



Grand Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath Puri today



Elaborate security arrangements in place

NALINI SAHU ■ Puri

The pilgrim town of Puri is all set to host the world-famous Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath and His siblings on Friday with elaborate security and logistical arrangements in place to manage a massive influx of devotees.

Nearly two million devotees are expected to witness the centuries-old festival, which will see the deities, Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and

Sudarshan, ride their ornate wooden chariots to the Gundicha Temple.

Director General of Police (DGP) Yogesh Bahadur Khurania said around 200 platoons of police, eight companies of Central paramilitary forces, bomb squads, dog squads and anti-sabotage teams have been deployed to ensure foolproof security. Marine police will patrol the coast while AI-powered surveillance and anti-drone systems will monitor crowd movement and traffic.

"The city has been divided into eight security sectors for effective management. A dedi-

cated mobile app will provide real-time updates on traffic, parking and advisories," the DGP informed.

An integrated command and control centre will assist officials in handling emergencies and maintaining law and order.

Governor Hari Babu Khambampati, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and his ministerial colleagues, Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan, Jual Oram and Ashwini Vaishnaw, and many other top dignitaries are most likely to attend the grand divine celebration.

Meanwhile, Dharmendra

Pradhan appealed to devotees to shun single-use plastics during the festival, underscoring the need for cleanliness and environmental responsibility.

The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration has also released the ritual schedule for the Ratha Yatra with the ceremonial Pahandi procession of the deities beginning at 9.30 am and chariot pulling slated for 4 pm.

All arrangements are aimed at ensuring a safe, smooth and spiritually uplifting experience for the millions expected to converge on the holy city.

One terrorist killed by army in Valley

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ Jammu

Shortly after Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Thursday appealed to the devotees to turn up in large numbers at Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, which is scheduled to begin from July 3, a joint team of security forces gunned down a terrorist in the Basantgarh area of Udhampur district.

An elite Para Commando of the Indian Army was earlier 'killed in action' during a similar cordon and search operation in the forest area of Dudu Basantgarh on April 24 this year. The Indian Army's White Knight Corps, in collaboration with the Jammu and Kashmir Police, launched Operation Bihali after receiving credible intelligence about the presence of terrorists in the Bihali area of Basantgarh. "Contact was established with the terrorists early this morning, and one terrorist has been neutralized so far," an



A security personnel in a search operation after an encounter broke out between security forces and terrorists in a remote forested area, in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district, Thursday

PTI

Army spokesperson confirmed.

At the time of filing the report, at least two more terrorists belonging to the same group were trapped by the forces. Inspector General of Police, Jammu Zone, Bhim Sen Tuti, said, "Security forces, including elite Para Commandos and CRPF units, have been deployed to cordon off the area, with drones and sniffer dogs assisting in the search. Reinforcements have

been rushed to the site to tighten the cordon and prevent the terrorists' escape.

Addressing a press conference at Raj Bhawan in Srinagar, LG Manoj Sinha acknowledged the impact of the April 22 Pahalgam attack on pilgrim registrations. "Before April 22, 2,36,801 people had registered. After the incident, there was a slight drop of about 10.19% compared to last year's 5.12 lakh pilgrims. However, as of yester-

day, over 85,000 pilgrims have confirmed their Yatra, and I am hopeful the numbers will continue to rise," he said.

To restore public confidence, the administration has implemented a robust, multi-layered security grid. LG Sinha emphasized that the Indian Army, Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) along with the Jammu & Kashmir Police, have taken comprehensive measures for a safe pilgrimage.

India moves to restrict Indus waters

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

The Government is looking to restart the long-stalled Tulbul Navigation Project, as

part of a broader strategy to optimise the country's share of water from the western rivers under the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT).

A detailed project report (DPR) for the Tulbul project is being prepared and is expected to take about a year to complete.

MAY LORD JAGANNATH SHOWER US
WITH HIS DIVINE BLESSINGS AND
ILLUMINATE OUR PATH TO PROGRESS.

Have A Blessed
Rath Yatra!



For You, With You, Always

TPC^{ODL} | TPN^{ODL} | TPS^{ODL} | TPW^{ODL}

(Joint Ventures of Tata Power and Government of Odisha)

DADLS-36



MESSAGE OF HON'BLE GOVERNOR ON THE OCCASION OF RATHA YATRA

On the occasion of world famous Ratha Yatra-2025, I extend my heartfelt wishes to the devotees of Lord Jagannath across the globe.

The path to the elevation of humanity lies in embracing the consciousness and timeless philosophy of Shri Jagannath. May this divine spirit greatly contribute to fostering peace, amity, love and brotherhood in society.

(Hari Babu Kambhampati)



ପବିତ୍ର ରଥଯାତ୍ରା ଅବସରରେ ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା



ମହାପ୍ରଭୁ ଶ୍ରୀଜଗନ୍ନାଥଙ୍କ ପବିତ୍ର ରଥଯାତ୍ରା ଅବସରରେ ରାଜ୍ୟର ସମସ୍ତ ଭାଇଭଉଣୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା ଜଣାଉଛି । ରଥଯାତ୍ରା ଆମ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଅସୀମ ଭକ୍ତି ଓ ଭାବାବେଗର ଉତ୍ସବ । ମହାପ୍ରଭୁଙ୍କ ଆଶୀର୍ବାଦରେ ରାଜ୍ୟର ବିକାଶ ସହିତ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କ ଜୀବନ ସୁଖ, ଶାନ୍ତି ଓ ସମୃଦ୍ଧିରେ ଭରିଉଛି, ଏହା ହିଁ ମୋର କାମନା ।

ଜୟ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ...

(ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ମାଝୀ)
ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

CM reaffirms 'zero casualty' goal during disasters

RAJEEV RATHAN ■ Bhubaneswar

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Wednesday chaired the 2025 State-Level Natural Disaster Committee Meeting and reiterated the State Government's firm commitment to achieving zero casualty during natural disasters.

Addressing ministers, legislators and senior officials from disaster-prone districts, Majhi said that while natural disasters are unavoidable, their impact can be significantly mitigated through robust preparedness and strong interdepartmental coordination.

With the southwest monsoon bringing increased risks of floods and cyclones, the CM



reviewed preparedness across departments. He highlighted Odisha's successful handling of Cyclone Dana in 2024, which impacted 14 districts but resulted in no fatalities.

In response to drought vulnerability, the State has drawn up a plan to irrigate 15 lakh hectares over the next five years. The government has also declared unseasonal rain and heat waves as State-specific disasters, ensuring timely compensation to affected

farmers. Notably, only one death was reported due to heat wave conditions this year, the CM said.

Emphasising health sector readiness, he instructed officials to sanitise tube-wells and stock essential medicines and anti-snake venom at healthcare centres. He also called for strict monitoring of weak embankments and better water management systems. Real-time weather tracking will be enhanced with

Goppler radar installations in Sambalpur, Baleswar and Bhubaneswar. Multipurpose shelters, 909 in total, have been constructed in 25 high-risk districts while palm tree plantations have been undertaken in lightning-prone areas to minimise risks.

The emergency control rooms are operational 24x7, and ODRAE, NDRF and Fire Services remain on alert for rapid response.

Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari emphasised the use of modern equipments and trained personnel. Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo, ministers from key departments and elected representatives from vulnerable districts also attended the meeting.

With Adani & JSW

Odisha signs port deals worth Rs 18,654 crore

8,450 jobs to be created

RAJEEV RATHAN ■ Bhubaneswar

The State Government on Thursday signed Concession Agreements for two major port infrastructure projects worth Rs 18,654 crore. The move marks a decisive step toward port-led development with strategic investments from private sector giants Adani Ports and JSW Steel.

The agreements were inked in the presence of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, who emphasised the transformative potential of these projects for Odisha's coastal economy.

1. Gopalpur Port expansion-Rs 16,554 crore. Devel-



oper: Gopalpur Ports Limited (Adani Ports). Target capacity: 50 million metric tonnes (MMT). Employment generation: approx. 5,000 jobs

2. Captive jetty at Jatadhari, Erasama tehsil, Jagatsinghpur-Rs 2,100 crore. Developer: JSW Utkal Steel Limited. Capacity: 52 MMT

Employment: Approx. 3,450 jobs

CM Majhi said, "These

projects will play a key role in transforming Odisha into a major hub for maritime trade. The State will work in partnership with private companies to enhance its maritime economy."

Majhi announced plans for four additional ports to diversify the State's port ecosystem: New Ports: Inchudi and Bahuda. Upcoming ports: Subarnarekha and Astaranga.

Jobs boost: Over 8,450 direct and indirect employment opportunities.

The Rs 18,654-crore investment is being hailed as a cornerstone in Odisha's coastal industrialisation journey. With port capacity expansion, strategic partnerships and future-ready infrastructure, Odisha is positioning itself at the centre of India's maritime resurgence.

RSC holds wk-long fest to mark Day of Yoga

Host of activities undertaken

PNS ■ Bhubaneswar

The Regional Science Centre (RSC), Bhubaneswar, embarked on a week-long celebration to mark the 11th International Day of Yoga (IDY) from June 19 to 25. The event embraced this year's global theme: "Yoga for One Earth, One Health," reflecting the universal benefits of yoga in fostering holistic well-being for individuals and the planet.

Various activities were conducted at the centre including a guided yoga practice session under the banner Yoga Sangam, live streaming of Prime Minister's address and an interactive session on "Stress and Lifestyle Management and Diseases Prevention" on June 21 in collaboration with JKYog India.



An online contest on "3 Generation Yoga" was conducted in which the participants were required to upload pictures of 3 generations (Grandparent to Grandchildren) performing yogic postures. The centre with support from Bharatiya Yoga Sansthan, Bhubaneswar and the State Bank of India, RCE Campus, Bhubaneswar organised an Inclusive Yoga Session for the differently abled children, professionals, security personnel and staff members of the centre, presided over by Prant Pradhan (Odisha), Bharatiya Yoga Sansthan Suresh Kumar Mohapatra.

Govt committed to making Odisha ganja-free: Min

PNS ■ Bhubaneswar

The Odisha Government has initiated a campaign to make the State completely ganja-free. Excise Minister Prithviraj Harichandan on Thursday announced that a structured process has already begun to eliminate ganja cultivation and its illegal trade across the State.

Addressing the media, the minister made a direct appeal to the public, especially in tribals-dominated regions, urging them to stay away from ganja farming. He expressed concern that members of tribal communities are often lured by drug mafias into cultivating the banned crop on the promise of financial gains.

He informed that several joint strategies have been dis-



cussed between the Excise Department and the Police, aimed at enforcing tighter surveillance, uprooting ganja cultivation and taking strict action against offenders.

"Tribal people are often lured by drug mafias to cultivate ganja. We are also working on a plan to provide alternative livelihood plans for these communities. This year, we have destroyed the maximum of illegal ganja cultivation," Harichandan stated.

Along with enforcement, the government will launch awareness drives to educate tribal communities about the dangers of narcotic cultivation and the legal consequences involved. The focus will be on both curbing the supply chain and rehabilitating vulnerable communities. The government will keep a sharp eye on drug mafias while sensitising local populations. This is not just a law enforcement issue but a social responsibility, the minister said.

Cong slams govt for failing to contain cholera

RAJEEV RATHAN ■ Bhubaneswar

Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Bhakta Charan Das had recently constituted a fact-finding committee to assess the alarming spread of cholera across the State. Committee chairperson and Congress MLA CS Raazen Ekka addressed the media here, revealing disturbing ground-

level findings on Wednesday.

Ekka stated that cholera has spread like wildfire in over 11 districts, affecting more than 12,000 people, far beyond the official figures shared by the State Government. He alleged that contaminated drinking water is the primary cause and claimed that many villagers are still dependent on pond water with the government

failing to ensure safe drinking water supply.

He further pointed out that many hospitals are running without paramedical staffs and doctors. Contrary to government claims, more than 20-30 deaths have occurred due to cholera, but the administration is suppressing data. Of the 53,000 villages in the State, 24,000 still lack access to potable water, he added, calling

for urgent attention before the upcoming Rath Yatra.

Former PCC President Prasad Harichandan demanded that the government bear all treatment costs of cholera patients and compensate bereaved families with Rs 25 lakh each. He also urged immediate water source testing and vaccine provision.

PCC vice-president Santosh Singh Saluja

slammed the Health Minister alleging he remains "lost in celebration while people are dying," and demanded his resignation.

The fact-finding team visited cholera-affected regions in Cuttack and Jajpur districts. The team submitted a detailed report urging structural reforms in rural water supply, health staffing and epidemic preparedness.

Bhagabanprakash's book "Lucy's Children"

A social narrative of our times by an Odia globetrotter

Dr Bhagabanprakash's book "Lucy's Children" is an autobiographical non-fiction that covers a wide range of contemporary social narratives.

The book reflects the ideas and emotions of a trained sociologist, social development expert, and a student of literature who has nicely blended the combined expertise and experience based on his international exposure to around 70 countries.

Born in the pre-independent India in an upper caste poor family of a temple priest of a non-descriptive village in Khurda district of Odisha, Bhagabanprakash has made a very fascinating life journey as a small-time school teacher to a university faculty to a leader of country's largest youth programme, NSS to adviser to Election Commission of India. He is more known for his regular columns in the Sambad. As a prolific writer, he authored three popular books such as, Bikalp Biswa, Truteeya Drusti and Ditiya Pruthivi. He is also recognised as a public intellectual in civil society circle who is more concerned for



MANAS JENA

building an inclusive developed Odisha. Gandhi's death has impacted his childhood memory of school days and later, he was influenced by Gandhian thought. A non-vegetarian and passionate advocate of organic farming, he established SAMBHAV, an organic farming center, with late Prof Radhamaohan as the co-founder.

He was part of a group of inspired youth in their late thirties looking for a radical social change in society and for promotion of

rational ideas in social and personal life. They identified caste system and social issues as a major barrier of social transformation of backward societies. In the early seventies, social actions were more influenced by ideas of Gandhi, Binova and Lohia's anti caste reform movement where they gave a call to denounce caste surnames

through motivation and research. His efforts have resulted in building a band of critical youth social entrepreneurs of different commitment and later, they became the role models of social action in the State with their visible action research to bridging the gap between communities and government. Being non-political in his approach to devel-

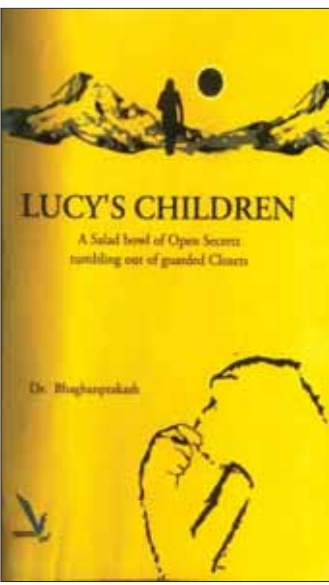
SOCIAL CANVAS

and remove the sacred thread as a caste privilege and symbol to demonstrate the upper caste hegemonic pride. Interestingly, the group once met the then Chief Minister of Odisha late JB Pattnaik at his residence and made a surprising request to him to wipe out his caste surname "Pattanaik" and also ambitiously proposed him to ask his Education Minister to issue an official circular to all educational institutions to not to use the caste surname during admission. But they failed to convince him about such a very radical action.

His social development action started mostly with youth action

opment, Bhagabanprakash identified civil society as a fifth pillar of democracy for community development to creatively complement and supplement to many government initiatives of transformative actions.

Going through his book will make you encounter with many such interesting narratives to his personal conviction in fighting social issues that disturbed him the most while serving in some remote tribal areas. He left his lasting imprints on institutions where he served in different capacities and contributed through his policy interventions and actions.



The writer is a "frequent flyer" and conceived this book in a air travel from San Francisco to New Delhi. The book 'Lucy Children' written in 2016 has 18 chapters that deals with social issues rooted in our understating of persistent myth, mythology, people's narrative, epics, religion, history, anthropology, sociology and modern science. The title of the book itself is

interesting because the very name "Lucy" is not any one connected to the writer but the name of our common grandmother of humans whose 2.8 million years' fossils were discovered in Ethiopia in 1974. And we all are her children. The book can be seen as a document of social history of the last 65 years that meticulously narrates the human suffering of infants and mothers struggling with unsafe child delivery, unwanted pregnancy and lack of contraceptives.

Here he narrated his own childhood experience and personal family life, about his mother who got married at age of 13 and delivered 9 children before she died early because of repeated multiple pregnancy issues along with breast cancer. He also talked about the pathetic condition of widows of those days and their multiple ways of suffering by depicting the life of his own "Nani Maa", a child widow as a symbolic metaphor of all widowhood, who left home to live in the holy city of widows. He remembered his school days and humorously narrated the school system specially the role of teachers and their very repressive method of

teaching children with unbearable heavy physical punishment of different varieties inclusive of verbal abuse. But when he became a teacher, he encountered different issues at a higher level with insensitive Principals and arrogant Vice-Chancellors who are against creative methods of imparting knowledge and their detachment from public cause.

The end part of the book is a kind of semi-research report on old age related issues, may be the writer's role as an adviser to Helpage India International. It exposes him to a wide range of old age social and physical complications to develop a very indepth understanding based on social and physical science. This is important while we are going through a major demographic shift and the number of older people is projected to double by 2050. The book was released in Delhi by former Chief Election Commissioner of India, Dr SY Quraishi and suggested by eminent Indologist Wendy Doniger and former BBC Bureau chief Mark Tully for a must reading.

(manasbbsr15@gmail.com)

In Mayurbhanj Woman gang-raped while returning from temple

2 accused held;
another still at
large

PNS ■ Baripada

A 25-year-old woman was allegedly gang-raped by three men while returning from a temple in Karanjia in Mayurbhanj district. Though the crime occurred on Tuesday, it came to the fore the following day after the woman's family filed a complaint. This is the fifth such inci-

dent in the State in a span of 10 days.

In connection with the Mayurbhanj incident, police have arrested two persons, who were identified as Bikash Kumar Patra (33) and Lokanath Mohanta (30). Both are from Malharpada village in Karanjia and have been produced in court. The third accused Bapi Patra is still at large.

As per the complaint, the woman, who belongs to Nuagan village in Bisoi, had

gone to her uncle's place in Haladiaposhi. On Tuesday, she visited the Hanuman temple at Nadhagadia and was returning to her uncle's house when the three miscreants intercepted her near a cashew forest. Before she could react, they abducted her on their two-wheeler and took her to a deserted roadside restaurant near Kuita petrol pump.

While Bikas raped her, Lokanath molested her and Bapi filmed the incident. They

then left the woman at Karanjia College Chhak and fled.

After coming home, the victim shared the ordeal with her family and filed a complaint, acting on which a case was registered by the Karanjia police.

Police said the main accused raped the woman while the other two abetted him. Their bike has been seized. Two persons have been apprehended and efforts are on to nab the third accused.

In Mayurbhanj Armed men loot Rs 8L from Gramya Bank

PNS ■ Baripada

Armed miscreants looted the Kuche branch of Gramya Bank on Wednesday, under the Kuliana police station in Mayurbhanj district and decamped with Rs 8 lakh.

The incident occurred at around 2:45 pm with customers and employees present in the bank.

As per eyewitnesses, five men wearing helmets arrived

by two motorcycles at the bank and barged into the bank carrying guns and sharp weapons, terrorised those present and warned them against making any calls.

One of the assailants confronted the cashier and demanded money from the drawers. Simultaneously, another miscreant held bank manager Ranjita Soren at gunpoint, threatened her against alerting the police.

The other gang members snatched mobile phones from both staffs and customers, removed computer hard drives and took away the main gate key of the bank.

The group swiftly collected the cash, locked the gate from the outside, and sped away. However, before fleeing, they threw the seized mobile phones and gate key outside the bank compound.

As per the estimation by the branch manager, the stolen amount is believed to be between Rs 6 lakh and Rs 8 lakh. She also mentioned that the robbers spoke in Hindi, Bengali and Odia.

Later, Eastern Range DIG Satyajit Nayak and Mayurbhanj SP Varun Guntupalli visited the site. Police have begun reviewing CCTV footage to identify and trace the robbers.

After safe return to India Odia students from Israel narrate harrowing experiences



PNS ■ Bhubaneswar

A group of Odisha students studying in Israel has safely returned to India amid the ongoing conflict in the region. After facing days of anxiety and living under the constant threat of rocket attacks and air raid sirens, the students landed in New Delhi on Tuesday and shared their terrifying experiences from the war zone.

The students, who were enrolled in various Israeli universities and research institutions, were evacuated as part of the Indian government's emergency repatriation efforts. Upon arrival, many of them expressed relief, but also recounted the psychological trauma of being in a war-torn environment.

"When we were on board the flight yesterday from Jordan and Kuwait, we saw missiles coming from the Iranian side and interceptors. Israel is really safe, as there are bunkers. We initially thought it was some sort of light, then realised it was a missile," said an Odia student studying at Tel Aviv University.

On Sunday, a missile landed near the university. No major damage was caused, she added.

"Sirens would go off at odd hours, and we had to rush to bunkers within seconds," said one Odia student. She de-

scribed how students had to abandon classes and research labs, living in uncertainty and fear.

Another student said, "My hometown is in Jajpur, and it was for the last one and a half years that I was studying in Israel. The Indian Embassy was in direct contact with us right from the day when the war started. When Operation Sindhu started, we started our registration process. Every arrangement was made by the Indian government via different routes. We spoke to students of other countries; they were in despair as their concerned governments had told them to come on their own."

The students appreciated the support provided by the Indian Embassy in Tel Aviv, which regularly updated them on safety protocols and coordinated evacuation.

"Our Odia community abroad stayed connected through WhatsApp groups. We made sure no one was left behind. Every two to three hours, we had to rush into bunkers," said a student leader from the group.

After reaching New Delhi, the students were welcomed by their families and Odisha representatives in the capital. Many plan to return to their studies once the situation improves, but for now, they are just happy to be home.

Cong hits back at BJP's Constitution Murder Day

Terms it
hypocritical

RAJEEV RATHAN ■ Bhubaneswar

Responding sharply to the Odisha Government's observation of 'Constitution Murder Day' on the 50th anniversary of the Emergency, the Congress on Thursday accused the BJP of indulging in political theatrics while systematically eroding Constitutional values through its governance model.

Former PCC president Prasad Harichandan said, "The Emergency was an extraordinary political decision taken within Constitutional provisions and later revoked through a democratic process. But what we are witnessing under the BJP rule today is a permanent and systematic subversion of democratic in-

stitutions."

Harichandan added that the Modi-led government has turned agencies like the ED, CBI and Income Tax into tools of political vendetta, targeting Opposition leaders while shielding those who join the BJP. "This is not emergency for 21 months; this is undeclared emergency for 10 years," he said.

OPCC president Bhakta Charan Das, while honouring the role of Opposition parties during the Emergency, reminded that India's democracy today is facing its gravest challenge. "The BJP cannot whitewash its own sins of muzzling dissent, jailing journalists and curbing federalism by revisiting a past chapter it had no role in restoring," he said.

Das also pointed to recent incidents in Odisha, in-

cluding the ongoing cholera outbreak and the deaths due to administrative negligence, stating that the real "murder of the Constitution" is when a government fails to ensure the Right to Life and Health guaranteed under Article 21.

The Congress further questioned the Odisha Government's "selective glorification" of BJP's role during the Emergency while conveniently forgetting the contributions of non-BJP stalwarts who also opposed it like Dr Harekrushna Mahtab and Biju Patnaik.

The party urged Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi to focus less on symbolic events and more on substantive governance, including addressing public health crises, unemployment and the deepening rural distress in the State.

Singh Deo seeks Centre's support for resilient, green power infra

NALINI SAHU ■ Bhubaneswar

At the Conference of State Energy Ministers and Energy Secretaries of Eastern Region States held in Patna on Tuesday, Odisha Deputy Chief Minister and Energy Minister KV Singh Deo reaffirmed the State's commitment to developing a resilient, green and future-ready power infrastructure.

Addressing the summit chaired by Union Power Minister Manohar Lal, Singh Deo emphasised Odisha's progress in the power sector and its vision to emerge as a model State in energy transformation.

"Odisha has successfully moved from being power-sufficient to power-empowered. We are strategically investing in renewables, grid resilience, transmission planning and financial reforms," he said.

Highlighting Odisha's ambitious targets, Singh Deo noted that 61 per cent of the State's power capacity is



planned to be from non-fossil fuel sources by 2036. Odisha aims to add 11,294 MW of green energy capacity, of which 3,904 MW is already under contract. Renewable power corridors, including major projects like Hirakud, Kolabira, Duburi, Indravati, Theruvali and Gopalpur, are being developed to support this transition.

He also showcased Odisha's

achievements in power distribution, citing a sharp drop in AT&C losses from 29.5% in FY21 to 16.5% in FY25. He noted that three of the State's four distribution companies (DISCOMs) have earned A+ ratings and rank among the top 10 performing utilities in India.

Singh Deo urged the Union Government to sanction Rs 6,284 crore under the Re-

Gopalpur gang-rape: Accused produced in court

RAJEEV RATHAN ■ Bhubaneswar

The Crime Branch on Thursday produced the prime accused in the Gopalpur gang-rape case before court after the completion of their remand period.

Sources in the Crime Branch confirmed that the remand period, which was granted earlier for interrogation and further investigation into the sensational case, concluded on Thursday. The accused were brought before the designated court amid tight security arrangements.

The Gopalpur gang-rape incident had triggered massive public outrage across the State after reports emerged of a minor girl being sexually assaulted by multiple individuals. The government handed over the case to the Crime Branch for an impartial and



in-depth probe.

According to officials, during the remand, the Crime Branch interrogated the accused to uncover the sequence of events, identify other possible suspects and gather digital and forensic evidence. The agency is also verifying whether there are links to any

larger criminal network.

As per court procedure, further legal action will follow based on the findings of the investigation. The case continues to remain under close monitoring by senior police officials with assurances given to the victim's family that justice will be delivered swiftly.

Zohran, New York mayoral candidate, has Odisha roots

RAJEEV RATHAN ■ Bhubaneswar

As Zohran Mamdani emerges as the Democratic nominee for New York City Mayor, a strong sense of pride is sweeping across Odisha, his maternal homeland. The 33-year-old New York State Assembly member, known for his progressive politics, carries deep ancestral roots in the State through his mother, celebrated filmmaker Mira Nair.

Mira Nair was born in Rourkela and raised in Bhubaneswar, where she spent her formative years before moving abroad. Her father Amrit Lal Nair, a 1949-batch IAS officer, played a key role in setting up the Rourkela Steel Plant. His legacy continues to be remembered through landmarks like Nair Chowk in Rajgangpur and Nair Stadium in Sundargarh district.

Though Zohran was born in Uganda and moved to New

York at the age of seven, his Odisha connection has remained a source of strength and identity. His campaign in New York City has drawn admiration from Indian-Americans, particularly the Odia diaspora, who see in him a reflection of their aspirations and legacy.

"It's not just a political moment; it's a cultural one," said a resident of Bhubaneswar. "Mira Nair took Odisha's spirit to the global stage through cinema, now her son may do the same in governance."

If elected on November 4, 2025, Zohran would be New York City's first Indian-American and Muslim mayor, marking a historic moment for immigrant and minority representation. For Odias around the world, his potential victory is also a testament to Odisha's growing presence on the global stage.

BJD demands CBI probe into Brahmapur rape case



RAJEEV RATHAN ■ Bhubaneswar

The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) on Thursday demanded a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into the rape of a minor girl by a fake doctor in Brahmapur, citing the accused's strong political affiliations and suspected links to organised crimes.

In a memorandum to the Inspector General of Police, Southern Range, the BJD alleged that one Bhabani Sankar Dash, who operates a clinic in Baidyanathpur, raped the girl employed at his establishment. An FIR has been registered at

the Baidyanathpur police station following the victim's disclosure to her family.

The BJD stated that the accused holds a prominent post as the BJP's Ganjam district president of the Workers' Front and is a former Brahmapur City BJP president and Vishwa Hindu Parishad Ganjam district president. He is reportedly close to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Ministers Bibhuti Bhusan Jena and Gokulanand Mallick.

The party suspects that the accused may have abused multiple girls and expressed

grave concerns over possible involvement of his clinic in trafficking and illegal organ trade.

To ensure impartiality and restore public trust, the investigation must be handed over to the CBI immediately," Ganjam district BJD president Ramesh Chandra Chyupatnaik said.

The BJD delegation included former Jagatsinghpur MP Dr Rajashree Mallick, Brahmapur Mayor Sanghamitra Dalai, former minister Tukuni Sahu and former Ganjam district president Subash Maharana.

Bhartiya Rail: At the service of Rath Yatra pilgrims

The holy city, the abode of Mahaprabhu, Jagannath Puri, is ready for the Rath Yatra. It is a journey of faith for the millions of devotees coming from across the globe. And Bhartiya Rail is at the service of these pilgrims, facilitating their overall experience in the Shreekshetra Puri.

Last 11 years have been historic for Odisha's railway infrastructure development. Under PM Shri Narendra Modi's Purvodaya policy, Odisha's railway budget allocation has seen a twelve times jump to over 10,500 crore in 2025-26 as compared to the annual average during 2009-14. Since 2014, over 2,100 km of new tracks have been laid in Odisha - more than the entire rail network of Malaysia.

Approximately 73,000 crore worth of projects for constructing new tracks in Odisha are ongoing. 59 Amrit stations are being developed, including 16 stations in aspirational districts. 6 Vande



ASHWINI VAISHNAW

Bharat services covering 17 districts are operational.

The most special contribution of Indian Railways to Odisha is during the Rath Yatra. The railways undertakes the task of serving lakhs of Rath Yatra pilgrims every year.

There has been a four times jump in the Rath Yatra special trains over the last 11 years. A total of 1,215 train services including 850 regular and 365 special train services are being provided this year for Jagannath Puri. These services

connect many districts of Odisha including aspirational districts of Kalahandi, Balangir, Nuapada, Koraput, Rayagada, Gajapati and Dhenkanal and interior tribal regions to Shreekshetra Puri. An AI-based real-time demand prediction system has enabled dynamic scheduling. 10 platforms are welcoming the pilgrims this year. Additional ticket counters have also been set up at Puri as well as other railway stations.

With the spirit of Seva Parmo Dharma, Bhartiya Rail ensures dignity, comfort and security of the pilgrims during the Rath Yatra. This year marks one of the largest facilitation drives for inclusive pilgrimage travel.

Railways is ready to cater to around 20 lakh passengers with a daily peak of 2 lakh. A holding space with a capacity to accommodate 25,000 pilgrims has been designated. Adequate arrangements have been made to provide relief from the hot weather. Suffi-

cient food stalls and water booths & coolers have been arranged. An estimated 2.5 lakh free meals will be served to the pilgrims.

Sanitation and cleanliness arrangements including modern jet cleaning machines and sewage suction trucks are also in place. A much larger pool of security personnel have been deployed for ensuring safety and security of the pilgrims. They will be supported with CCTVs, drones, and face recognition systems.

Accessibility needs of Divyangjans, elderly, women and medically-vulnerable pilgrims have also been taken care of. Medical booths with doctors and paramedics, ambulances, and first-aid counters have been set up. This year, Indian Railways has converted Puri station into a model of inclusive and faith-centred public service.

A team of Indian Railways including engineers and technicians is also deployed at the Rath Yatra. This team is re-

sponsible for ensuring smooth movement and repair work of the chariots during the Yatra. The team assists in transporting the massive chariots from the construction site to the Shree Jagannath Temple.

The railways team uses the special screw jacks for ensuring proper positioning, alignment, and forward movement of the chariots on the designated path. It also helps in removing any obstacles and maintaining adequate distance between the chariots. The team accompanies the chariots till the completion of the Yatra.

Bhartiya Rail is fondly called as the lifeline of the nation. It remains committed to the service of all Indians including the pilgrims who consider Rath Yatra as their lifeline.

(The author is Union Minister for Railways, Electronics & Information Technology and Information & Broadcasting)

Language was used to divide India: Home Minister Shah

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said language was used as a means to try to divide India in the past but such efforts were never successful, and the Modi government will ensure that Indian languages become a powerful medium to unite the country.

Addressing the golden jubilee celebrations of the Central government's official language department, Shah also said Hindi is not an opponent to any Indian language, rather it is a friend of all Indian languages and that there should be no opposition to any foreign language in the country.

He said the country's administration should align with the spirit of the nation, and for the self-respect of Indian languages, administrative func-

tions should also be conducted in Indian languages.

"In the last few decades, language was used as a means to try to divide India. This move was not successful even though efforts were made. We will ensure that our languages become a powerful medium to unite India," he said.

The home minister said the official language department will work in this endeavour.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has laid the foundation for creation of a great India by 2047 and efforts will be made to make the Indian languages enriched and increase their utility.

"I sincerely believe that Hindi can't be an opponent to any Indian language. Hindi is a friend of all Indian languages," he said.

Hindi and other Indian languages together can take the self-esteem of the country to its final destination, Shah said.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah

FILE PHOTO

He asked all state governments to take the initiative to impart medical and engineering education in the local language.

The home minister also said

that everyone should get rid of the slavery mentality and until a person takes pride in his own language, or does not express himself in his language, that person cannot be free from the

mentality of slavery.

"There is no opposition to any language. There should not be any opposition to any foreign language. But there should be an urge to glorify

one's own language, there should be an urge to think in one's own language," he said.

Shah also said that language is the "soul" of a nation.

"Language is not just a medium of communication, it is the soul of a nation. Our roots, traditions, history, and culture cannot move forward separately from the languages. Keeping languages alive is as essential as enriching them," he said.

He said efforts should be made in the coming days for growth and expansion of all Indian languages, especially for the official language.

The home minister said if a country has to progress, it is absolutely essential that its administration operates in its own languages and with this great objective, the department of official language was established.

"Indian languages should be used as much as possible in government work, not only in the Central government but also in the state governments. For this, we will also help the state governments, encourage them and try to convince them," he said.

Extending greetings to all the well-wishes of the official language Hindi, the home minister congratulated the admirers of Indian languages across the country on the golden jubilee year of the department.

Shah said this was the 50-year journey from 1975 to 2025 of the official language department and when India will celebrate the centenary of its Independence, the name of the official language will be inscribed in golden letters in the history of all the efforts made for the reawakening of India's pride.

He said in the last 11 years,

Prime Minister Modi has launched the 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' programme under which initiatives have been taken to host events like the Kashi-Tamil Sangamam, Kashi-Telugu Sangamam, Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamam, and Mithila Festival, so that the country's unity can be further strengthened.

The home minister said entrance examinations like the JEE, NEET, CUET are now conducted in 13 Indian languages. Besides, he said, examination for recruitment in the constable posts in the Central Armed Police Forces are now conducted in 13 languages instead of earlier Hindi and English.

"I am happy to say that 95 per cent of the candidates are taking the constable examination in their mother tongue. This tells how bright the future of Indian languages is in the coming days," he said.

Somnath Bharti cannot represent wife in her defamation case: Sitharaman to Delhi court

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday informed a Delhi court that AAP leader Somnath Bharti cannot legally represent his wife in a defamation case due to "conflict of interest".

Bharti's wife, Lipika Mitra filed a criminal complaint against Sitharaman before a court accusing her of defamation.

Sitharaman's counsel argued Bharti representing his wife Mitra in her complaint was conflict of interest as Mitra was Bharti's wife, who alleged that the minister's purported speech damaged her husband's reputation.

he counsel said Bharti couldn't appear in his own case and should withdraw his vakalatnama (document authorising lawyer to represent) failing which a reference ought to be made to the Bar Council of India for initiation of disciplinary proceedings against him.

Additional Chief Judicial



Nirmala Sitharaman

Somnath Bharti

Magistrate Paras Dalal posted the hearing on July 16 after Bharti sought time to argue on the application.

The judge on May 19 issued notice to Sitharaman, noting that "the proposed accused is to be given opportunity of being heard".

"Fresh case for making and publishing defamatory, derogatory and libelous remarks in print and electronic media against the complainant received by way of assign-

ment. It be checked and registered," the judge noted.

The judge passed the order after hearing submissions on point of cognisance/issuance of notice to Sitharaman.

The complaint claimed that Sitharaman made "defamatory, false, and malicious statements" in a press conference on May 17, 2024 with the sole intention to tarnish the reputation of Bharti and weaken his chances of winning in general elections.

According to the complaint, the utterances were made "solely with an intent to hurt the complainant and her husband" for political gains to BJP's candidate and political loss to the complainant's husband during 2024 lok sabha election.

The accused, it said, spoke about the matrimonial discord of the complainant and her husband but withheld the information of their reunion and living together happily.

ICMR in process to procure two more mobile BSL-3 laboratories

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has initiated the process of procuring two more Mobile BSL-3 (MBSL-3) laboratories to step up outbreak response capabilities and bolster public health delivery, especially in remote and inaccessible areas.

Called RAMBAAN, there are currently two such laboratories — each stationed at ICMR's two institutes, the National Institute of Virology in Pune and the RMRC in Gorakhpur, UP.

RAMBAAN is the first of its kind Rapid Action Mobile BSL-3 laboratory and is fully indigenous. It is field-deployable and designed to meet enhanced diagnostic demands during outbreaks of known and unknown high-risk pathogens.

An initiative of ICMR, it was developed in partnership with Klenzaids Contamination Controls Private Limited, Mumbai, under the patronage

of Pradhan Mantri-Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the apex research institute said.

The MBSL-3 was successfully deployed and operationalised for the first time during the Nipah virus (NiV) outbreak in Kozhikode, Kerala, in September 2023 and again in Malappuram district of the state in July 2024, it said.

This "laboratory on wheels" is built on a heavy-duty Bharat Benz vehicle chassis, compliant with BS-VI norms, designed to operate at extreme temperatures and altitudes and bears a maximum load capacity 17,000 kgs.

It is classified as a Type-IV Rapid Response Mobile Laboratory (RRML) as per WHO GOARN RRML laboratory network classification.

The laboratory is designed to maintain a negative air pressure environment and is equipped with an advanced heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system with HEPA filters.

It also features a double-door autoclave and a biological liquid effluent decontamination (BLED) and hydrogen peroxide (H2O2) fogger system for biological waste management.

The MBSL-3 laboratory's work area is divided into four zones -- zone-1 (driver and outer change room), zone-2 (shower and inner change room), zone-3 (main laboratory), and zone-4 (material staging and decontamination area).

Key installations within these zones include biological safety cabinets (Class II A2), an intelligent programmable logic controller system, a dynamic pass box, and an entry-exit shower system with biometric control.

The laboratory's power supply can be from a direct electric supply or a diesel generator, with an uninterrupted power supply (UPS) and petrol generators for backup. Communication within the laboratory is facilitated by walkie-talkies and real-time surveillance through CCTVs.

272 Indian, 3 Nepalese nationals evacuated from Iran

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

India has evacuated 272 Indian and three Nepalese nationals from Iran following the conflict with Israel, officials said on Thursday.

A special flight carrying them arrived in Delhi a little past midnight from the Iranian city of Mashhad.

"#OperationSindhu update 272 Indian and 3 Nepalese nationals were evacuated from Iran on a special flight that arrived in New Delhi from Mashhad at 00:01 hrs on 26th June. 3426 Indian nationals have been brought home from Iran as part of #OperationSindhu," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Randhri Jaiswal posted on X.

India on Wednesday had evacuated 296 Indian citizens and four Nepalese nationals from Iran.

India on Tuesday had evacuated more than 1,100 citizens from Iran and Israel.

It has brought back 594 Indians from Israel, using C-17 heavy-lift aircraft of the Indian Air Force to fly out more than 400 people after they were moved out of Israel to Jordan and Egypt by land transit points.

Also, 161 Indians were brought back in a chartered flight from Amman after they had moved to the Jordanian capital from Israel by road.

A total of 573 Indians, three Sri Lankan and two Nepalese nationals were evacuated from Iran in two chartered flights on Tuesday, according to details shared by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

Several other flights have brought Indian nationals back home after being evacuated from Iran in the past several days. Israel and Iran fired hundreds of missiles and drones at each other's cities and military and strategic facilities since the hostilities began more than a week ago.

RSS seeks removal of socialist, secular from Constitution

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

RSS general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale on Thursday demanded that the Congress must apologise for the imposition of Emergency by the Indira Gandhi government 50 years ago. Addressing an event here, Hosabale also made a strong pitch for the removal of two words — socialist and secular — from the preamble of the Constitution, which were inserted by the erstwhile Congress government during Emergency.

Recalling the days of Emergency, which was announced on June 25, 1975, Hosabale said while thousands of people were put in jail and tortured during that period, freedom of the judiciary and



Union Minister Nitin Gadkari with RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale and President of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) Trust Ram Bahadur Rai releasing a book authored by Rai during an event marking the 50th anniversary of the Emergency in New Delhi

PTI

media was also curtailed.

The days of Emergency also witnessed large-scale forced sterilisation, the RSS leader said.

"Those who did such things are today moving around with

Constitution's copy. They have still not apologised... Apologise," he said.

"Your ancestors did it... You must apologise for this to the country," Hosabale said.

DRI seizes Pakistan-origin goods worth ₹9 crore

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

In a significant enforcement action, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has seized goods worth Rs 9 crore under 'Operation Deep Manifest', targeting illegal imports of Pakistani-origin goods routed through Dubai.

The operation has thus far led to the seizure of 39 containers carrying 1,115 metric tonnes of goods in blatant violation of import policy conditions and prohibitions imposed by the government on direct or indirect import or transit of Pakistani-origin goods, the finance ministry said in a statement on Thursday. One of the partners of an importing firm was arrested on Thursday, it added.

Following the Pahalgam

terror attacks, the government imposed a comprehensive ban, effective May 2, 2025, on the direct or indirect import or transit of goods originating in or exported from Pakistan.

Previously, such goods were subject to 200 per cent customs duty. Despite these stringent measures, some importers attempt to bypass the government policy by misdeclaring the origin of goods and manipulating the related shipping documents, the ministry said.

"In two separate cases, these consignments were seized at Nhava Sheva port. The consignments were falsely declared as UAE-origin, masking their Pakistani origin. However, investigations revealed that these goods actually originated from Pakistan and were merely transhipped via Dubai for

import into India," it noted.

Investigations revealed that the goods were initially transported from Pakistan to Dubai on one set of containers and vessels and subsequently transferred to another set of containers and vessels bound for India, it said.

Further examination of goods and analysis of documents gathered during investigations conducted so far uncovered cargo movement trails from Karachi port, Pakistan, and transshipments at Jabel Ali port, Dubai, en route to Indian ports, the statement said.

Furthermore, it said, money transfers/financial linkages with Pakistani entities were traced, raising serious concerns about illicit financial flows. The entire modus operandi was orchestrated through a complex web of transactions involving

Pakistani and UAE nationals, aimed at obscuring the true origin of the goods, namely Pakistan. In the context of "Operation Sindoor" and the prevailing heightened security environment, DRI intensified its vigil through augmented intelligence gathering and data analytics to target consignments emanating from Pakistan, the ministry said, adding that this proactive surveillance resulted in high-value seizures.

In the light of prevailing regional and global security threats, "Operation Deep Manifest" exemplifies DRI's steadfast commitment to upholding the government's policy, customs and other relevant laws; safeguarding national and economic security of the country and preventing the misuse of trade channels for import of Pakistani-origin goods.

Congress to ensure backward castes get respect in Bihar, north India: Rahul

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has said that his party is with backward communities in their fight for power in proportion to their population and again called for conducting a caste census at the earliest.

Gandhi, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, said this during a meeting with members of the Vishwakarma community at his residence here earlier this week.

In a video shared by him on Thursday, Gandhi is heard saying that the Congress would strive to help the OBCs and the extremely backwards get respect in north India and Bihar.

"My aim is to hand over the Congress party's command in the hands of OBCs, Dalits, tribals. This is your weapon," he told the Vishwakarma commu-

nity leaders. "...When I see injustice being done to backwards and very backward communities, I don't like it. My endeavour is that in Bihar and north India, the extremely backwards should get respect and their history should be respected. I want to strengthen the original roots of extremely backward community, which the BJP-RSS is trying to weaken," he said.

Gandhi pointed out during the meeting that people of the community were not there in the bureaucracy, media, corporate India, higher judiciary or among the generals in the armed forces.

"The solution to your problems is caste census and the day it is done, your community will realise that they do not have a share according to their population. "The big question is how you will enter the country's power system. Merely having

some MLAs from your community is not enough. You are fighting for representation and not for power. You should fight for power," the Congress leader said.

Sharing the video of the meeting on his WhatsApp channel, Gandhi said lack of representation, loss of traditional employment, humiliation and contempt, and a large population of the country being away from the mainstream were their main complaints.

Giving the example of Congress freedom struggle for complete independence, the Congress leader said he explained to them that mere representation is not enough - "a united strong voice is also necessary".

"The first and most important step in this direction is 'caste census' — the tool that will bring out the real situation of the society."

President inaugurates cancer-care centre at SGRH

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated a state-of-the-art cancer-care centre at the Sir Ganga Ram Hospital (SGRH) here on Thursday and interacted with patients during her visit to the facility.

Describing the event as a moment of pride, the hospital authorities said the president's presence marked a recognition of the institution's legacy of delivering ethical, affordable and quality healthcare for more than seven decades.

The newly-inaugurated Comprehensive Cancer Care Centre brings together medical, surgical and radiation oncology, along with day-care chemotherapy, under one roof, aiming to offer a one-stop destination for cancer diagnosis, treatment and long-term care, according to a statement issued by the hospital.



President Droupadi Murmu during the inauguration of Sir Ganga Ram Cancer Centre in New Delhi

PTI

Equipped with cutting-edge diagnostic and therapeutic technologies, the facility is designed to offer personalised and multidisciplinary treatment to cancer patients, the statement said.

Murmu also unveiled a commemorative plaque and toured the premises, commending the hospital's contin-

ued commitment to patient-centred care and medical excellence.

Doctor D S Rana, chairman of the Sir Ganga Ram Trust Society, said the launch of the cancer-care centre was a significant step toward the hospital's vision of accessible and compassionate healthcare.

"For the past 50 years, the

hospital has been run by a dedicated Board of Management consisting of 25 eminent doctors. We are proud to follow a sustainable, charity-based healthcare model. The Cancer Care Centre is not just an infrastructure milestone — it is a reflection of our dream to serve more communities and eventually establish SGRH

Medical College," Rana said.

Echoing the sentiment, Doctor Ajay Swaroop, chairman of the Board of Management, added, "This centre marks the culmination of the dream of our stalwarts and positions the hospital as a total comprehensive healthcare provider. We now offer the most-advanced diagnostic, therapeutic and after-care services for all types of cancer."

The hospital was founded in 1954. Hospital officials said the cancer-care centre aligns with the SGRH's long-standing mission of blending advanced medical science with humility, empathy and service.

President Droupadi Murmu visited ailing former Jharkhand chief minister Shibu Soren at the Sir Ganga Ram Hospital here.

She met Soren's son and Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren and enquired about his father's health.

Learning to live like a baby, says Shubhanshu Shukla

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla on Thursday said he was learning to live in microgravity conditions “like a baby” and it was an amazing experience to float in vacuum as the Dragon spacecraft circled the Earth in its journey to dock at the International Space Station.

Sharing his experience via a video link from the spacecraft, Shukla said after remaining in quarantine for 30 days, where he was far away from all the excitement, ahead of the launch of the Axiom-4 mission on Wednesday, “the only thought in my mind was to let us just go”.

Shukla and three other astronauts lifted off from NASA’s Kennedy Space Centre in Florida on board the Dragon spacecraft, powered by the Falcon-9 rocket for a 14-day stay at the International Space Station (ISS). The astronauts, part of the Axiom-4 commercial mission, docked at the ISS at 4:30 pm on Thursday.

“Wow, what a ride it was. Frankly, when I was sitting in the capsule Grace, yesterday on the launch pad, the only thought in my mind was let’s just go. After 30 days of quarantine, it was a feeling that I just wanted to go. Excitement and all was very far away. There was just this feeling that let us just leave,” Shukla said. The new Dragon spacecraft of SpaceX has been named Grace by the astronauts.

He also introduced ‘Joy’, a toy swan that



India’s Shubhanshu Shukla and three other astronauts react after Space-X Dragon spacecraft docked to the International Space Station

is the zero gravity indicator and the fifth “crew member” on the Axiom-4 mission.

Sharing his experience of encountering the gravitational force during the launch, Shukla said he felt like being pushed back in his seat. “But when the ride started, it was something. You were getting pushed back in the seat. It was an amazing ride and then suddenly nothing. Everything was silent and you were just floating. You were unbuckled and just floating in the silence of vacuum,” he said.

Shukla said the first few moments after they got shot into the vacuum did not feel that great, but soon it was “an amazing feel-

ing”. He added that his fellow astronauts have told him that he has been sleeping a lot since the launch on Wednesday.

“I am getting used to it quite well. I am enjoying the views, enjoying the experience and learning like a baby. Learning the new steps, learning how to walk, learning how to control yourself, learning how to eat. It’s just so exciting,” Shukla said.

“It is a new environment, a new challenge and I am really enjoying this experience with my fellow astronauts here. It is good to make mistakes, but it is better to see somebody else do that too. So it has been a fun time,” Shukla said.

India rejoices as Shukla reaches ISS

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

India rejoiced again as the Space-X spacecraft with Lucknow-born astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla on board landed at the International Space Station (ISS) on Thursday.

‘Bharat Mata ki jai’, ‘India-India’ and ‘Hip Hip Hurray’ chants intermingled with resounding applause after the Dragon spacecraft docked to the orbital laboratory after a 28-hour journey around the earth.

After joining for Wednesday’s successful liftoff from Kennedy Space Centre in Florida, marking India’s return to human spaceflight after 41 years, Shukla’s parents and relatives, teachers, friends, scores of students and astounded onlookers greeted the successful docking with a standing ovation and let out a collective roar at Lucknow’s City Montessori School here.

Shubhanshu’s family were also seen joyously holding the Tricolour as the Dragon spacecraft completed the docking sequence with ISS.

“He has reached the ISS; we are over the moon,” Shubhanshu’s sister Suchi Misra said, admitting that it was a moment when the astronaut’s family, like the rest of India, felt overwhelmed.

Like Wednesday, Shubhanshu’s parents — Shambhu and Asha Shukla — were there to witness the momentous occasion at the World Unity Convention Centre (WUCC) of CMS, where Sudhanshu studied till class 12.

“He is our son, but now he is more than that. For he is carrying with him to space not just our blessings but the dreams and prayers of a billion Indians, all of whom are rejoicing not just for my



Shubhanshu Shukla’s mother Asha Shukla, father Shambhu Shukla and others celebrating after Shukla reached the International Space Station in Lucknow on Thursday

son but also because the moment heralds India’s triumph in space,” Shubhanshu’s father said.

Since Wednesday’s lift-off, the Shukla household had been praying.

“Of course, we have deep belief in the almighty whose blessings help in achieving big missions. Shubhanshu is a deep believer in Lord Hanuman and all other gods, and now we are praying for his safe return after successful completion of the mission,” he added. CMS manager Geeta Gandhi Kingdon said that there was more to the moment than just celebrations.

“Of course we are delighted, like all Indians, more so as he is an alumnus who has made all of us so proud. But, at this moment as he enters the ISS, Shubhanshu also symbolises India’s growing muscle in space,” she added.

“I hope his journey inspires the rise of many more Shubhanshus across the country. It’s a moment of immense pride for every Indian,” Suchi had said during Wednesday’s liftoff.

And on Thursday, Sudhanshu Gaur, sports teacher at the CMS Aliganj branch where Shubhanshu studied, admitted to growing enthusiasm among students to become astronauts.

“I am witnessing a newfound enthusiasm among students to become astronauts. We had a fancy dress competition in school sometime back, and the majority of students turned up as astronauts. This is just amazing,” Gaur said.

“As the docking happened and everyone went up I had tears in my eyes,” said Rishi Khanna, head of communications at CMS.

Mamata misusing Lord Jagannath’s name for commercial gains, says Puri seer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Puri/Kolkata

The Puri seer on Thursday accused the West Bengal Government of misusing the name of Lord Jagannath for commercial gains rather than religious devotion. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said she holds the Puri Jagannath temple in high esteem and has been a regular visitor as a devotee for years.

Addressing a press conference, the Shankaracharya of Govardhan Peeth, Swami Nischalananda Saraswati, said, “The West Bengal Government is misusing the name of Lord Jagannath for commercial purposes. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee does not have the religious sentiment required to name the Digha temple as

‘Jagannath Dham.’ Clarifying his remarks, the 81-year-old seer pointed out that Puri’s economy is significantly supported by pilgrims from West Bengal.

“Even Mamata Banerjee knows that Puri thrives because of Bengali devotees. Local servitors, hotels and traders benefit from this,” he said. “To stop the flow of revenue from Bengal to Odisha, she (Mamata) has constructed a Jagannath Temple in Digha and termed it as ‘Dham’. Using the ‘Dham’ tag is not acceptable,” the seer said, adding she thinks Bengali pilgrims will now spend money in Digha.

Replying a question, he also criticised ISKCON for conducting different rituals and festivals of Lord Jagannath, including Rath Yatra, on dif-

ferent dates and days not in accordance with the scriptures. “ISKCON should stop all this,” he demanded. The West Bengal Government inaugurated the Jagannath Temple in Digha on April 30 and named it as ‘Jagannath Dham’, triggering a row.

The controversy began after the West Bengal Government inaugurated a Jagannath temple in Digha on April 30, 2025 and named it ‘Jagannath Dham’. The move triggered sharp objections from Puri’s Gajapati Maharaja Divyasingha Deb, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, and servitors of the Jagannath Temple, who argue that the ‘Dham’ designation is traditionally and spiritually reserved for Puri.

Meanwhile, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata



Sohna municipal council yet to act against encroachments in Aravalli

PARVESH SHARMA ■ Gurugram

Despite repeated concerns raised over illegal farmhouse constructions in the Aravalli region near Sohna, the Municipal Council of Sohna has yet to take substantial action against the encroachments, raising questions about the seriousness of its enforcement efforts.

Sources indicate that while officials of the council are aware of the illegal activities, action has largely been limited to symbolic gestures.

On Wednesday, the council team had installed a few warning boards and placed notices in front of some farmhouses. In



some instances, only partial demolition, such as the dismantling of boundary walls, was carried out.

Municipal Council, Executive Officer (EO) Suman Lata maintained that the council is doing its best to prevent

unauthorised construction in the ecologically sensitive Aravalli hills.

“To stop illegal constructions in the Aravali area, we have deployed 12 council guards who monitor the area round-the-clock in shifts and report any suspicious activity. She also claimed that due to the non-availability of a deputy magistrate or police force, the demolition drive is sometimes hampered,” said Lata while speaking to *The Pioneer*.

However, a ground inspection by *The Pioneer* revealed a stark contrast to the EO’s claims. Loud music could be heard from within one farmhouse and a pool party was underway

at another — activities that are strictly prohibited within the protected Aravalli zone.

Previously, *The Pioneer* had reported in detail on the illegal construction of farmhouses in the region, especially near Raisina village. In response to those reports, council officials claimed to have initiated a drive to identify and take action against unauthorised structures. Show cause notices were reportedly issued to some property owners, asking them to respond within seven days.

According to officials, many of these illegal constructions begin with the erection of massive boundary walls that shield ongoing development inside.

Information gathered suggests that nearly 450 farmhouses have been sold in the Aravallis by private developers, each spanning over one or two acres.

Historical records further expose the scale of encroachment. A survey conducted by the council before 1992 had recognised only four to five legal structures in the area. Any construction that has taken place after 1992 is considered illegal under existing forest and environmental regulations.

Despite these clear violations, the lack of robust enforcement continues to allow illegal construction to thrive in one of Haryana’s most ecologically crucial regions.

Andhra lacks fiscal discipline: Jagan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Amaravati

Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday accused the TDP-led NDA Government of lacking fiscal discipline and exceeding 50 per cent of the borrowings incurred by the previous YSRCP regime in just 13 months.

Reddy said that the Andhra Pradesh Mineral Development Corporation (APMDC) concluded the second tranche of its NCD (bond) issuance at a coupon rate of 9.3 per cent on June 25 to raise ₹5,526 crore, taking the aggregate value of the issuance to ₹9,000 crore.

“With this NCD issuance, the total budget

and off-budget borrowings availed and secured in this 13-month period by the TDP alliance government exceeded 50 per cent of what was borrowed by (the) previous Government over a 5 year period,” said Reddy in a post on ‘X’.

Alleging that the N Chandrababu Naidu-led government disregards constitutional framework, the YSRCP supremo said APMDC went for the second tranche of its NCD (bond) issuance despite this matter being admitted in the Andhra Pradesh High Court and notices served over it. “Further, it is quite apparent that the proceeds of the issuance would be utilised for financing government revenue expenditure,” he said.

Uddhav, Raj call for protests against Hindi in school curriculum

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ Mumbai

Ahead of joining hands to contest the crucial Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) polls, the Thackeray cousins — Uddhav and Raj — came on the same page on Thursday and announced their plans to stage protests against the BJP-led MahaYuti Government’s decision to make Hindi as a “third language” for the Class 1st to 5th students in Marathi and English medium schools in the State.

While the Raj Thackeray-led Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) will take out a padyatra from Girgaum Chowpatty to Azad Maidan on July 5 (Saturday) to protest against Hindi being made “third language” in school, the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) would hold a rally on the same issue at Azad Maidan on July 7 (Monday).

Informed sources in both the parties are not ruling out the possibility of the Shiv Sena (UBT) and MNS taking out a joint a joint protest at the Azad Maidan on a mutually agreed upon date in the first week of

July. In an effort to amplify the impact of the issue raised by them, the Thackeray cousins are involving the participation of all Marathi-speaking people, authors, artists, actors, lawyers, academics, sportspersons and other citizens.

A coordination committee of Marathi intellectuals and academics has already thrown its lot with the Thackeray cousins to boost the protests announced by them against the ruling MahaYuti Government of the BJP, Shiv Sena (Eknath Shinde) and NCP (Ajit Pawar) on the Hindi language issue,

Prior to the protest planned by it on July 7, the MNS will burn the copies of the Government circular on the Hindi issue, on June 29.

Slamming the Devendra Fadnavis-led Government for “imposing” Hindi on students in schools in the State, Uddhav said the Hindi language decision had stemmed from “linguistic emergency” declared by the ruling BJP.

“What is happening is nothing but a ‘linguistic emergency’. India’s federal structure is built around linguistic states, but the Government is not imple-

under the Constitution,” CJI said.

A judge does not become independent just by passing orders against the Government, he further said.

“A judge should always remember that we have a duty, and we are custodians of the rights of citizens and constitutional values and principles. We don’t just have power, but a duty is cast upon us,” he said. A judge should not be guided by what people will say or feel about their judgment, the CJI said.

“We have to think independently. What people will say cannot become a part of our decision-making process,” he added.

The CJI asserted that he always let his judgments and work speak, and always stood by the fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution.

Referring to his judgment against “bulldozer justice”, he said the right to shelter is supreme. Gavai reminisced about his childhood days, saying while he wanted to be an architect; his father wished that he become a lawyer.

Global stage set for excellence at World Cryptic Crossword Championship

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi/London

The stage is set for a historic moment in the world of cryptic crosswords, as World Cryptic Crossword Championship (WCCC) 2025 prepares to crown its champions and unite the planet’s finest minds in a grand celebration of cryptic crosswords. For the first time ever, the cryptic crossword — a cerebral art form that has challenged, entertained and enriched minds for over a century — will have its own formal World Championship, courtesy of the pioneering efforts of Extra-C, a leading organisation in the field of intellectual and knowledge-based competitions.

WCCC 2025 promises to bring together top solvers from across continents in both individual and team-based competitions, giving cruciverbalists a global platform to showcase their skills and earn international acclaim.

WCCC 2025 is organised through ACAD Global - a daily international crossword challenge run by extra-c at

For the first time ever, the cryptic crossword — a cerebral art form that has challenged, entertained and enriched minds for over a century — will have its own formal World Championship

www.crypticsingh.com. ACAD Global is the year-round training ground for crossword solvers — offering a daily cryptic clue at 12:30 GMT, global leader boards and an engaging platform to sharpen skills in preparation for WCCC.

No separate registration required for WCCC. Free registration via ACAD Global is mandatory for all participants (both individual and team championships). After registering, participants will receive login credentials to access WCCC events. The World Cryptic Crossword Championship (WCCC) 2025 will open with the much-anticipated Individual Championship, an online event where the sharpest minds from across the

globe will compete for the coveted title of World Champion. The second day of WCCC 2025 will see the spotlight shift to London for the prestigious Team Championship, an in-person contest that will bring together some of the finest cruciverbalists worldwide. The event is scheduled for June 29, 2025 in London.

Participation in the Team Championship will include two categories of contestants: Country Representatives - top solvers specially invited by the organisers based on their past performances in national and international competitions - and Challenger Participants, an open category welcoming all crossword enthusiasts who hold a valid ID and have registered for ACAD Global.

Crosswords are one of the finest examples of intellectual sport. The WCCC 2025 aims to take this cerebral challenge to a truly global level — where the best minds can pit their skills in friendly competition. We invite all lovers of wordplay and logic to be part of this historic championship, said Amitabh Ranjan, COO Extra-C, in a statement.

Editor's TAKE

Looming water crisis: Act now or pay the price later

With demand poised to outstrip supply by 2030. Water emergency is not a distant threat, it is already unfolding

In India we have taken natural resources for granted. We care little about them but exploit them to hilt realising little that these resources are limited and if not consumed in a responsible way would perish faster than we can imagine. India today stands on the brink of a monumental water crisis that threatens to derail its economic progress, destabilise food security, and imperil public health. Despite housing 18 per cent of the world's population, India holds only 4 per cent of its freshwater resources. NITI Aayog's 2018 Composite Water Management Index had already sounded the alarm — 600 million Indians are living under high to extreme water stress. By 2030, demand could double the available supply. Yet, despite the growing evidence, the country continues to respond with fragmented policies and piecemeal solutions. The roots of this crisis are deep and multi-layered.

One of the primary causes is the grossly unequal distribution of water across the country. While some states struggle with devastating floods, others face year-round droughts. Climate change has intensified this disparity. Adding to this challenge is India's overwhelming dependence on groundwater. Excessive extraction has pushed India to become the world's largest user of groundwater. Replenishment rates simply cannot keep up. Climate change has transformed the water equation from a future threat to a present crisis. Erratic rainfall patterns have made agriculture precarious. The shrinking glaciers have further led to the shortage of water across storage systems. Glaciers in the Himalayas — the lifeline of rivers like the Ganga and Indus — are melting at alarming rates.

The contamination of water sources presents an equally serious challenge. The 2024 Annual Groundwater Quality Report revealed that 70 per cent of India's water is contaminated, with arsenic and fluoride contaminating drinking water for over 230 million people across 19 states. Untreated sewage and industrial waste continue to choke rivers, rendering them unfit for use. The toll on public health is staggering. According to NITI Aayog, nearly 200,000 lives are lost each year to waterborne diseases — a tragedy that is preventable. Cities like Bengaluru, Chennai, and Delhi have already experienced water crises of a scale once thought unimaginable. According to NITI Aayog, 21 Indian cities could exhaust their groundwater by 2030, impacting over 100 million people. There is, however, a way forward. But it requires systemic transformation. Integrated Water Resource Management (WRM) must become the norm rather than the exception. Water cannot be viewed in isolation — it is intricately connected with energy, agriculture, climate, and health. National policies must reflect this reality. Nature-based solutions like wetland restoration need to be scaled up alongside cutting-edge technologies such as real-time monitoring and water accounting systems that can track usage and redistribute resources more equitably. A water-secure India is the bedrock of economically vibrant, and socially just future. The consequences of inaction will be huge. What remains to be seen is whether India will rise to the challenge.

PICTALK



Artisan in Jaipur meticulously weave carpet on the handloom, preserving centuries-old traditions with every knot and thread.

PHOTO: PANKAJ KUMAR

Karakoram anomaly: Relook Indus Water Treaty

With India suspending the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), the abeyance of the IWT, combined with a renewed focus on harnessing water resources from the western rivers, signals a decisive policy shift regarding natural resource sharing

Islamabad's preference for terror on India's civilian and armed forces using ISI-trained terrorists, as compared to the belief in conventional warfare has misfired after the Pahalgam terror attack on April 22nd, where 26 civilians, mostly tourists including a Nepalese national lost their lives. Immediately after the attack India expelled Pakistani nationals, reduced its diplomatic presence and kept the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) in abeyance. In response to the April 22nd attack, India launched Operation Sindoor in the wee hours of May 7th, and hit and decimated terrorist infrastructures at nine locations — five in PoK and four in Pakistan's Punjab province including Muridke and Bahawalpur, the headquarters of two major terrorist organisations Lashkar-e-Taiba or Jaish-e-Mohammed.

The operation also resulted in the killing of more than a hundred terrorists in these camps. Pakistan's response using Turkey and Chinese-made weapons was foiled and in four days of conflict, considerable damage was inflicted on Pakistan's eleven airbases and air defence system. Even after the ceasefire was announced at 5.35 pm on May 10th, IWT continued to be kept under abeyance. Two countries have fought several wars and India has faced many terrorist attacks orchestrated by our neighbour, but it is for the first time since 1960 that IWT has been suspended. A permanent cost has been inflicted on Pakistan for the misadventure. In recent years India has been seeking bilateral modification of IWT. The treaty signed in 1960 divides six rivers of the basin between the two. Indus, Jhelum and Chenab are the western rivers allocated to Pakistan, while Ravi, Beas and Sutlej are the eastern rivers allocated to India. Further, the treaty allocated 80 per cent of water for Pakistan and only 20 per cent for the upper riparian state, India. No other water treaty in the world has ignored an upper riparian state like this and has been the most generous treaty favouring the lower riparian state. The treaty also did not take into account global warming, climate change issues and environmental impact assessment, as brought out in the departmentally related Standing Committee report 2021.

While the treaty was operational, Pakistan has continuously objected to India's hydro-electric projects. In recent years, the objections to the Kishenganga and Ratle hydroelectric projects are for anyone to take note of. With such baseless objections, Pakistan moved International Court of Justice, Hague, which is quite irksome and hampers our growth. Further, it is challenging for the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir to progress economically. Reports have substantiated that UT suffered hundreds of millions of rupees



annually due to IWT. Sixty-five years into the treaty, climate change has altered the scenario considerably. The glaciers located on the eastern side that feed water to Sutlej, Beas and Ravi rivers are at relatively lower altitudes as compared to the glaciers in the Karakoram mountain ranges that feed water to western rivers namely Indus, Jhelum and Chenab. The glaciers at lower altitudes are losing mass at a higher rate and are retreating faster.

In higher Karakoram mountain ranges, glaciers are not losing masses, and are relatively stable. In the scientific community, it is called the 'Karakoram anomaly'. From the depleted glacier mass there has been a considerable reduction in the flow of water in the eastern rivers namely Sutlej, Beas and Ravi. This has impacted water availability for irrigation and power generation in the Indian states of Punjab and Rajasthan, as well as in the UT of J&K. Thus, despite IWT allocated 20 per cent water share for India, we got only 5 per cent. 'Karakoram anomaly' is termed as the stability or the anomalous growth of glaciers in

central Karakoram, in contrast to the retreat of glaciers in other nearby mountainous ranges of the Himalayas and other ranges of the World. Studies have highlighted the role of temperature in establishing and sustaining the anomaly over the years. Western disturbances are the primary feeder of the snowfall for the region in winter. It has also been found in the study that 53 per cent of precipitation and 65 per cent of snowfall in the region is

powered by western disturbances. This has resulted in an increase of precipitation intensity in the Karakoram ranges by 10 per cent in the last two decades. This explains the role of Western disturbances in sustaining the anomaly. In other words, the flow of water in western rivers namely the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab is sustainable and may increase by 10 per cent, while that in eastern rivers Ravi, Beas and Sutlej shows a depleting trend. Given scientific findings, IWT must change. Post Pahalgam, PM Modi has reiterated that the treaty will remain suspended till our neighbour stops supporting terrorism in all forms and manifestations.

Especially given the 'Karakoram anomaly' owing to climate change, IWT in its present form cannot be revived, even if Pakistan supports terrorism. PM Modi has directed officials to expedite the planning and execution of projects on the Chenab, Jhelum and Indus rivers. The central Government has also committed to fast-track environmental clearances of all pending and proposed projects in the Indus River basin in J&K to utilise the maximum amount of water from the river system. Canals on Chenab are also being planned to be extended to cover more areas for irrigation. Uri Stage II, Kirthal-II and Sawalkot projects are for the generation of power and also for irrigating agricultural fields, and are already listed for single window clearance. The work on the Tulbul navigation barrage in the Wullar Lake in north Kashmir, essential for providing navigation in the Jhelum river, was suspended in the 1980s, under pressure from Pakistan, but can now be revived. After keeping IWT in abeyance, India released water from the Baglihar and Salal dams for the desiltation of reservoirs. This caused swelling of the Chenab River and flooding in Pakistan.

After completion of de-siltation, the gates are closed, disrupting the agriculture sowing/paddy transplant in Pakistan's Punjab and Sindh.

Even India is not obliged to share rainfall data now. Pakistan has come up with another bluff, saying that China in a similar way can stop Brahmaputra water, where India is the lower riparian state. China can never punish us in that way. The Brahmaputra originates in the Angsi glacier in Tibet and flows through China as Yarlung Tsangpo before entering India's Arunachal Pradesh. It is called Siang and Dibang in Arunachal Pradesh and Brahmaputra in Assam and Bangladesh. China has already announced the building of a hydropower dam on Yarlung Tsangpo, but Indian experts opined that it cannot cut the flow of water in Brahmaputra. IDSA's peer-reviewed data suggests that even during lean periods Yarlung Tsangpo's annual outflow from China is far lower than Brahmaputra's total discharge in India. Assam CM Hemanta Bishwa Sarmah recently responded to this bluff and posted on X, "Brahmaputra is not a river India depends on upstream — it is a rain-fed Indian river system, strengthened after entering Indian territory."

Only 30 to 35 per cent flow is fed by glacier melting and some rainfall in Tibet in Chinese territory and the remaining 65 to 70 per cent is fed from Indian monsoon through the rivers Subansiri, Lohit, Kameng, Manas, Dhansiri, Jia-Bharali, Kopili, Krishnan, Digaru and Kuls in the catchments spread in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland and Meghalaya. Any Chinese upstream intervention will have no impact on India.

(The writer is a retired Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Karnataka. Views are personal)

Telangana's fight against child labour

SECOND Opinion

A recent report on child labour rescues has found that Telangana outpaced all other states in pulling children out of unlawful employment in 2024-25. Of the 53,651 children rescued in India during this period, 11,063 were given a new lease of life in Telangana. The state not only carried out the most number of rescue operations in the country but it also topped the list of arrests made against the offenders.

While this is good news for all the vulnerable children rescued from exploitative work, their lives will still be in limbo in the absence of appropriate rehabilitation. This crucial task may be an easier one for Telangana as it already has a successful rehabilitation roadmap, thanks to MV Foundation, the Hyderabad-based, not-for-profit, which has managed to withdraw over one million children from work. By mainstreaming them into formal schools, MVF has also made 1500 villages child-labour-free. This is no mean achievement. The cornerstone of their success has been their belief that any child out of school should be considered a child labourer and that school and education were the only options for eliminating child labour. The model adopted to reach this goal is simple. First, a survey of all children out of school is conducted in each of the intervention villages. Villagers were often taken aback to see a sari-clad lady outside their homes asking about their children. But Shantha Sinha, founder trustee MVF and Magsaysay awardee for her work to eliminate child labour, had no compunctions in sitting on the floor of their homes to persuade them to send their children to school. This personalised approach helped in facilitating permission for their children to attend residential bridge course camps (RBC).

These provide short-term intensive education programmes to help children who had dropped out of school to work or those who had never been to school, fill their knowledge gaps. Then they are mainstreamed into government schools. Establishing Child Rights Protection forums comprising the community, parents, local panchayat members and school teachers, ensures children enrolled stay in school. Had it not been for this house-to-house survey, 11-year-old Amritha would have continued to work with her family as agricultural labourers. She was reconciled to going to sleep most of the nights on an empty stomach. But her life changed when MVF came to her village to spread awareness about education. They motivated her parents to send her to the RBC. When it became known that Amritha had gone to the camp, five other children, who heard about the life-changing



SWAPNA MAJUMDAR

ing experience, also joined her there. One of them was working at a roadside eatery and afraid that he wouldn't be allowed to join the RBC, ran away without informing his employer. He walked 10 km to catch a train to the MVF camp. The MVF approach has given hundreds of children a chance at a second childhood by fostering a sense of community ownership to ensure the elimination of child labour. This has provided support for a large number of such children to go beyond primary schooling. Many of them have achieved their dream of becoming doctors, lawyers, engineers and media personalities. Equally vulnerable to exploitation are those reported missing as they too are at risk of being trapped in working in dangerous trades.

Over 11,400 children were reported as missing in 2024-25, according to India Child Protection, a voluntary organisation, that prepared the report on child labour rescues in conjunction with Just Rights for Children, a civil society network of over 250 organisations working in coordination with law enforcement agencies to combat child labour and trafficking. Although a large number of these missing children have been found, they face similar challenges of rehabilitation. Adapting the community-based, child-protection approach to mainstream them back to school could be life-changing for all these children.

(The author is a journalist writing on development and gender. Views are personal)

Letters to the Editor

Restored Sholay to premiere in Italy

The iconic Bollywood classic Sholay will screen in its original, uncut form — including its long-lost climax and deleted scenes — at the prestigious Il Cinema Ritrovato Festival in Bologna, Italy, this Friday, June 27, 2025.

The film will be showcased on a grand open-air screen at Piazza Maggiore, the city's historic central square. This restored version is the result of painstaking efforts by the Mumbai-based Film Heritage Foundation, led by Shivendra Singh Dungarpur, in collaboration with India's National Film Archive and international restoration experts. The screening marks the world premiere of the restored Sholay, offering global audiences a rare glimpse of Ramesh Sippy's vision as it was originally conceived.

As it will subsequently screen in Indian theatres, its changed ending will disturb the five-decades-formed image in the audience, giving relief to some while it may not affect the new generation. Indeed, it is a proud moment for film lovers in India.

The world premiere of the restored Sholay on June 27, 2025, at Il Cinema Ritrovato in Bologna marks a historic cinematic moment. Audiences will witness Ramesh Sippy's complete vision for the first time, including the original climax. The restoration, led by the Film Heritage Foundation and global partners, will soon reach Indian theatres.

RS NARULA PATIALA

Tripura becomes fully literate state

Tripura has become the third fully literate state after Mizoram and Goa. In 1961 Tripura's literacy rate was 20.24 per cent; in 2011 it reached 87.22 per cent.

For the last decade or so, Tripura's literacy rate was more than 90 per cent, but it was lagging behind on some parameters; hence, it could not attain fully literate state status earlier.

It is to be noted that any state acquires this status once it reaches more than 95 per cent literacy rate. But we need to dig deeper and introspect as to why it took so long — precisely more than six decades for a population of 40 lakh people of Tripura to achieve this feat. Mediocrity is so ingrained in our blood that we do not aim for high goals and accept tortoise-pace growth as a way of life. This thinking has to change.

Hopefully, other states can take a cue from Tripura and keep promoting learning to all their citizens and take help of digital mediums to reach this level and attain full literacy. Collaborating with NGOs can also help the cause to bridge the digital gulf between rural and urban as education has to reach the remotest village in the country. Tripura's achievement of full literacy is commendable, but the six-decade journey for a small state signals deeper systemic complacency.

BAL GOVIND | NOIDA

India's complacency cost it the match

Anyone imagined that after having scored five centuries — three in the first innings and two in the second — can any team suffer a loss when they have put up a formidable 371 for the opponent to chase in the fourth innings in a Test match? Indeed, team India has now become the first team in the 148 years of Test cricket history to face such an unexpected defeat against England at Headingley sheerly by their complacency in their approach, by the slipshod fielding of dropping as many catches and a mediocre bowling attack.

Little the skipper Shubman Gill tried to rotate the bowlers and solely depending on Jasprit Bumrah won't pave the way for the team to come victorious all the time; this never happens must be realised. Only the individual records were the highlight: Skipper Shubman Gill rose up to his captaincy debut and his deputy Rishab Pant scored two brilliant tons back-to-back in the same Test — all went in vain at the end for India's own fault. KL Rahul's extraordinary ton in the second innings was not utilised in their failed attempt to dismiss England when the target set was reasonable enough to grab a victory. In a way it was a gifted match by India while Yashasvi Jaiswal dropped four catches, which includes a costly one of Ben Duckett on 97, whom England relied much upon to score in a fast-paced strategy which worked in their favour as Duckett went on to reach 149.

AP THIRUVADI | CHENNAI

MAMATA'S BOLD QUESTION SPARKS DEBATE ON DISCRIMINATION

No kudos is enough for Mamata Banerjee for asking the most relevant and burning question in a straightforward way whether speaking the language of Rabindranath Tagore and Swami Vivekananda has become an "offence" in the "Double Engine" states ("Is speaking Bengali an offence: CM Mamata Banerjee asks BJP?", June 25)! Yes, just speaking Bangla (language of India's National Anthem and National Song) and hailing from Bengal (land of Khudiram Bose, Surya Sen, Netaji and innumerable other valiant bravehearts selflessly sacrificing their all for the sake of Indian independence) are enough "excuse" for according such step-motherly treatment to the Bengalis in their very own country, now dubbed "New India"!

At first the hard-working migrant labourers from Bengal were getting heckled by the goons from Odisha to Rajasthan and often compelled to leave the concerned states without their

belongings and unpaid wages, and this ugly phenomenon has increased in deadly proportions recently! Also they are regularly being summoned by the police or detained for days in the name of "interrogation" and "identification"! But now the situation has attained such a height of absurdity that many of them have been "pushed" into Bangladesh by the security force of India! Have the hapless souls committed a "quintuple sin" of sorts — hailing from Bengal, speaking Bangla, professing Islam and daring to venture to "Double Engine" states for earning an honest livelihood!

And if their "authenticity" as an Indian citizen gets questioned despite possession of Aadhar and EPIC, then immediately the Government must declare that these cards have no legal value and stop demanding the former right from pregnancy cases in hospital to the crematorium!

KAJAL CHATTERJEE | KOLKATA

Drug abuse and illicit trafficking: The role of RPF under the NDPS act

On this International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, RPF stands as a vigilant and evolving Force, committed to securing the lifelines of the nation from the scourge of drugs. RPF is not only protecting the Indian Railways but also fortifying the nation's resolve against narcotics trafficking

FIRST
Column

Every year, June 26 is observed as the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, serving as a global reminder of the need to combat one of the most serious threats not only to human health and safety but also to the future of humanity. As India faces increasing challenges related to the rising consumption of narcotics in the younger sections of our population due to the easy availability of narcotics, the Indian Railways, and RPF have resolved not to allow the railways to be used by narcotics smugglers for their nefarious designs.

Since the Indian Railways, due to its vast network and high passenger volume, was beginning to emerge as a significant conduit for narco-trafficking, a major development occurred in 2019 when the Government of India empowered the Railway Protection Force (RPF) under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985. This authorisation enabled the RPF to search for and seize narcotics being transported through the railway network, thereby strengthening efforts to combat narcotics trafficking across Indian Railways. This decision aligned with the Government of India's comprehensive "whole-of-government approach" in the war against narcotics, reinforcing the RPF's role in national security beyond its traditional duties.

RPF's Mandate under the NDPS Act

The grant of authority under the NDPS Act enabled the RPF to act not only as a custodian of railway property but also as a proactive law enforcement agency in the domain of narcotics control. The large and relatively unmonitored railway ecosystem—characterised by open-access platforms, high-frequency passenger movement, and vast geographical spread—was being increasingly exploited by traffickers to move contraband, particularly Ganja, and this timely decision has brought about a transformational change.

Notable achievements of RPF in controlling the drug menace

In the year 2024 alone, RPF undertook a record number of operations resulting in over 1700 contraband seizure cases involving significant quantities of contraband articles. Big Seizures and Operational Successes of RPF during 2024-25 include:

- On 01.03.2024, in a joint operation with DRI Tuticorin & Madurai teams, RPF/Madurai to the seizure of 31.5 kg of Methamphetamine worth ₹150 crore from a passenger on Pothigai Express (Train No. 12661) during a targeted operation.
- On 08.05.2025, at Nabadwip Dham Railway Station (ER), a joint team seized 1.03 kg of Brown Sugar worth ₹4 crore during a surveillance operation based on intelligence generated by STF Kolkata.



MANOJ YADAVA



- On 19.06.2025, at Sealdah Station (ER), a routine RPF check led to the recovery of 3.14 kg Morphine and 3.198 kg Heroin, valued at ₹3.35 crore. The seized quantity was later handed over to NCB.

- On 05.12.2024, at Burhwal Station (NER), a joint operation intercepted two women aboard a train with 11 kg Charas worth ₹5.5 crore which was being transported from Sugauli to Kota.

- On 05.03.2025, a joint RPF-GRP team recovered 24.39 kg of Charas valued at ₹6 crore in unclaimed backpacks at Sagauli Railway Station (ECR).

- On 26.03.2025, in Varanasi Station (NR), a checking operation on Tapti Ganga Express led to the seizure of 10 kg Charas, valued at ₹5 crore, from an unattended bag.

The RPF seized contrabands valued at over ₹227.5 crore in 2024, contributing 1.34 per cent to the overall seizure quantity in the country. RPF has also arrested 1489 traffickers during the year. This significant recovery marks a noteworthy addition to the collective efforts towards building a Drug-Free India.

The outcome of the targeted and successful operations and seizures underscore RPF's evolving capabilities and intelligence-led policing approach.

Emerging patterns

An analysis of drug trafficking patterns on the Indian Railway network has revealed distinct smuggling corridors and modus operandi of traffickers. The North-Eastern Corridor (Lumding-Arunachal) acts as a critical source route for cannabis cultivation and transportation. Eastern-Central-Southern Routes (Odisha to Southern States) facilitate the movement of narcotics from Odisha to high consumption — demand centres such as Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kochi and Mumbai. Major cities act as the primary endpoints of the trafficking network, where narcotics are distributed through local networks, making them the urban consumption hubs. The affordability of Ganja, combined with its recreational nature, makes it one of the most commonly trafficked narcotics via railways. The contraband is often packed in bulk quantities and concealed ingeniously in passenger and freight luggage.

Learnings and Strategic Insights

From years of tracking illicit narcotics movements while actively pursuing the role of Sentinels of Indian Railways, RPF has developed key learnings in the domain. Traffickers rely on anonymity pro-

vided by general class compartments and unreserved ticketing. Night trains and long-distance express trains are frequently misused due to the reduced presence of uniformed personnel at night time. Concealment techniques have become increasingly sophisticated, necessitating enhanced detection methods. Youth and vulnerable populations in urban centres are primary targets for drug consumption, fueling demand.

Capacity Building and RPF's Commitment

RPF has taken concrete steps to build institutional capacity to tackle narcotics trafficking. Specially trained dog squads are now deployed at major railway stations and are actively participating in targeted operations. RPF personnel undergo intensive training on NDPS provisions, detection methods, and procedural law and inter-agency coordination in collaboration with the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB). Data analytics and crime pattern analysis have led to the systematic mapping of drug routes and the identification of vulnerable trains. Cooperation with NCB, State Police and Intelligence Agencies has led to a productive partnership based on real-time intelligence sharing and the constitution of joint taskforces for action. This progress directly reflects the Union Home Minister's strate-

gic directive that combines top-down guidance and bottom-up implementation, ensuring uniform policy application with local adaptability.

Challenges and the Road Ahead

Despite the success stories, several challenges remain. The need for more resources including narcotic detection equipment and canine units, slow judicial processes under NDPS hindering deterrence, rapid changes in trafficking routes and methods, cross-border smuggling through the porous borders of the country, and imperatives of passenger privacy is a vis surveillance concern which demands balancing individual rights with stringent checks etc needs systematic and concentrated approach to be addressed effectively.

To counter these challenges, enforcement agencies must continue to leverage advanced technological solutions such as Artificial Intelligence and scanning systems with pattern recognition capabilities for route and passenger profiling, thereby enabling predictive policing in the detection of drugs and narcotics. Community sensitisation programs to generate public awareness are essential to address the issue of consumption. The canine force is the backbone of any Force involved in the detection of narcotics, but it has its operational limitations. Possible technology solutions to enhance detection need to be explored in the field. Further, the human capabilities in the field demand capacity augmentation through specialised training and intervention in the domain.

The Indian Railways handles a substantial quantity of parcel traffic through the Seating cum Luggage Rake (SLR) vans of long-distance passenger trains. At present the contents of the parcel are not being scanned through X-ray scanners. Realizing the possibility of utilisation of parcel traffic for drug trafficking, Indian Railways has started the process of installing large-sized baggage scanners at important railway stations.

A-Pillar in the Whole-of-Government Effort

The RPF's contribution to narcotics control is not an isolated initiative but a net addition and an important part of the Government of India's integrated anti-drug effort. Its success exemplifies the whole-of-government approach, working in unison with central and state agencies to safeguard national security and public health. On this International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, RPF stands as a vigilant and evolving Force, committed to securing the lifelines of the nation from the scourge of drugs. By recognising patterns, enhancing capabilities, and strengthening inter-agency collaboration, RPF is not only protecting the Indian Railways but also fortifying the nation's resolve against narcotics trafficking in the years to come.

(The writer is Director General, Railway Protection Force. Views are personal)

MSME Day: Celebrating the backbone of sustainable growth and innovation

June 27 is MSME Day. It is a day dedicated to celebrating the significance and achievements of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). In 2017, the United Nations (UN) designated this day to recognise the vital role of MSMEs in promoting innovation, job creation, and sustainable economic growth. MSME Day highlights the need for ongoing support and innovation to help these enterprises thrive in a changing global environment.

The UN estimates indicate that MSMEs are the cornerstone of economic growth worldwide, accounting for 90 per cent of global businesses, 60-70 per cent of employment and 50 per cent of the world's gross domestic product (GDP).

The World Bank notes that 60 crore jobs will be needed by 2030 to absorb the growing global workforce, which makes MSME development a high priority for many Governments around the world. Furthermore, in emerging markets, most formal jobs are generated by Small and Medium Enterprises, which create 7 out of 10 jobs.

In India, MSME Day is particularly significant. The country has over 6.5 crore registered MSMEs, contributing 31 per cent to the GDP and 45 per cent to total exports, employing more than 28 crore people. Today, MSMEs are omnipresent, traversing all sectors from Charkha to Chandrayaan.

They are spread over variegated sectors, stretching from retail trade to repair of computers, from food and beverage services to land transport, from the manufacturing of apparel to manufacturing of furniture, from pharmaceuticals to tourism, from khadi and village industries to literally catapulting Missions into space by manufacturing aerospace components. Accordingly, these enterprises get covered by schemes and policies of different administrative Ministries of the Central Government, accentuating the essence of the Whole of Government approach.

The theme of this year's MSME Day is 'Enhancing the role of MSMEs as drivers of Sustainable Growth and Innovation'. This underscores both the relevance of the sector and its potential role in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It is a well-known fact that the definition of MSMEs followed across the world is not uniform. While some countries follow an asset-based definition, MSMEs in some other countries are identified in terms of their employment. In 2020, India became one of the countries that adopted twin cri-



teria based on investment in plant and machinery and turnover of enterprises to classify them as MSMEs. The overall ceiling for MSMEs was ₹50 crore for investment and ₹250 crore for turnover. To allay apprehensions of losing entitlements related to MSMEs, from 1st April 2025, the ceilings were raised to ₹125 crore and ₹500 crore for investment and turnover, respectively. The Indian MSME sector is also unique in its recognition and purposeful formalisation of informal micro-enterprises.

The closest proxy measure of the universe of MSMEs is the number of non-agricultural unincorporated enterprises estimated by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation's Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE). The latest report of ASUSE of January 2025 estimates 7.34 crore such enterprises. Since 1st April 2023, the number of formalised enterprises has grown fourfold, to 6.5 crore. The effort to bridge the formalisation gap is discernible. Formalisation extends the twin benefits of providing an identity to the enterprise and creating entitlements for it because of its MSME status. Enterprises registered on the Udyam Registration Portal or Udyam Assist Platform not only become eligible for Priority Sector Lending but also for schemes meant for MSMEs run by the Central Government and some State Governments.

With recently determined interventions from the Government of India to ensure affordable finance, accessible technology, and the availability of domestic and international markets, the sector has undoubtedly made great strides. While during 2000-2023, as many as 70.7 lakh guarantees worth ₹4.27 lakh crore were given under the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Micro and

Small Enterprises (MSEs), during 2023-2025, there were 44.39 lakh guarantees worth ₹5.08 lakh crore, indicating larger coverage of enterprises in a shorter period and a higher average guarantee amount. Recent reports corroborate the accomplishments of the sector. Niti Aayog's report, released in May 2025, states that the share of MSEs accessing credit through scheduled banks rose from 14 per cent in 2020 to 20 per cent in 2024.

The share of Medium Enterprises increased from 4 per cent to 9 per cent during the same time. SIDBI's survey report for May 2025 elucidates affirmative findings. 90 per cent of the survey respondents claimed to be using digital payments. 18 per cent had benefited from digital lending platforms. While one-third of the respondents stated that they had adopted at least some form of sustainable practice, an equal proportion also mentioned that limited awareness was the main hindrance to adopting sustainable practices. Mandatory procurement of CPSEs from MSEs gives enterprises the comfort of certainty. While in 2023-24, CPSEs procured ₹74,828 crore from MSEs, the corresponding figure in 2024-25 grew by 25 per cent to ₹93,697 crore.

In recognition of the achievements of MSMEs, National Awards for MSMEs have been instituted to encourage entrepreneurship and enthuse potential risk-takers to emerge as successful entrepreneurs.

The MSME Day is more than just a celebration; it is a vital call for action to strengthen this essential pillar of economies around the world. Awareness among all stakeholders, robust and integrated central databases, strengthened digital public infrastructure for addressing various issues faced by MSMEs, including access to finance, academia-industry collaboration for effective technology transfer and incentives for adopting green technologies are some steps that will cement the role of MSMEs in designing sustainable Viksit Bharat.

(The writers are officers of the Indian Economic Service. Views are personal)

Rate cuts to reforms: Fiscal policy must power India's growth engine

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) statement on June 6 announced a reduction in the Repo rate by 50 basis points to 5.50 per cent, cumulatively cutting the repo rate by 100 basis points since February.

It also surprised the economy by reducing the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) by 100 basis points to 3 per cent. This expansionary monetary policy (MP) move is expected to boost economic activity, as banks can borrow more and lend it to consumers and investors at lower interest rates. Following this, four public sector banks have already reduced the repo-related lending rates. The reduction in CRR further supports the lending spree, as it would release ₹2.5 lakh crore, giving banks further impetus to lend.

MP could choose to be accommodative, as the inflation rate has been at a comfortable target level of an average of 4 per cent, and the outlook for the year is being further revised downwards to 3.7 per cent.

Hence, inflation is not a major concern for now, but growth remains below expectation, with the projected growth for 2025-26 being 6.5 per cent, the same as the actual real growth in 2024-25.

With enough leverage provided to support growth, MPC has announced a reversal to a neutral stance for the future, and the economy cannot expect further cuts in the interest rate easily. With this future course of action of MP, they have set the ball rolling for fiscal policy (FP) measures to take the onus of stimulating growth.

The Government will now have to proactively take measures to ensure optimistic consumer, investor and producer confidence, the lifelines of a resilient economy. With the uncertainties looming due to expected tariff impositions from the US and subsequent trade wars, the Government has to be vigilant of even the smallest aberrations from the norm. On the revenue front, the Government had already reformed the income tax rate structure in this year's Union Budget, with tax exemptions, to boost consumption.

Additionally, there is an expectation of rationalisation and restructuring of the complex GST framework soon. The four-tier slab structure needs to be streamlined and simplified, which will help to incentivise consumption and production.

Further, the Government has planned its capital expenditure policy to lift the business mood. It has already front-loaded the capital expenditure in the current financial year, spending ₹1,59,790 crore in April, an increase of 61 per cent spent in the corresponding month of the previous year. The cost of Government borrowing, according to the RBI, has decreased over the years, releasing liquidity, which, if provided as



loans to the states, with assured productive expenditure, can encourage consumption, and investment, and strengthen the macroeconomy.

On the global front, India is gaining strength, as global investors are shifting their manufacturing base to India, due to production link incentives, strong global supply chains, easing of business policies, low labour cost, and high demand, to name a few.

Further, the IMF World Economic Outlook (April 2025) shows India acquiring the status of the fourth-largest economy in the world, surpassing Japan in terms of nominal GDP as reported by BVR Subrahmanyam, Chief, Niti Aayog.

Analysts, however, caution that this does not guarantee the improvement in the internal socioeconomic issues such as poverty, health, education, large income inequalities, etc. With a neutral MP stance for the future, now the Government needs to play its cards well amidst the domestic and global uncertainties for a better-performing economy.

Conclusion

The MPC's expansionary measures, including rate cuts and CRR reduction, aim to revive growth amidst subdued inflation. With monetary policy turning neutral, the spotlight shifts to fiscal policy. The Government must now drive momentum through tax reforms, GST rationalisation, and increased capital spending. Despite global headwinds, India's rising global stature and investor interest offer optimism. However, sustained progress depends on addressing domestic socioeconomic disparities while navigating uncertain global tides with prudent fiscal strategies.

(The writer is an Assistant Professor at Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce, Delhi University. Views are personal)



ISHITA G TRIPATHY



ANURADHA GURU



KAJLEEN KAUR

Thailand bans cannabis sales without prescription

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■
Bangkok

Thailand is further tightening control of cannabis by banning sales of the plant to those without prescriptions. Thailand became the first country in Asia to decriminalise cannabis in 2022, in a move that boosted Thailand's tourism and farming, and spawned thousands of shops. But the country has faced public backlash over allegations that under-regulation has made the drug available to children and caused addiction. Health Minister Somsak Thepsutin signed an order Monday that bans shops from selling cannabis to customers without a prescription. It also seeks to reclassify cannabis buds as a controlled herb.

Phanurat Lukboon, secretary-general of the Office of the Narcotics Control Board, said on Wednesday that his agency is ready to study and implement the change in regulations.

The order will take effect when it is published in the Royal Gazette, although it was unclear when that would happen.

The ruling Phue Thai Party previously promised to criminalise the drug again, but faced strong resistance from

its former partner in the coalition government, the Bhumjaithai Party, which supported the decriminalisation. Bhumjaithai quit the coalition last week over a leaked phone call between Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra and former Cambodian leader Hun Sen. Somsak told reporters Tuesday that he would like to relist cannabis as a narcotic in the future. The move came after officials last month revealed that cannabis smuggling cases involving tourists had soared in recent months.

Phanurat said that a study done by his agency last year found the number of people addicted to cannabis had spiked significantly after it was decriminalised.

Government spokesperson Jirayu Houngsab said in a statement Tuesday that the government ordered the Health Ministry to tighten control on sales of cannabis because "many shops opened to sell cannabis both for recreational and medical purposes, allowing easy access for children and general people, which contradicts the government's purpose to crack down on drugs".

A group of cannabis advocates said Wednesday that the change in regulations was politically motivated.



NEW OKHLA INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida G.B. Nagar,(U.P)
Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to be informed to the general public that the building (W Mall) constructed on the land of Khasra number 412 of village Hajipur is illegal and the file is in moment for the sealing/demolition process of the said building, which is to be demolished soon. Some people/land mafias have constructed/running shops for commercial activities on the notified land of Noida Authority and are selling it to the general public. This is completely against the rules of the Authority.

Therefore, the general public is conscious not to purchase illegal shops constructed in the name of (W Mall) on the land of Khasra number 412 of village Hajipur, so that the general public does not suffer any financial loss.

Senior Manager
Work Circle-8, Noida

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA



DELHI TRANSCO LIMITED

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS

DTI intends to invite online tender for Design, Engineering, Supply, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of 220/66/33KV G1S Sub-Station with complete civil works & automation at existng 220KV GIS Maharani Bagh Substation, New Delhi (India) on Turnkey Basis against Tender No. T25R220466.

For complete details of the tender please visit websites :-
<https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>
(Tender ID No. 2025_DTL_274356_1)
and www.dtl.gov.in
(Tender Reference No. -DTL-9650-250625)

Last date for bid submission: 25.07.2025 at 1.30 P.M.

All corrigendum ,addendum, amendments, time extensions, clarifications etc. to this e-tender will be hosted on the above website only. Bidders should regularly visit website to keep themselves updatd.



DELHI TRANSCO LIMITED


NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS

DTI intends to invite online tender for Design, Engineering, Supply, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of 220/33KV G1S Sub-Station with complete civil works & Automation at Sarojini Nagar, Delhi on Turnkey Basis against Tender No. T25R220465.

For complete details of the tender please visit websites :-
<https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>
(Tender ID No. 2025_DTL_273856_1)
and www.dtl.gov.in
(Tender Reference No. -DTL_9654-260625)

Last date for bid submission: 25.07.2025 at 1.30 P.M.

All corrigendum ,addendum, amendments, time extensions, clarifications etc. to this e-tender will be hosted on the above website only. Bidders should regularly visit website to keep themselves updatd.



DELHI TRANSCO LIMITED

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS

DTI intends to invite online Two Part Domestic Competitive Bidding (DCB) tender for Design, Engineering, Supply, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of 220/66KV G1S Sub-Station with complete civil works & automation at Budella, Delhi on Turnkey Basis against Tender No. T25R220464.

For complete details of the tender please visit websites :-
<https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>
(Tender ID No. 2025_DTL_274404_1)
and www.dtl.gov.in
(Tender Reference No. -DTL-9651-250625)

Last date for bid submission: 25.07.2025 at 1.30 P.M.

All corrigendum ,naddendum, amendments, time extensions, clarifications etc. to this e-tender will be hosted on the above website only. Bidders should regularly visit website to keep themselves updatd.

Myanmar buds worth confiscated illegal drugs worth around \$300 million

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■
Yangon (Myanmar)

Nearly \$300 million worth of confiscated illegal drugs were destroyed in Myanmar's major cities on Thursday to mark the annual International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, officials said.

The drug burnings came nearly a month after UN experts warned of unprecedented levels of methamphetamine production and trafficking from Southeast Asia's Golden Triangle region and Myanmar's eastern Shan State in particular.

The country has long been a major source of illegal drugs destined for East and Southeast Asia, despite repeated efforts to crack down. The UN agency labelled it in 2023 as the world's largest opium producer.

In the country's biggest city, Yangon, a massive pile of drugs worth more than \$ 117 million went up in a spectacular blaze.

The destroyed drugs included opium, heroin, methamphetamine, marijuana, ketamine and the stimulant known as ice, or crystal meth, Yangon Police Brig Gen Sein Lwin said in a speech at a drug-burning ceremony.

Similar events also occurred in the country's second-largest city of Mandalay, and in Taunggyi, the capital of eastern Myanmar's Shan state, all areas close to where the drugs are produced. A police official from the capital Naypyitaw told the Associated Press that the substances burnt in three locations were worth 297.95 million US dollars. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the information has not yet been publicly announced.

Myanmar has a long his-

PUBLIC NOTICE
Known to all that my client Smt. Laxmi Devi owner of the THIRD FLOOR, PLOT NO. 10, AREA 114.33 SQ. YDS., KHASRA NO.-36/25 RAJINDRA PARK, NANGLOI, NEW DELHI and Smt. Laxmi Devi, owner of property situated at Smt. Ratan Kaur vide Notarized GPA, ATS and dated 04.05.1987, Now Smt. Laxmi Devi wants to sell above said property. And it is informed that any deal with said documents by any person except my said client and said institution regarding said property, shall be deemed as null and void. If any person having any claim, right in said property then he may contact and hanover the same and apprise his claim to undersigned within 15 days of this publication.

AD REM LEGAL SOLUTION
Ch. No. 760 - Dwarka Court Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75
Mobile :- 9899013918

PUBLIC NOTICE
To be known to all that, P Sikand w/o Smt. Lalpat Rai Sikand resident of Flat No.3397, Second Floor,Pocket-3, Sector-D, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi is owner/mutatee and in physical possession of Flat No.3397, on Second Floor, Cat 3F5-II,Pocket-3 Sector-D, Situated at Vasant Kunj, New Delhi, which has been allotted by DDA vide File No.F125(4289)1983 /JK/II and applied for conversion from lease hold into free hold of said flat in D.D.A. The original allocation Letter, and other related documents of said flat have been lost. An F.I.R. to this effect has been lodged. Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents may write/contact with above named person at above address/ Phone No. 956064477 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. If any person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this flat can personally inform or write to Dy. Director(LAB) H.D. Block 3rd Floor,Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform the general public that: Mr. Devennder Kumar Maurya is the owner of Land measuring 3sq. yards, i.e., 30-16 sq. mtrs., out of Khasra no. 882 situated at village Mohra Jaidabad, Pargana & Tehsil Dadri, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. through Sale Deed dated 23.11.2019 as doc. No. 7150 executed by Mr. Bir Singh in favour of Mr. Devennder Kumar Maurya in respect of said property.

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE is hereby given to the General Public that Mr. Dilip Singh ("seller") s/o Shri Prem Kishore, is selling a Portion admeasuring 25 square yards of his Freehold property, admeasuring 133 square yards in total, bearing address Property No. N-176 Out of Ract No. 21, Killa No. 242 situated at Village Khyala, Vidma Garden, New Delhi ("said property"), to Mohd. Uvais Khan and Mrs. Nshat Parveen ("intending buyers"). The seller acquired the right over the said property by virtue of General Power of Attorney executed/dated on 03.01.2008 by Mr. Krishan Lal in favour of the seller, in respect of the said property, along with Notarized WILL and Agreement to Sell. The property is now being sold to the Intending Borrowers and the purchase is being financed by SMCG India Home Finance Co. Ltd. General Public hereby informed that if anybody has any charge/Interest/Title in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of publication of this advertisement.

TAPAN RAGHAV (Advocate)
Ch. No. G-220, Karkardooma Courts, Delhi-32.
raghavt.legal@gmail.com (M - 8800096522)

SBFC
SBFC FINANCE LIMITED
Registered Office : Unit No. 103, C&S Square, Sangam Complex, Andheri Kurla Road, Chakala, Andheri East, Mumbai - 400059
Telephone: +91 22 67875300 | www.sbfc.com | CIN : L67190MH2008PLC178270

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform the public regarding shifting of SBFC Finance Ltd to Faridabad, (Haryana Branch), which will be effective from 27th June, 2025 to 12th October, 2025.
Old address: Plot No 731, Mohna Road, Yadav Prem Nagar, Ballabgarh, Faridabad, Haryana-121004
New address: SBFC Finance LTD Shop No- 125 First floor , Sec- 3 , Huda Market Ballabgarh Haryana 121004.
You can reach out to our nearby branch for servicing related requests.

For SBFC Finance Limited

PUBLIC NOTICE
TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN
This is to inform general public that the following 718 Equity Shares of **Escorts Kubota Ltd** having its Registered Office at 15/5 Mathura Road, Faridabad, Haryana 121003. registered in the name of **(Late) Kantilal Manilal Mehta** under **L. F. No ESC0006858** bearing Certificates Nos 90019085 - 90019095, 90019097-90019098 and 90019102-90019106 and Distinctive Nos 1317059-1317068, 1563356-1563367, 1913307-1913320, 2284225-2284241, 2813245-2813269, 3177990-3178014, 3890773-3890823, 5916935-5917026, 9388663-9388809, 14472275-14472509, 25923819-25923863, and 32173819-32173863 have been lost by me.

The Public are hereby cautioned against purchasing or dealing with the above mentioned shares

Any person who has any claim in respect of the above shares certificates should lodge such claim with the company at its abovementioned address within 15 days of the publication of this notice after which no claim shall be entertained and the Company shall proceed to issue of Duplicate Share Certificates,

Place : **Mumbai** | Date : **27 - 06 - 2025.**
(KAUSHAL KANTILAL MEHTA)

RLF LIMITED
Reg. Office:-14 KMS, Gurgaon Pataudi Road, Village Jhund Sarai Veeran, Distt. Gurgaon Haryana-122001
Corporate Office:-14, South Extension-II, New Delhi-110049.
CIN No. L74999HR1979PLC032747, Phone:-011-26258237, Email:- teamunited83@gmail.com, compliance@rlfkd.com

NOTICE TO PARTLY PAID UP PHYSICAL SHAREHOLDERS OF RLF LIMITED
Notice is hereby given to the shareholders of RLF Limited bearing CIN: L74999HR1979PLC032747, that pursuant to provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 and rules made thereunder along with the compliance of the provisions of Articles of Association of the company, SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 ("SEBI LODR Regulations") and other applicable regulations, this is to inform you that the Board of Directors of the Company in its meeting held on 22nd January, 2025 by passing a resolution, made call on partly paid equity share amount payable on or before 24th February, 2025 the appointed date and the said notice was issued to partly paid shareholders dated 02th February, 2025. Further, the Board of Directors of the Company in its meeting held on 29th May, 2025 by passing a resolution have decided to ask the holders of partly paid equity shares to pay the amount as per call notice previously sent along with an interest of 12% (Twelve percent) per annum on or before 14th July, 2025 the appointed date and the said notice was issued to partly paid shareholders dated 29th May, 2025.

The members holding partly paid equity shares are now requested to remit on or before the appointed date i.e. 14th July, 2025, the necessary amount of call money in respect of the shares held by you should be made via Cheque/Demand Draft drawn in favour of "RLF Limited" along with Payment Slip enclosed herewith as Annexure A and details of same to be sent to the Corporate Office of the Company situated at D-41, South Extension, Part II, New Delhi-110049 additionally you are requested to email the same at compliance@rlfkd.com. Notices are sent to physical shareholders of partly paid shares at their registered addresses as on record date Tuesday February 04, 2025 (date of determining eligible shareholders for sending last call notice to partly paid shareholders). In case any member of the company has not received the above said notices may contact the company or download the notice from website of the company.

By order of the Board of Directors
For RLF LIMITED
Aditya Vatsa

Date: 26th June, 2025
Place: Gurgaon



tory of drug production linked to political and economic insecurity caused by decades of armed conflict.

Eastern Myanmar is part of the infamous Golden Triangle, where the borders of Myanmar, Laos and Thailand meet. The production of opium and heroin in historically flourished there,

सार्वजनिक सूचना
सुचित किया जाता है कोरिमण्डल फटीलाजरस एंड केमिकलस प्राइवेट लिमिटेड गॉव-मसपुर, डाकखाना-चौड मसपुर-134007, अम्बाला, हरियाणा का नाम बदलकर नोवामंडल फटीलाइजर्स एंड केमिकलस प्राइवेट लिमिटेड गॉव-मसपुर, डाकखाना-चौड मसपुर-134007, अम्बाला, हरियाणा कर दिया है।



इंडियन बैंक
AB-20, Safdarjung Enclave, DDA Shopping Complex, Delhi-110 029.

FOR PUBLIC NOTICE - LOST DOCUMENTS
I Himanshu, s/o Raja Ram Dwivedi, working as a Branch Manager, Indian Bank having its branch at S.D Enclave, AB-20 DDA Shopping Complex Safdarjung Enclave New Delhi, Pin code 110029, hereby informs that Flat buyers Agreement between Pal Infrastructure & Developer Pvt. Ltd and Mr. Amit Kumar bearing property Flat no. 301 Tower B, 3rd Floor, Pal Greens, Sector 78, Faridabad, Haryana, on which Bank has created E.M is not traceable in the bank and, therefore, declared lost. Finder may please inform the bank at the above said address and mobile no. 9369444608.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Re: Industrial Plot No. 110, area measuring 114 sq.mtr., Block-B, Sector-10, Noida, U.P. hereinafter referred to as "said property".
NOTICE is hereby given to the general public that our client, Mr. Rajesh Sikka (hereinafter called the "owner") is the sole and absolute owner of the said property vide Mutation Letter dated 18.06.2024 issued by NOIDA. The said owner has further informed that the said property owned by Mr. Birj Sikka vide allotment letter dated 28.08.1980 and lease deed dated 18.07.1986 executed by NOIDA. And the said owner has further informed that the said property has been demutated under the name of Mr. Rajesh Sikka and the said property has been mutated in his favour and he became the owner of the said property. The said owner has, in writing, with documentary evidence, Registered AD Post, to the undersigned at the address mentioned herein below within 07 days of publication of this notice and in the event of no response having been received to the notice, the title of the owner in respect of the said property shall be deemed to be clear of any charge or encumbrance of any nature whatsoever and any subsequent claim shall not bind our clients/Purchasers, in any manner whatsoever.

Shivkant Arora, Advocate
For M/s Intelective Law Offices
A-74, Lower Ground Floor,
Defence Colony, New Delhi-110024

PUBLIC NOTICE
Re: Property Bearing No. WZ-48, area measuring 75 sq. yds., Out of Khasra No. 26, situated in the Laldora of Village Tatarpur, Najafgarh, Karol, New Delhi. Hereinafter referred to as "the said property".
NOTICE is hereby given to general public that our client, Mrs. Taraneet Chawla (hereinafter called the "owner") is the sole and absolute owner of the said property, vide Sale Deed dated 17.08.2012. The said owner has further informed that initially the said property owned by Mr. Khazan Singh and Mrs. Shyamno Devi, his wife, was transferred to the said owner through Khatauni and Lal Dora Certificate issued by concerned authority. Upon the death of Mr. Khazan Singh on 05.02.1982 along with his wife Shama Devi on 01.11.1988 and one son Mr. Dharam Singh on 23.04.1995, his share of property has been devolved upon Mrs. Shanti Devi, Mrs. Kaushalya Devi, Mrs. Kamlesh Devi, Mr. Ashok Kumar and Mr. Sunder Singh. Further Mrs. Shanti Devi, Mrs. Kaushalya, Mrs. Kamlesh, Mrs. Mittlesh relinquished their respective shares in favour of Mr. Ashok Kumar vide Relinquishment Deed dated 02.07.2012. After the death of Mrs. Shyamno Devi on 23.11.2009 and her husband Mr. Manish Kumar Ram on 27.11.1983 and her one son Mr. Rakesh Kumar on 11.09.1990, their shares has been devolved upon Mrs. Saroj Bala, Mr. Manish Kumar Tanwar & Mr. Rohit Tanwar. Thereafter, Mrs. Saroj Bala relinquished her respective shares in favour of Mr. Manish Kumar Tanwar & Mr. Rohit Tanwar vide Relinquishment Deed dated 02.07.2012. And after the death of Mr. Raghunath Singh his shares of property has been devolved upon Mrs. Chandra Devi, Mrs. Sumriti Devi, Mrs. Rajniwati, Mr. Rajendra Singh & Mr. Chander Pal. And finally all of the above said parties namely Mr. Sunder Singh, Mr. Ashok Kumar, Mr. Manish Kumar Tanwar, Mr. Rohit Tanwar, Mrs. Chandra Devi, Mrs. Sumriti Devi, Mrs. Rajniwati, Mr. Rajendra Singh & Mr. Chander Pal transferred the said property in favour of Mrs. Taraneet Chawla. Hence, Mrs. Taraneet Chawla became the owner of the said property. The said owner has also informed that the said property is not mortgaged anywhere and there is no charge or encumbrance of any nature whatsoever and any subsequent claim shall not bind our clients/Purchasers, in any manner whatsoever.

Shivkant Arora, Advocate
For M/s Intelective Law Offices
A-74, Lower Ground Floor,
Defence Colony, New Delhi-110024

PUBLIC NOTICE
Re: Property Bearing No. WZ-48, area measuring 75 sq. yds., Out of Khasra No. 26, situated in the Laldora of Village Tatarpur, Najafgarh, Karol, New Delhi. Hereinafter referred to as "the said property".
NOTICE is hereby given to general public that our client, Mrs. Taraneet Chawla (hereinafter called the "owner") is the sole and absolute owner of the said property, vide Sale Deed dated 17.08.2012. The said owner has further informed that initially the said property owned by Mr. Khazan Singh and Mrs. Shyamno Devi, his wife, was transferred to the said owner through Khatauni and Lal Dora Certificate issued by concerned authority. Upon the death of Mr. Khazan Singh on 05.02.1982 along with his wife Shama Devi on 01.11.1988 and one son Mr. Dharam Singh on 23.04.1995, his share of property has been devolved upon Mrs. Shanti Devi, Mrs. Kaushalya Devi, Mrs. Kamlesh Devi, Mr. Ashok Kumar and Mr. Sunder Singh. Further Mrs. Shanti Devi, Mrs. Kaushalya, Mrs. Kamlesh, Mrs. Mittlesh relinquished their respective shares in favour of Mr. Ashok Kumar vide Relinquishment Deed dated 02.07.2012. After the death of Mrs. Shyamno Devi on 23.11.2009 and her husband Mr. Manish Kumar Ram on 27.11.1983 and her one son Mr. Rakesh Kumar on 11.09.1990, their shares has been devolved upon Mrs. Saroj Bala, Mr. Manish Kumar Tanwar & Mr. Rohit Tanwar. Thereafter, Mrs. Saroj Bala relinquished her respective shares in favour of Mr. Manish Kumar Tanwar & Mr. Rohit Tanwar vide Relinquishment Deed dated 02.07.2012. And after the death of Mr. Raghunath Singh his shares of property has been devolved upon Mrs. Chandra Devi, Mrs. Sumriti Devi, Mrs. Rajniwati, Mr. Rajendra Singh & Mr. Chander Pal. And finally all of the above said parties namely Mr. Sunder Singh, Mr. Ashok Kumar, Mr. Manish Kumar Tanwar, Mr. Rohit Tanwar, Mrs. Chandra Devi, Mrs. Sumriti Devi, Mrs. Rajniwati, Mr. Rajendra Singh & Mr. Chander Pal transferred the said property in favour of Mrs. Taraneet Chawla. Hence, Mrs. Taraneet Chawla became the owner of the said property. The said owner has also informed that the said property is not mortgaged anywhere and there is no charge or encumbrance of any nature whatsoever and any subsequent claim shall not bind our clients/Purchasers, in any manner whatsoever.

Shivkant Arora, Advocate
For M/s Intelective Law Offices
A-74, Lower Ground Floor,
Defence Colony, New Delhi-110024

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Shivkant Arora, Advocate
For M/s Intelective Law Offices
A-74, Lower Ground Floor,
Defence Colony, New Delhi-110024

AXIS BANK LTD
(CIN: L65110GJ1999PLC020769)
Structured Assets Group – Axis House Plot No. 114, Tower 4, 4th Floor, Sector 128, NOIDA - 201304

PUBLIC NOTICE INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR SALE OF SECURITIES
Axis Bank Limited ("Axis Bank", "The Bank") hereby invites expression of interest ("EOI") from eligible entities ("Parties") for acquisition of debt of below mentioned company through competitive bidding process. The sale of debt is on "AS IS WHERE IS" and "AS IS WHAT IS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS" and "NO RECOURSE" condition subject to certain terms and conditions.

Name of Borrower	Principal FIs as on 31.03.2025	Reserve Price*
Adel Landmarks Limited	Rs. 49.40 Cr	Rs. 13.75 Cr

*EOIs shall be entertained only from eligible entities offering 100% upfront payment.

The Schedule of the procedure and timelines for the bid are as under:

Bid Process	Timelines
Authorized Entities to submit Express of Interest	03rd July 2025
Timelines for Due Diligence	04th July 2025 to 11th July 2025
Last date for submission of Bid Documents and Binding Offer	15th July 2025 by 5 PM IST
Declaration of Successful Bidder	16th July 2025
Issuance of Letter of Acceptance by Axis Bank Ltd (Subject to approval of competent Authority of Bank)	18th July 2025
Receipt of Assignment Consideration and execution of Assignment Agreement	30th July 2025

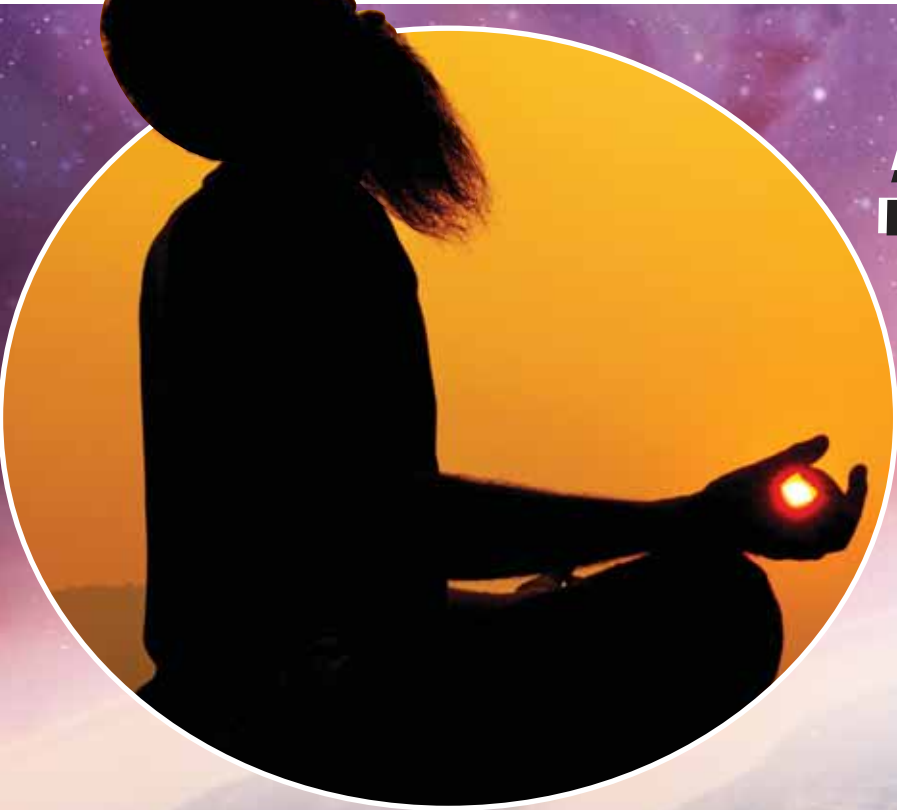
The broad terms of the offer are as follows:-
1. Parties should submit an unconditional Expression of Interest ("EOI") expressing their interest in purchasing the above Securities, by sending e-mail to suhodhi mukherjee@gaxisbank.com or n.bapiraju@gaxisbank.com and submission of original hard copy of the EOI at the address mentioned herein below on or before 2nd July, 2025 by 05:00 p.m. Local: Subhodhi Mukherjee/ N. Bapiraju, Structured Assets Group – Axis House Plot No: 114, Tower 4, 4th Floor, Sector 128, NOIDA - 201304, Mob. No. :- +918130891183.2.Minimum Mark-up Offer above the Reserve Price amount is 5% i.e. the entities participating in the bidding process has to submit minimum binding offer of Rs. 14.4375 Cr (Rupees Fourteen Crore Forty Three Lacs Seventy Five Thousand Only).3. The Bank reserves the right to accept or reject any ineligible EOI without assigning any reason therefor i.e. it is the discretion of the Bank to accept or reject the EOI. 4. Interested parties shall submit their bid application/format of offer (as mentioned below) along with EMD of minimum 5% of the amount specified in Point 2 above from offer of quoting bid price along with the detail of bidder (KYC documents, i.e. Photo ID proof, PAN card & Address proof & E-mail ID). The format of offer will only be provided to the participating Parties whose EOI has been accepted by Bank's EMD is to be deposited in form of Demand Draft drawn in favour of, Axis Bank Ltd, payable at par. Last date for Bid application/Format of offer along with EMD amount is to be deposited by 5:00 PM of 15.07.2025. Full name of the bidder, Address, Contact No. & E-mail should be mentioned at the back of the demand draft (EMD). 6. The EMD amount shall be liable for forfeiture without prior notice, if the successful bidder fails to adhere to the terms and conditions. 7. Nothing in this notice constitutes or will be deemed to constitute any commitment or representation on the part of the Bank to sell the above Securities. Axis Bank reserves the right to cancel the sale for any reason it may deem fit or even without assigning any reason and such cancellation shall not be called in question by the bidders. 8. Bank shall have no liability or indemnity obligations (whether express or implied) to any bidder. 9. The successful bidder shall be solely and absolutely responsible for completion of all statutory, regulatory and other compliance. 10. This process shall be governed in accordance with the laws of India and the courts of Delhi shall have the exclusive jurisdiction over any dispute arising under this process. 11. Cut-off date denotes the date of assignment the Stressed Loan Exposure (s) i.e., all realization/ recoveries made up to the cut-off date shall be retained by the Bank. 12. The transfer of loan exposure will be on "as is where is basis", "as is what is basis", "whatever there is basis" and "without recourse basis" i.e., with its risk credit risk, operational risk, legal or any other type of risks associated with the Stressed Loan Exposure(s) transferred to the acquirer and shall not be liable to be revoked for any breach including antecedent breach of any representation and warranty. In the event of non-realization of amount out of assets/securities, the Bank is not liable to pay the interest or principal or full Bank reserves right to execute the assignment deed as per Bank's format 13. In case any un-developed LCG BCs yet to be invoked/ transfers of DPGs, which are not yet due, in respect of the specified loan exposure being offered for transfer by the Bank, Bank shall retain charge on the securities related to non-crystallized non-funded facilities. In case of crystallization of non-funded facilities after the transfer of loan exposure, the acquirer of the fund-based loan exposure of the said loan account shall be bound to purchase that converted portion of non-fund-based loan exposure (net of cash margin converted into fund-based exposure) from Bank on predefined terms and conditions of notice and Assignment Deed. 14. Taxes, stamp duty and registration charges that may be arising out of the transaction shall be payable by the successful bidder. 15. Bank shall reserve the exclusive right to deal with the claims pertaining to ECGCGTMSSE (both present & future) (cash margin/insurance claim/subsidy reserve fund/margin etc.) of the Stressed Loan Exposure(s) and the successful acquirer/bidder has no right or authority or claim thereon. 16. AXIS BANK reserve the right to add or delete accounts or modify the composition of the Stressed Loan Exposure (Individual/Portfolio) offered for transfer and transfer structure at any stage without assigning any reason. 17. Further, AXIS BANK does not represent and warrant realizations in terms of the valuations of the security reported in the Preliminary Information Memorandum. Further, AXIS BANK also does not warrant and represent that the security is enforceable beyond the extent asserted by its advocates. The bidder(s) are therefore advised to have complete due diligence of the account put for transfer. Bank will not entertain, any claim whatsoever, for any deficiency pointed out in future and will not indemnify/make losses good to the successful buyer

18. Notwithstanding anything contained herein above, Bank reserve the right to examine the EOI and accept or reject any or all or some of the EOIs at its sole discretion, and neither this notification nor delivery of an EOI nor the consideration thereof by Bank shall be construed as creating any kind of right or interest of any interested party to be considered any further in the process or entitle them to any recourse against the bank. 19. Notwithstanding anything contained in this notice, neither AXIS BANK, nor its employees or its advisors accept any responsibility or liability, whatsoever, in respect of any statements or omissions herein, or the accuracy, completeness or reliability of information, and shall incur no liability, under any law, statute, rules or regulations as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of this PUBLICATION, even if any loss or damage is caused by any act or omission on the part of Axis Bank or its employees or its advisors, whether negligent or otherwise. 20. AXIS BANK, may, at its sole discretion, add, amend, vary, modify, delete, any of the conditions, date etc. of this notice as may be deemed necessary in the light of the facts and circumstances and also issue one or more Agendas. Corrigendum as required without giving any reasons thereto. 21. AXIS BANK reserve the right not to go ahead with the proposed transfer at any stage, without assigning any reason. Axis Bank has absolute and unpeachable right with respect to all the matters starting from receiving, considering, accepting the bid, or transferring the specific loan exposure and such right without limitation encompasses right to not to receive, not to consider, not to accept the bid and decide not to transfer the specific loan exposure. AXIS BANK would not entertain any claim from any acquirer in this regard. The decision of the AXIS BANK in this regard shall be final and binding. 22. The Assignment will be done on prescribed format. Any changes in the prescribed format will be accepted only if approved by the Bank considering the specific facts of the transaction and any changes in the basic premise of the draft agreement will not be accepted. 23. The Bids submitted by bidder(s) shall be unconditional, irrevocable & binding in all respect. Bidder(s) cannot withdraw the bid once submitted & successful bidder has to complete the transaction related to transfer of the loan exposure where they are declared successful bidder in the time bound program as notified in the notice. Conditional and contingent bids are liable to be disqualified by the Bank. 24. Under no circumstances successful bidder can refuse to complete the transaction citing any reason or defects/ objection in any loan exposure. If they do so, the matter will be reported to RBI/regulator & their association concerned for taking necessary action. The Bank may also consider in this notice, neither AXIS BANK, nor its employees or its advisors accept any responsibility or liability, whatsoever, in respect of any statements or omissions herein, or the accuracy, completeness or reliability of information, and shall incur no liability, under any law, statute, rules or regulations as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of this PUBLICATION, even if any loss or damage is caused by any act or omission on the part of Axis Bank or its employees or its advisors, whether negligent or otherwise. 20. AXIS BANK, may, at its sole discretion, add, amend, vary, modify, delete, any of the conditions, date etc. of this notice as may be deemed necessary in the light of the facts and circumstances and also issue one or more Agendas. Corrigendum as required without giving any reasons thereto. 21. AXIS BANK reserve the right not to go ahead with the proposed transfer at any stage, without assigning any reason. 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ରାଜ୍ୟ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟସେବା ହେଲ୍ପ ଲାଇନ୍: ୧୦୪, ଆୟୁଲାଇନ୍: ୧୦୮

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http://www.health.odisha.gov.in
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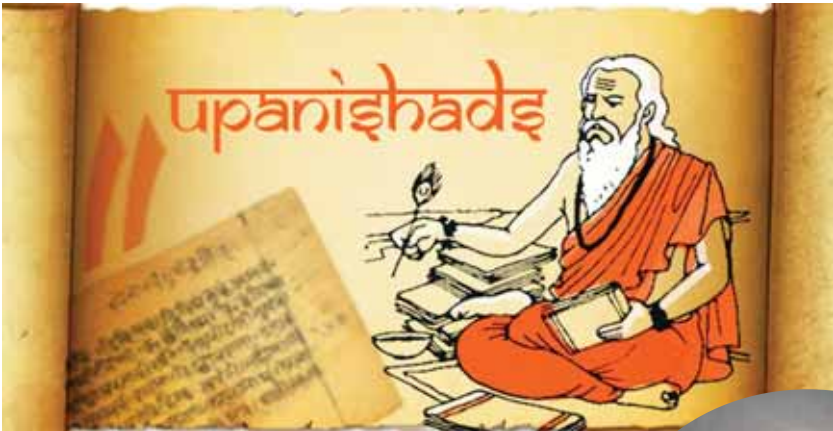
A Modern Lens on Timeless Wisdom

Ishavasya Upanishad by Swami Mukundananda delves into the philosophy and premise of the first Upanishads and simplifies it for the reader without diluting its essence, writers **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**

The **Ishavasya Upanishad** is the first and one of the shortest yet most profound Upanishads, forming a cornerstone of Vedantic philosophy. It has just 18 mantras, which hold the essence of Indian spiritual philosophy.

It says that the entire universe is pervaded by the divine (Isha), and that one should enjoy life through renunciation rather than attachment. It explores the tension and harmony between action and renunciation, the path of knowledge (jnana) and the path of work (karma), and culminates in a call for self-realisation through surrender to the divine truth within all beings. At its core, the Ishavasya Upanishad asks a simple question: How can we live in the world, act in it, and yet not be bound by it? Its answer lies in a vision of oneness, detachment, and duty, which has influenced thinkers from Adi Shankaracharya to Mahatma Gandhi.

The book by well-known writer Swami Mukundananda's explores this aspect in depth and in simple yet profound way describes the rather complex and difficult postulates of Ishavasya Upanishad. Of course, the book is not meant for everyone only those who have interest in philosophy and are keen to understand the Indian approach to



life and beyond would be able to relish it more. In his book Swami Mukundananda, the renowned spiritual teacher brings clarity, accessibility, and philosophical depth to this ancient scripture.

His commentary does not merely explain the verses; it is an attempt to interpret Upanishads and their timeless wisdom in the modern context so it becomes more relatable and understandable.

Swami Mukundananda begins each mantra with a Sanskrit verse, a transliteration, and a translation, before offering a detailed exposition. He weaves together traditional interpretations, philosophical context from the broader

Vedic canon, and practical relevance. His style is lucid, yet rooted in rigorous scriptural knowledge, which makes the book suitable for both casual as well as seasoned seekers.

One of the strengths of Swami's interpretation of Upanishad is its balance: it neither dilutes the text for easy consumption, nor does it alienate the reader with abstruse scholarship. For instance, when elaborating on the concept of Isha vasyam idam sarvam ("Everything in this universe is pervaded by God"), Author explores the implications of divine immanence in a world driven by materialism. He emphasises inner renunciation while fulfilling outer duties-an ideal that resonates powerfully in today's fast-

paced, success-oriented societies.

Upanishads or for that matter all of Indian philosophical approach is paradoxical it is not digest the concepts without opening up your mind to new ideas. It is therefore very important for any book on such subjects to rather thread bear such concepts for the understanding of the seeker. This is where the book scores high. The way the book addresses the paradoxes of the Upanishad-such as the co-existence of knowledge and ignorance, or action and renunciation-by drawing on the Bhagavad Gita and other Vedantic texts. This integrative approach enriches the reader's understanding and reflects Swami Mukundananda's broad spiritual vision.

Swami Mukundananda's Ishavasya Upanishad is not just a commentary on Ishavasya Upanishad; it is a spiritual guidebook. By unpacking dense metaphysical ideas with clarity and heart, he transforms a terse and ancient text into a luminous manual for modern spiritual living. The book speaks to today's thinking individual navigating chaos and craving clarity. Whether you are a student of Vedanta, a spiritual seeker, or simply someone yearning for inner peace and purpose, this book offers timeless insights with immediate relevance. This 183-page book is both a gateway and a journey into the heart of Vedic wisdom for all those who are drawn to Vedic literature but are daunted by its complexity. This book would be must read for them.



FOR THE MODERN SEEKER

Swami Mukundananda's Ishavasya Upanishad reads like a quiet, thoughtful conversation with a teacher who understands the pulse of both the seeker and the sceptic. This is a book that brings the spirit of the ancient text into focus without overwhelming the reader. The explanations flow with clarity, offering space for reflection rather than preaching. His thoughts on living with detachment, while staying true to duty, feel especially relevant in a world that rarely slows down. The writing feels anchored, honest, and deeply rooted in the Indian spiritual tradition. For readers curious about Vedanta or looking to engage with the Upanishads in a meaningful way, this book provides a steady path. The author doesn't rush through the verses, he pauses, interprets and draws from a wider spiritual canvas including the Bhagavad Gita and Vedic thought. This is a reflective, gentle guide that encourages the reader to look inward. The approach stays respectful to the text while making space for modern understanding.

Simplified Life Teachings



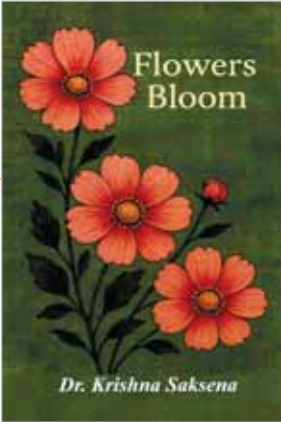
BY ABHI SINGHAL

Flowers Bloom is a collection of thought-provoking and spiritually enriching stories that illuminate timeless human values through simple, poignant narratives. It has short stories that give you valuable lessons and teach you a lot about life and teachings that will help take life in a smoother way. Written by Dr Krishna Saksena, the book draws lessons from Indian culture, moral philosophy, and lived experience, each tale offers a gentle yet profound lesson on life, character and conscience.

Through themes such as humility, devotion, compassion, integrity and the importance of inner strength, the book encourages readers to reflect, grow, and live with greater awareness. Written in an accessible and engaging style, Flowers Bloom is both a moral guide and a tribute to the enduring beauty of virtuous living.

With chapters such as The Baggage, The Silence, The Devotee, The Diamond, The Map, The Mother, The Squirrel the book gives many useful insights. The stories gives lessons like:

- * The world, our



ABOUT THE BOOK

Book: Flowers Bloom
Author: Dr Krishna Saksena
Price: ₹395/-

friends and family may communicate with us in harsh ways.

- * We cannot control how others will behave with us
- * If we accept or respond to their communication and react to it, we can lose our peace of mind, thinking about the communication to us and feeling hurt
- * Hence do not react to what seems instigating and hurtful.
- * Silence speaks louder than words.
- * Prioritise your peace of mind.
- * Our Past is our memory. Every present becomes a past the following day.
- * Memories should remain in the past.
- * Clinging on to memories increases our mental baggage.

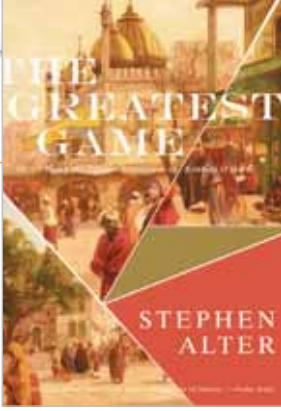
"The flower does not hurry, nor does it strive, it simply unfolds, fully alive. Bathed in the light of the boundless One, It blooms in silence, needing none. No trumpet declares its gentle rise, yet all who see it feel the skies. For in each petal, God does gleam, a fragrant trace of the eternal dream. My thoughts, my wisdom of a life lived long I hope to blossom in the pages that come O gentle reader, please read with care For hidden in simplicity are thoughts divine," says Dr Krishna Saksena.

The Road to Freedom Is Never Quite Straight

Amidst 1947 India's chaos, an intelligence officer races against time in a riveting espionage thriller, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

Imagine standing on a precipice, one foot in the dying embers of colonial rule, the other trembling on the brink of an unknown, independent future. What if India's independence had begun with a devastating explosion instead of a midnight speech? What if one man, living between two worlds, stood as the last defence against chaos? This is the question that drives **The Greatest Game** by Stephen Alter, a historical espionage novel set in the charged and volatile weeks of March 1947, when the subcontinent teetered on the edge of freedom and division. Kimball O'Hara, the protagonist first introduced to the world in Rudyard Kipling's Kim, returns here as a seasoned intelligence officer in the Imperial Secret Service. No longer a playful street urchin, he is now older, weathered and deeply embedded in the dangerous world of espionage. In a country burning with communal riots and growing distrust, Kim finds himself racing against time to prevent an assassination that could shatter India before it takes its first steps as an independent nation.

The story opens in Lahore, where Kim is nearly killed in an attempted assassination. Riding his Norton motorbike through the curfew-bound city, he is ambushed near the Victoria Memorial. The air is thick with the fear and tension that defined those final months before Partition. The attack sets in motion a larger mission, uncovering a plot by Sir Denys Bromley-Pugh, a British officer and Nazi sympathiser, to bomb a Congress rally where Jawaharlal Nehru is expected to speak. If the plan succeeds, the dream of a united India may die before it is realised. From the very first chapter, Alter captures the sights, sounds and smells of pre-independence India with stunning clarity. Lahore's empty roads, its shadowy bazaars, and the threat of violence lurking around every corner are portrayed with quiet precision. The book draws readers deep into a world



ABOUT THE BOOK

Book: The Greatest Game
Author: Stephen Alter
Publisher: Aleph
Price: ₹799/-

ALLEGIANCE AND BURDEN

Through Kim's Journey, the story explores the burden of allegiance and the cost of belief. There is no illusion of clear good and evil. The enemy wears a British uniform, but so does Kim. The people he must save include both the hopeful and the corrupt.

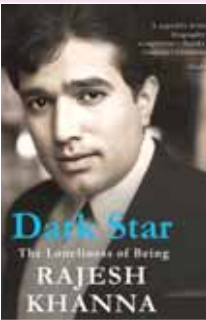


AT ITS CORE

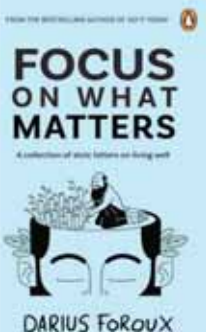
The novel does not move with haste, but with purpose. The reader is offered a portrait of India that is both personal and political, filled with moments of silence and sudden violence. The pacing mirrors the tension of the time, controlled but always alert to the next spark. A story that brings the past alive without dilution.



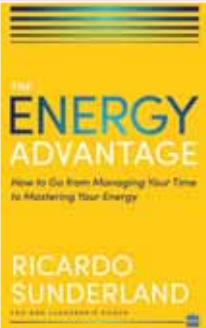
JUNE READS



Book: Dark Star
Author: Rajesh Khanna
Publisher: Rupa
Price: ₹395



Book: Focus on what matters
Author: Darius Foroux
Publisher: Penguin
Price: ₹350



Book: The Energy Advantage
Author: Ricardo Sunderlan
Publisher: HarperCollins
Price: ₹499



Book: Made of rivers
Author: Emory Hills
Publisher: Penguin
Price: ₹499

