Pradesh man turned 33 on Monday; he also turned a corner of sorts as he joined M.S. Dhoni and Rohit Sharma as the only captains to have successfully defended the IPL trophy.

'Attacking' the title

'Defend' was actually a word missing from the Bengaluru franchise's lexicon all season long. They didn't quite relish the tag of 'defending champions' because that's not how they have reshaped their philosophy. It was therefore in the fitness of things that they attacked a second title rather than defended the first one.

The skipper was at the forefront of many a stunning cameo, though the more meaningful and numerically significant contributions came from two men who joined the franchise as teenagers so many moons ago.

Virat Kohli was picked up by the flamboyant but also prescient Vijay Mallya at the draft for under-19 players ahead of the inaugural edition. Kohli had just led the Indian colts to a memorable title run in Kuala Lumpur, even then showing a feisty aggression that remains his calling card.

Delhi Daredevils, who had the first bite at the draft cherry, passed up the opportunity to snap up the burgeoning local hero, investing instead in the left-arm pace of Pradeep Sangwan because they felt they already had enough top-order batting options in skipper Virender Sehwag, Gautam Gambhir, Shikhar Dhawan and AB de Villiers.

Gem of a pick

RCB's turn was next, and they grabbed Kohli with both hands, sparking a bond for the ages. There is no gainsaying how Kohli's IPL career, potentially even his India career, would have panned out had he turned out first for Daredevils (renamed Delhi Capitals). But with RCB, he has grown organically, from a young tyro occupying a dressing room populated by the likes of Rahul Dravid, Anil Kumble, Jacques Kallis and Shivnarine Chandernaul, among others, to a leader of men and now an elder statesman who continues to be the fulcrum that has effectively kept Father Time at bay.

Kohli is 37 and a half, a young man in all aspects except sporting, you'd imagine. In cricketing terms, even for a batter, 37 and a half is a lot closer to the end of one's career than its beginning. But if you didn't know who Kohli was and what his age was (which is impossible for anyone who has even a fleeting interest in the sport), you'd not even start to guess that he has been playing at the international level for nearly 19 years.

Even today, despite having achieved almost everything there is to achieve, among them World Cup triumphs in both the 50- and 20-over versions, he is energised by the scent of battle, by the prospect of taking on and taming the fastest, the craftiest and the williest bowlers in the business.

Internationally, he only plays 50-over cricket, and isn't therefore seen in India colours as much as his adoring supporters would want. Maybe that has contributed to his freshness because over the last two months, Kohli has been a compelling, commanding figure who has towered over the others with his intensity and unhidden passion.

He is still prone to histrionics – needless, many might harangue – but even that is part of the larger-than-life Kohli persona, a way of rousing himself up that seems to be working wonders for him.

At the top of his game

Kohli finished as his franchise's leading run-maker and fourth overall in the Orange Cap race. In the past, he has made plenty more than his 675 runs this season, but he hasn't scored those runs at the same rate that marked his domination of this campaign.

Kohli hammered 73 fours – the third most after Sai Sudharsan (75) and Shubman Gill (74) – and 25 sixes as he struck at 165.84. The boundaries



VIJAY SONELI

Kohli, Bhuvneshwar and the band that believed

The veterans showed they still have enough fuel left in the tank to dominate as Royal Challengers Bengaluru retained the IPL crown with ease; Patidar, unperturbed by the expectations, scripted his own piece of history by winning back-to-back trophies

K.R. DEEPAK

accounted for 65.5% of his runs, but he also didn't forget the lifeblood of run-making, which is the humble single and slightly less modest two.

He egged on men a decade and more younger to keep looking for twos when even a run and a half was a stretch, he threw himself around the park with an enthusiasm that would have put the 15-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi to shame, and – lest we should forget that avatar – he was in the face and ears of the opposition batters, snarling and growling and sometimes opting to ignore outstretched right hands after a game, such as with Travis Head of Sunrisers Hyderabad.

Skipper's meteoric rise

Fears that the towering, inescapable shadow of Kohli would stymie Patidar's growth as a leader of men have proved singularly unfounded in the last two years. Patidar's has been an interesting journey with the franchise. Bought in 2021, released after a disappointing season and requisitioned late in 2022 as an injury replacement for Luvnith Sisodia, Patidar reminded everyone of his extraordinary skills with a century in the Eliminator against Lucknow Super Giants.

He missed the whole of IPL 2023 with a severe Achilles' heel injury for which he underwent surgery but re-announced himself with 395 runs (SR: 177.13) in 15 outings in 2024. When RCB decided to move on from Faf du Plessis and cast their collective eye inwards for the next leader, their gaze settled firmly on Patidar, him with little leadership experience at any level. What a masterstroke that turned out to be.

The deciding personnel, Kohli certainly among them, were impressed by Patidar's calmness and composure under pressure, the respect he enjoyed within the group and his tactical awareness as well as his ability to think on his feet. To the outside world, it might have seemed an optimistic gamble, but the wisdom of the move to elevate Patidar to the captaincy became increasingly obvious as IPL 2025 unfolded.

Patidar himself has grown in stature, his confidence evidently bolstered by ending RCB's seemingly ceaseless barren run in the tournament. This season, he was at his aggressive best, fusing 501 runs with a staggering strike-rate of 192.69. He set stall as the consummate six-hitter, smacking 42 off them in just 260 deliveries and taking down the most celebrated bowlers, including Kagiso Rabada and Rashid Khan, with a majestic approach bordering on the disdainful. He has remained his own man despite the presence of such gargantuan figures as Kohli and Josh Hazlewood, leading by example and therefore not having to ask of his charges what he himself didn't do.

Around him, the likes of his old mate Venkatesh Iyer, Devdutt Padikkal, Tim



David and Krunal Pandya flourished with the bat, thriving on responsibility and role clarity. The aura around this batting group allowed them to carry the gifted but underachieving wicketkeeper-batter Jitesh Sharma with no discernible weakening of the team's firepower.

Experience is gold

Such is the lot of the bowlers that they are often relegated to second-class status, but RCB haven't allowed that to come in the way of their appreciation of the other teen-turned-veteran, Bhuvneshwar Kumar. 'Bhuvi' joined the franchise in 2009 when 19 and didn't play a single game but is now the unquestioned leader of a solid bowling group with the peerless Hazlewood as his partner-in-crime and young Rasikh Salam more than holding his own, as evidenced by 19 wickets and an economy of 9.45.

Bhuvneshwar is a shining example of going about his business with little pomp or fanfare, insulated from the reactions around him and sticking to his strengths while constantly evolving as a thinking bowler. He has added subtle nuances to his craft, including an ultra-effective knuckle ball, without sacrificing his core weapon, beautiful swing with the new ball. Bhuvneshwar won the Purple Cap for two years on the bounce, in 2016 and 2017, when he was with Sunrisers.

A decade on from his first taste of the bowling honours, he finished second on the wicket-takers' list (behind Rabada) with 28 scalps, his exceptional economy of 7.95 the ultimate reflection of his outstanding control despite bowling in the most demanding phases of a T20 innings.

When he moved to RCB at the

beginning of the 2025 season after 11 years with Sunrisers – he was one of the stars during the latter's title march in 2016 – that too was seen as a punt, much like Patidar's coronation. The previous year, Bhuvneshwar had taken only 11 wickets in 16 games, but RCB were willing to dish out Rs 10.75 crore at the mega auction to acquire his services.

It was money superbly spent; while Hazlewood was the leading wicket-taker for the side in IPL 2025 with 22 scalps from just 12 games, Bhuvneshwar played second fiddle with 17 sticks. The roles were emphatically reversed this time – the Meerut master was head and shoulders above the rest while Hazlewood was somewhat inconsistent, settling for 15 wickets and conceding 9.59 runs per over.

Together, though, this was a fabulous new-ball pairing, sometimes split by New Zealander Jacob Duffy, the T20 specialist who was signed as an insurance for Hazlewood but who had his moments, including a Player of the Match performance on debut in the season-opener against Sunrisers.

Fears that left-arm pacer Yash Dayal, who had a great IPL 2025, would be sorely missed were offset by the emergence of Rasikh as a bankable third, sometimes fourth, seamer, while Krunal's street-smartness and the courage of leg-spinner Suyash Sharma, used sparingly but smartly, meant the spin was in capable hands.

Beyond Bhuvneshwar and Hazlewood, RCB didn't have what seemed to be an intimidating attack – look, for instance, at Titans, who boasted Rabada, Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, Jason Holder and Rashid – but then again, when have games and titles been won on paper?

RCB had Kohli and Bhuvneshwar, and a host of other match-winners, ensuring that the whole was significantly more than the sum of their impressive parts.

THE GIST

▼ Kohli (675) finished as his franchise's leading run-maker and fourth overall in the Orange Cap race

▼ Bhuvneshwar was second on the wicket-takers' list with 28 scalps, his exceptional economy of 7.95 the ultimate reflection of his outstanding control

▼ Patidar led from the front. He was at his aggressive best, fusing 501 runs with a staggering strike-rate of 192.69

SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP



Bhuvneshwar has added subtle nuances to his craft, including an ultra-effective knuckle ball, without sacrificing his core weapon, beautiful swing with the new ball

The genie of synthetic biology is out, and with it comes power and peril

The quest to understand the universe releases the genie from the lamp: kept inside, it is of no use and leashes human thought and creativity; released but unregulated, it risks creating new and unforeseen problems; released and used wisely, the applications are many and valuable

K. VijayRaghavan

For the first time in about four billion years of life on the earth, one species is learning not just to read the book of life but to write new versions.

Humans' quest to understand and explain the natural world has always carried a double consequence: every success also enhances our ability to change the world. By understanding how diseases act, we create drugs and vaccines that change the prevalence of infectious agents. The elimination of smallpox is one example. Understanding the basis of some hereditary disorders has meant that dietary management can help those affected to live full lives. Phenylketonuria, a condition in which the body cannot process a common amino acid, phenylalanine, is one such example.

Verbosity in genes

At the core of our efforts to understand and explain the extraordinary diversity of forms and functions of life lies one molecule: deoxyribonucleic acid, popularly known by its abbreviation, DNA. DNA resides in cells, the unit of construction of our bodies – indeed of any organism – and we humans are made up of trillions of cells.

The DNA in a cell is called its genome. The linear thread of DNA that makes up the genome has an alphabet of four molecules, denoted by the letters 'A', 'T', 'G', and 'C'. A genome can have thousands of genes, and through the specific ordering of these letters, each gene can encode a specific protein. Proteins in their various forms make up, or help manufacture, all that is needed for each cell to perform its unique function.

If we were to look simultaneously at a bacterium, a fruit fly, a mouse, and a human, and think about their varying complexity, we would be tempted to hypothesise that the human has many thousands of times more genes than the fly or the bacterium. After all, we are a far more complex organism than a tiny, unicellular bacterium.

However, the commonly studied bacterium *Escherichia coli* has about 4,300 genes. The fruit fly, about 17,000. The mouse, about 21,000. And the human, about 22,000. There is only a fivefold difference in gene number between a bacterium and a human. The mouse has more protein-coding genes than us, and a water flea, *Daphnia*, has about 31,000 genes, more than either us or the mouse.

Verbosity in genes, as in conversation, is not a measure of complexity. Just as one can convey something complex and information-dense in a short, non-redundant paragraph, it is how, when, how much, and where in the cell gene products are expressed that determines complexity. While genes encode proteins, they also have DNA sequences involved in regulating when, where, and to what extent genes are expressed. These regulatory regions are locations where other specific proteins, called transcription factors bind, to turn genes 'on' and 'off'. These regulatory proteins are themselves encoded by genes.

Three extraordinary insights

The decreasing cost and increasing speed of DNA sequencing means that we can, today, sequence the genome of any organism we choose. At the start of the Human Genome Project, sequencing a human genome took more than a decade, cost close to \$3 billion, and involved thousands of scientists across about 20 countries. Today this is possible in a few hours, at a cost of a few hundred dollars, in a small laboratory. As our computational capacity also increases, so does our ability to study the genomes we have sequenced. The growing bank of genome sequences across organisms offers three extraordinary insights into all life on the earth.

First, genome sequences taken together give us a history of life on the planet, the relatedness of organisms, and how the tree of life branched in different ways. The exquisite detail that genomes provide complements the fossil record where it is available – but it also tells us the history of life where no fossil record exists. No social history of humans can provide this degree of precision and accuracy over such an extended period.

Second, when we examine genomes in the context of how an organism (bacterium, plant or animal) functions in its environment, we learn how they are adapted. Genes, famously described as selfish, ensure their own propagation by using their host organism's survival as a vehicle for their transmission. By studying



Life chemistry: The exquisite detail that genomes provide complements the fossil record where it is available – but it also tells us the history of life where no fossil record exists. No social history of humans can provide this degree of precision and accuracy over such an extended period. RETHA FERGUSON/PEXELS

variations in genes, we learn how mutations are selected as organisms adapt to their environments. Human populations that today carry genes predisposing them to type II diabetes are typically descended from groups that lived in environments where food supply rose and fell cyclically over long intervals. In today's environment of abundant food, this genetic inheritance leads to disease.

Third, just as with DNA sequencing, we are rapidly accumulating detailed information on all aspects of the cellular environment across a variety of organisms – which genes are expressed, where their products are localised, what they do, and so on. When taken together, this detailed 'cell map' can give us a picture of all the complexity within a cell in each organism we study. When gathered over the entire life of a cell or organism – and we are far from this stage of data collection – the volume and complexity of data to be analysed is mind-boggling. Yet the tools for storing, analysing, and interrogating such 'big data' are also growing.

While scepticism remains, this may therefore not only be a feasible project in theory, but also one in practice. We already see early glimpses of such comprehensive pictures appearing from diverse attempts around the world. From all of this, one can expect a substantial advance in our understanding of how life in all its diversity came about, how organisms are made, and how they work. New hypotheses will be formed and tested, and new fundamental knowledge and applications will appear.

Never before seen

With this knowledge will come expanded power in synthetic biology. Our understanding of how genes, cells, and environments collaborate to make organisms has already enabled us to

With access to computing power and memory that AI provides, it is possible to analyse cellular and environmental information and design sections of genomes or entire genomes with the desired properties on our computers

engineer nature in many ways. But what we can currently do with genetic engineering is modest compared to the potential from new avenues now opening. Engineering cells and organisms not just at the level of one or a few genes, but on a genome-wide scale, is becoming possible. These technologies will become more accurate, less expensive, and more accessible.

With access to computing power and memory that AI provides, it is possible to analyse cellular and environmental information and design sections of genomes or entire genomes, with the desired properties on our computers.

Today, the predictability of what happens when such designs are implemented still remains low: cells and organisms are notorious for resisting simplistic *in silico* predictions. But this too will change, through a combination of analytical and experimental work. Designer cells that make chemicals, drugs, materials, and fuels are already with us but they will become ubiquitous and far broader in their uses than what we see today.

It is not only cells for biotechnological applications that will be created, often making products never before seen in nature. Creating complex new forms of multicellular organisms, plants or animals, is also a real possibility. Replacing the genome of a cell with one designed and manufactured by humans is now feasible for small genomes and will

soon be possible for larger ones.

In 2010, American scientist J. Craig Venter (1946-2026) and his team chemically synthesised a complete bacterial genome and introduced it into a bacterial cell whose native DNA had been removed. This was, at a first approximation, digitally created life. They watermarked their creation by encoding three quotations into non-coding regions of the synthetic DNA – a biological 'cipher' in which letters were mapped to codons: James Joyce, from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*: "To live, to err, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life"; Richard Feynman: "What I cannot build, I do not understand"; and J. Robert Oppenheimer: "See things not as they are, but as they might be."

While we are currently limited by the speed and cost of genome-wide synthesis, this will change. It will then be possible to create large genomes, introduce them into defined cellular environments we construct, or into fertilised eggs whose own genomes have been removed.

With great power

Complementing this top-down approach, which draws on billions of years of genomic history to create new forms of life, there is a bottom-up alternative. Pioneered by Jack Szostak and others, this approach aims to synthesise a primordial cell from scratch, modelling what the earliest living systems may have looked like before the first genome was ever written. Mr. Szostak's laboratory at the University of Chicago builds protocells – fatty-acid vesicles that can spontaneously form closed membranes, encapsulate RNA, and, in the right conditions, copy that RNA and divide. The aim is to solve the great mystery of how life first originated from non-living chemistry. In working towards this, we too will develop the power to create new and complex self-replicating biological systems.

All of this raises the 'genie conundrum' that humanity has grappled with across the centuries. Our quest to understand the universe releases the genie from the lamp. Kept inside, the genie is of no use and, more relevant, we leash human thought and creativity. Released but unregulated, we risk creating new and unforeseen problems. Released and used wisely, the applications are many and valuable.

These are challenges that regulators face not only in biology but in other domains too: how does one regulate chemistry or nuclear power, for example? But the engineering of life has a feature that the engineering of a spaceship or a nuclear plant does not: the ability to convert information into a self-replicating product. Here, we must 'see things not as they are, but as they might be'. Both for what must be done, and for what we must refrain from doing.

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A reconstruction of the marine reptile *Tylosaurus rex* in the Cretaceous-era Western Interior Seaway of North America. REUTERS

Fearsome dinosaur-era reptile was *T. rex* of the sea

Reuters

Tyrannosaurus rex was a huge land predator during the twilight of the age of dinosaurs. But it was not the only *T. rex* that terrorised the Cretaceous Period. There also was a marine reptile named *Tylosaurus rex* – the *T. rex* of the sea – that rivalled its land counterpart in size and ferocity.

Scientists say they have identified *Tylosaurus rex* as a distinct species after a wide-ranging examination of previously discovered fossils. They made the judgment based on its enormous size, fine serrations along the edges of its teeth to cut flesh more efficiently, heavy-duty musculature of the jaws and neck for subduing large prey, and certain other anatomical nuances. Roughly 66 million years ago, *Tyrannosaurus rex* roamed the land in Western North America.

The seagoing *T. rex* with a streamlined body, elongated snout with large teeth, four large paddle-like flippers, and a powerful tail, rivalling its land counterpart in size and ferocity

Approximately 80 million years ago, *Tylosaurus rex* prowled an inland sea that at the time split North America in two. The seagoing *T. rex* had a streamlined body, elongated snout with large teeth, four large paddle-like flippers, and a powerful tail. The genus '*Tylosaurus*' has been known since fossils were first unearthed during the 19th century. A handful of species are recognised, including *Tylosaurus proriger*. A genus is a grouping of closely related species sharing similar characteristics. For example, lions and tigers are from the same genus but represent different species.

The largest *Tyrannosaurus rex* specimen, nicknamed Sue and held at the Field Museum in Chicago, is about 12.2 m long. The largest *Tylosaurus rex* specimen, nicknamed Bunker and held at the University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute and Natural History Museum, is about 13.2 m long. Bunker previously had been identified as *Tylosaurus proriger*, but possessed the suite of traits that assigned it to *Tylosaurus rex*, the researchers said. "The skull alone is as long as I am tall – 5-foot-7 inches (1.7 m)," said palaeontologist Amelia Zietlow of the History Museum at the Castle in Appleton, Wisconsin, lead author of the study published in the *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*.

Tylosaurus rex is a member of a group of marine reptiles with a global distribution called mosasaurs that evolved from land-living lizards to become apex marine predators during the final roughly 30 million years of the age of dinosaurs. Today's monitor lizards, including the Komodo dragon – the largest present-day lizard at up to 3 m long – are perhaps among the closest living relatives of *Tylosaurus rex*. Most of the fossils identified as *Tylosaurus rex* come from north and central Texas, though Bunker came from Kansas. The holotype specimen – the fossil used to formally name a species – is at the Perot Museum.

The new species name, meaning "king of the tylosaurs," was a nod to *Tyrannosaurus rex* – "an incredible animal itself, obviously," Ms. Zietlow said. The two *T. rexes* were not contemporaries, though forerunners of the giant dinosaur lived at the same time as the giant mosasaur. *Tylosaurus rex* was among the largest of the mosasaurs, alongside the likes of *Mosasaurus hoffmanni*.

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Building blocks: The growing bank of genome sequences across organisms offers extraordinary insights into all life on the earth. REUTERS