

You are pawned: 16 billion login credentials leaked

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

In what is being called the largest data breach in history, over 16 billion login credentials major online platforms were leaked online. It includes login credentials of social media, VPNs, developer portals and user accounts for all the major vendors. The leaked data includes login information for a wide range of services, from email and social media platforms like Google, Facebook, and Telegram to developer accounts on GitHub and even some Government portals. Most of the information is

organised in a format that shows the website link, followed by the username and password, making it easier for attackers to use.

According to a report published in Forbes, a team of cyber security researchers at Cyber news, led by Vilnius Petkauskas, has been investigating this leak since early 2025 and found a huge set of stolen data-potentially affecting just about every major online service. The investigation team found 30 separate data dumps, each containing anywhere from tens of millions to over 3.5 billion records. In total, Petkauskas

The leaked data can be used for phishing attacks, ransomware infiltration, business email compromise, and account takeovers

has confirmed, the number of compromised records has now hit 16 billion. The leaked data appears to be the result of various infostealer malware attacks - malicious software designed to quietly collect usernames, passwords, and other sensitive data from infected devices. Password compromise is

no joke; it leads to account compromise and that leads to, well, the compromise of most everything you hold dear in this technological-centric world we live in. It's why Google is telling billions of users to replace their passwords with much more secure passkeys. It's why the FBI is warning people not to click on links in SMS messages. It's why stolen passwords are up for sale, in their millions, on the dark web to anyone with the very little amount of cash required to purchase them. And it's why this latest revelation is, frankly, so darn concerning for everyone.

Security experts are raising alarms about the potential impact. The leaked data can be used for phishing attacks, ransomware infiltration, business email compromise, and large-scale account takeovers. In particular, systems lacking multi-factor authentication (MFA) are at heightened risk, as even basic credentials can grant unauthorised access.

Cybersecurity experts suggest that people act immediately. This includes changing passwords across all major accounts, using strong and unique passwords and turning on two-factor authentication (2FA).

PM declined Trump dinner to visit Lord Jagannath

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Bhubaneswar/Patna/Amaravati

In his public statement after returning from 5-day abroad schedule, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said he had declined an invitation from US President Donald Trump to visit Washington, and instead chosen to come to Odisha, the sacred land of Lord Jagannath. This was also Modi's first statement on the matter after media reported the telephonic talk of Trump and PM Modi.

"I was in Canada for the G7 Summit when US President Trump had called me and invited me to Washington for a discussion and lunch. I thanked him for the invitation, saying I have to visit Odisha, the land of Lord Jagannath. I humbly rejected his invitation," Modi addressing a rally in Bhubaneswar.

The Prime Minister was in Odisha to participate in the first anniversary function of the BJP's maiden Government in the State and launched development projects worth over ₹18,600 crore. Early in the day the PM was in Bihar and late evening he landed in Andhra Pradesh to take part in the International Yoga Day on Saturday.

Modi had on Tuesday declined Trump's invitation to visit the US while returning from Canada, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said in a statement on the Modi-Trump phone call. According to Misri's statement, Modi said he could not accept the invitation due to a pre-existing schedule, and invited Trump to



Prime Minister Narendra Modi greets the gathering during a public meeting, in Siwan district, Friday PTI

visit India for the Quad Summit, likely later this year. The two leaders were scheduled to meet in Canada on the sidelines of the G7 Summit. However, the US President left the meeting midway amidst rising hostilities between Israel and Iran.

Earlier during his Bihar visit, Modi slammed the RJD for allegedly insulting Babasaheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar and asserted that the people of Bihar would not tolerate any disrespect to the

Dalit icon. At a rally in Siwan district, which marked his fifth visit this year to the State and second in less than a month, Modi hailed the "big role" played by Bihar in India's emergence as the "third largest economy" of the world.

Modi, who did not mention RJD chief Lalu Prasad by name, referred to the instance of a portrait of Ambedkar being placed close to the feet of the ailing septuagenarian, for which he (Prasad) has been drawing flak from the BJP-led NDA.

Sensex jumps 1,000 pts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Mumbai

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded sharply by over 1 per cent on Friday after sliding for the past three sessions, propelled by bargain hunting in financial, telecom and tech stocks amid a correction in global crude prices.

A largely supportive trend overseas and renewed foreign capital inflows supported domestic equities following signs of easing tension in the Middle East, traders said.

After a flat start, the BSE Sensex later found its mojo back and surged 1,046.30 points or 1.29 per cent to settle at 82,408.17. During the day, it jumped 1,132.62 points or 1.39 per cent to 82,494.49.

The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 319.15 points or 1.29 per cent to 25,112.40.

As many as 2,463 stocks advanced while 1,484 declined and 147 remained unchanged on the BSE.

This week, the BSE benchmark gauge jumped 1,289.57 points or 1.58 per cent, and the Nifty surged 393.8 points or .59 per cent.

"Equity indices surged as Middle East tension moderated with risk of immediate military actions reduced as US dialogue with Iran is expected to take place. The development led the crude price to correct, favouring domestic markets and boosting foreign investors' sentiments.

"In the broader market, rapid fall in VIX index and buying was witnessed in rate sensitives and consumer-oriented sectors like Finance, Auto and Reality and in anticipation of better Q1FY26 results led by rate cuts benefits, drop in inflationary pressure and rebound in consumer spending," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

From the Sensex firms, Bharti Airtel, Nestle, Mahindra & Mahindra, Power Grid, Reliance Industries, NTPC, Eternal and HDFC Bank were among the biggest gainers.

In contrast, Maruti was the only laggard.

The ByStander



Pakistan confirms it requested ceasefire

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Pakistan's deputy prime minister Ishaq Dar, in a rare and open admission, has confirmed that it was Islamabad that requested a ceasefire after two of their key air bases were hit by India when it launched Operation Sindoor last month in retaliation to Pahalgam terror attack claiming 26 lives.

Speaking on a television news show, Dar said India struck Nur Khan and Shorkot air bases in Rawalpindi and Punjab province.

"Unfortunately, India once again launched missile strikes at 2:30 AM. They attacked the



Ishaq Dar, Pakistan's deputy prime minister, made the admission on TV news show FILE PHOTO

Nur Khan Air Base and Shorkot Air Base.

"Within 45 minutes, Saudi Prince Faisal called me. He said he had just learnt about my conversation with (US

Secretary of State) Marco Rubio. He asked if he was authorised to talk to (India's External Affairs Minister) S Jaishankar and convey that we are ready if they (India) stop. I said yes,

Delhi police busts fake degree racket

VAISHNAVI MISHRA ■ New Delhi

Delhi Police have busted a large scale fake degree racket and arrested five people from four different States for their alleged involvement in fabricating and distributing more than 5,000 academic certificates including fake and back-dated degrees, mark sheets, and migration certificates of various universities, including Central universities across Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Sikkim, Meghalaya, and Tamil Nadu, police said on Friday.

"Some people with fake degrees are also currently working in Government sectors," police said. The operation has led to the recovery of hundreds of counterfeit documents from multiple universities across India. "In addition, 20 mobile phones and six laptops were seized, which upon forensic inspection, revealed more than 5,000 to 5,500 soft copies of similar fake academic documents, including degrees in BA, BSc, BCom, BTech, BAMS, BED,



MBA and MA," police said.

Police have also confirmed the involvement of University employees in providing the fraudsters with formats, templates or confidential academic records to help make academic documents.

"The degrees that we seized look so genuine that we do not believe one can create them without any involvement of the university itself. Additionally, while verifying the records of those who have obtained the degree, we found that some of those have their records in university as well, this can only be

possible with the involvement of university administration," said Devesh Chandra Srivastava, Special Commissioner of Police, Crime Branch. "Twenty to 25 coaching centres are part of this well-organised network, which provides customised fake documents to students based on their needs," He added.

"The accused were running a highly organised syndicate that operated through coaching centres and educational consultancies, primarily in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR)," Srivastava added.

J and K opposes move to drain Indus system

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ Jammu

At a time when India is carrying out a feasibility study to build a 113 km-long canal for redirecting surplus flow of the three western rivers of the Indus system from Jammu and Kashmir to Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has decided to 'firmly' oppose the move at this juncture citing drought like situation in parts of Jammu region.

According to the proposed plan, the 113 km long canal is expected to link the Chenab River to the Ravi-Beas-Sutlej system, connecting with 13 existing canal structures and potentially feeding into the Indira Gandhi Canal to address water scarcity in other North Indian States. The Jal Shakti Ministry is already working on infrastructure development on a war footing to implement the decision in a span of next three years. The aim is to ensure that not a single drop of water meant for Pakistan goes to waste.



Indus river FILE PHOTO

Interacting with the media after inaugurating a Rabitta office in Jammu, aimed at strengthening public outreach and grievance redressal, Abdullah made it clear that Jammu and Kashmir's water requirements take precedence. "I will never permit this. Let us use our water for ourselves first. There is a drought-like situation in Jammu. Why should I send water to Punjab? Punjab already had water under the Indus Water Treaty.

There is a drought-like situation in Jammu. Why should I send water to Punjab? Punjab already had water under the IWT. Did they give us water when we needed it?

— OMAR ABDULLAH, J AND K CM

Did they give us water when we needed it?" he said, mentioning past struggles to secure water from Punjab's

DDA's hot air balloons for revenue



Tourists ride a hot air balloon, in Manali, Friday PTI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

With an eye on generating revenue and promoting tourism, Delhi Development Authority (DDA) is planning to launch hot-air balloon rides at the

Yamuna and the Commonwealth Games Village sports complexes. According to officials, after careful consideration, four locations — Bansera, Asita, Yamuna Sports Complex and the Commonwealth Games Village Sports Complex —

have been selected for the initial start of the project, and a tender has been issued inviting private players to operate these rides at DDA sites.

These sites will be offered for operation of hot air ballooning on a revenue-sharing basis. The required area,

approximately 60 metres by 60 metres at each site, will be provided to the firm as per mutually agreed timings and days," as per the tender issued by the DDA.

Sources said the landowning agency has marked four sites at each of the two mega sports complexes managed by it. Currently, there are several other sporting areas within these complexes. According to sources, the firms will be allowed to advertise on the balloons, and the licence issued will be for three years, which will be extendable up to a maximum of nine years.

"The space will be provided to the firm for undertaking a maximum of four hours of flying per day. However, temporary permission for additional hours may be granted by DDA on a case-by-case basis," the proposal added.

As per the report, the price of the hot-air balloon rides will be decided by the firm, however, DDA has directed that it be kept reasonable.



National Cadet Corps (NCC) cadets and others practice yoga ahead of the International Day of Yoga, at NCC headquarters, in Ahmedabad, Gujarat PTI



One-off yoga practice ineffectual; incorporate it into daily life: experts

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Experts suggested that rather than practising yoga solely on International Yoga Day, people should incorporate it into their daily routines for enduring benefits. On June 21, International Yoga Day is observed across the country with numerous organisations, NGOs and government institutions hosting commemorative events. However, it has been noted that many tend to practise yoga only on this particular day, leaving it out of their everyday life. Experts emphasised that regular yoga practice can help reduce the prevalence of various health issues, such as depression and obesity, which have alarmingly surged in recent years.

Yogacharya and a volunteer at Parmarth Niketan in Rishikesh, Ganga Nandini expressed her appreciation for the initiatives taken by the Government of India and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in particular, to

help International Yoga Day become a vibrant event across the world. She, however, said that while people practise yoga on International Yoga Day enthusiastically they often do not continue this practice regularly. "This is not disappointing at all; rather, it is a positive sign that they are planting the seeds of yoga in their life which will eventually flourish. This occasion serves as a motivation for many to engage with yoga. Nonetheless, they should aim to incorporate yoga into their daily life rather than limiting it to just one day," she said.

Nandini further pointed out that the cases of depression and obesity among other health issues have been surging worryingly over the years. "Practising yoga can help reduce the rates as it is beneficial for both the body and mind. Yoga can be practised any time, but it is most effective

when it is practised on an empty stomach. Therefore, morning is the ideal time. If it is not possible people should practise at least two to three hours after eating," she said.

A yoga expert from Patanjali, Radhika Nagrath said that dedicating just 20 minutes each day to yoga can yield long-term mental and emotional benefits. "Doing it on a single day cannot effectively address respiratory issues. But engaging in yoga for 20 minutes daily can alleviate various ailments. The 12 poses of Surya Namaskar, combined with Pranayama and Kapalabhati, can significantly strengthen the musculoskeletal system and provide additional advantages to practitioners," she said, adding that yoga if rightly done would help people remain free from mental depression which has been afflicting an increasing number of people across the world.

Bank returns property papers at widow's doorstep, issues no dues certificate after DM's action

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

A district cooperative bank (DCB) in Dehradun returned the property documents of a widow Shivani Gupta directly at her doorstep and issued her a No Dues Certificate after the district administration's action. Gupta, a resident of Chandrabani, had been reportedly seeking justice for over a year after the death of her husband Rohit Gupta, who had



taken a loan of Rs15.50 lakh from DCB Bank. After her husband's death in May 2024, she approached the bank and the insurance com-

pany several times, requesting them to process the insurance claim and relieve her from the loan burden as she had no source of income. However, the insurance company allegedly delayed the disbursement and the bank kept pressuring her to pay EMIs. When she brought her case to the notice of Dehradun district magistrate Savin Bansal during a recent public hearing, he instructed the DCB Bank branch manager to appear and resolve the issue. The administration issued a recovery certificate (RC) of Rs 17.05 lakh, including interest on June 9 and directed the bank to comply by June 16. The bank did not act despite multiple notices. The DM said that following continued inaction, the ad-

ministration sealed the bank's branch located at Cross Roads Mall on Rajpur Road on June 18. The bank's movable assets were seized as part of the enforcement. The bank responded immediately after the sealing. Its officials visited Gupta's residence, returned her property docu-

ments that had been held as loan security and issued her a No Dues Certificate, effectively closing the loan. Bansal stated that such actions will continue in public interest when institutions fail to comply with lawful directions or deny justice to citizens seeking help.

Ajay Bhatt flags off Lalkuan-Prayagraj railway service

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lalkuan

The train from Lalkuan to Prayagraj was flagged off on Friday by the former Union Minister and Member of Parliament from Nainital-Udhm Singh Nagar, Ajay Bhatt and the MLA from Lalkuan, Mohan Singh Bisht.

The train will depart from Lalkuan every Friday at 2:50 PM while on its return journey it will depart from Prayagraj on Thursday at 11:30 AM. It will stop at Bareilly,

help the people of Uttarakhand to visit Prayagraj conveniently. "Also, people will come from Prayagraj and other places of Uttar Pradesh to visit religious and tourist places of Kumaon," he said.

He further said that the train has been started in conformity with the longstanding public demand. "If people use this service it will continue permanently. Lalkuan railway station has been appropriately expanded and in

future, more long-distance trains will be operated from Lalkuan railway station and there is also a plan to operate superfast trains like Vande



Kasganj, Farrukhabad and Kanpur.

Bhatt in his address said that the operation of Lalkuan-Prayagraj rail service would

press," he said and added that efforts are on to operate trains from Lalkuan to Kamakhya Devi and Lalkuan to Jhansi.

893 Anganwadi workers and assistants in 2 districts receive appointment letters

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The Women Empowerment and Child Development (WECD) minister, Rekha Arya handed over appointment letters to 893 Anganwadi workers and their assistants in Rudrapur and Pauri districts at Swami Manmanthan Auditorium within the Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna University's Chauras campus in Srinagar on Saturday. Of the total appointments, 196 were issued to Anganwadi workers and assistants in Rudrapur district while 697 went to those in Pauri district.

Speaking on the occasion, Arya said that the selection process has prioritised highly educated women and girls as Anganwadi workers and assistants. "I am firmly of the view

that this will enhance the quality of education and nutrition for the children," she said.

Invoking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Developed India by 2047, she said that the Anganwadi workers have a significant role to play in this transformational vision. She also said that upon finishing the recruitment process, the WECD has become one of the largest departments in terms of human resources. The current staff count in the department has reached approximately 40,000, she informed.

It is worth noting that the department has recently hired a total of 7,052 persons across the State, including 6,330 Anganwadi assistants and 722 Anganwadi workers.

Authorities prevent man from committing suicide after Instagram post

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The promptness of authorities prevented a man from committing suicide in Haridwar who had posted about taking his own life on Instagram. It was possible due to proper coordination between Meta, the parent company of Instagram and Facebook and the cyber crime unit of Uttarakhand Special Task Force (STF), the deputy superintendent of police of STF's cyber crime unit Ankush Mishra said. He informed that the incident unfolded on June 19 when Meta's team in the United States of America detected a disturbing post by a man Rajesh (name changed) in which he indicated his intent to commit suicide. The company's nodal officer Ashwin Mad-

husudhan immediately alerted the STF and cyber police teams in Uttarakhand through a call and follow-up email, sharing critical details of the user's account and location. Mishra said that as soon as the alert was received, Dehradun-based cyber crime officers, including assistant sub-inspector Mukesh Chand and constable Nitin Ramola, sprang into action. After analysing the information provided by Meta, they found that the location linked to the account was within Haridwar district. They promptly informed the Haridwar Police control room and the Kotwali Nagar police station. A Haridwar police team swiftly reached the location associated with the Instagram post.

They found the man in a distressed state and intervened just in time to prevent him from harming himself. Upon questioning, Rajesh shared that he had been grappling with serious personal and family issues, which led him to contemplate suicide and share his final thoughts online, as per DSP. He stated that the police officers not only diffused the immediate crisis but also counselled the man, urging him to seek help whenever he feels overwhelmed. They resolved some of his immediate problems and handed him over to his family with a strong advisory to contact the police if he ever faces such a crisis again, Mishra added.

Yoga calms down restless mind, boosts inner strength: Kandwal

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The chairperson of the Uttarakhand State Commission for Women (USCW), Kusum Kandwal exhorted everyone to make yoga a daily habit while participating in a seven-day yoga camp held to mark International Yoga Day, alongside women and children at the Women Welfare and Rehabilitation Cen-

italises energy. "It is an ideal means to calm restless minds and delve deeper into our consciousness. Thanks to the efforts of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Indian culture and the tradition of yoga are being embraced worldwide. Today, many around the globe have made yoga an essential part of their daily life," she stated.



Lauding the initiatives of the chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhama to engage the youth in yoga, she said that this has increased em-

ployment opportunities in the field of yoga. "I must thank the State government for having formulated a new yoga policy aimed at making Uttarakhand as a global hub for yoga and wellness," she added.

3 more Covid-19 & 2 more dengue cases reported in Dehradun

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Three new cases of Covid-19 and two of dengue have been reported in Dehradun district on Friday. The chief medical officer (CMO) of Dehradun, Dr Manoj Kumar Sharma said that one of the two dengue 'positive' patients has been admitted to Shri Mahant Indresh Hospital while the other at the outpatient department (OPD) of Graphic Era Hospital. This raises the total number of confirmed dengue cases in the district to 121, which includes 68 cases from Dehradun and 53 from other districts or states.

He further said that there are currently 16 active dengue patients being treated: eight at Shri Mahant Indresh Hospital, two each at Himalayan Hospital, Graphic Era Hospital and All India Institute of Med-

ical Sciences (AIIMS) Rishikesh and one at GDMC while one patient is recuperating at home. On Friday alone, 108 dengue samples were collected, taking the cumulative total to 7,543 samples so far.

Speaking of the new Covid-19 cases, Dr Sharma said that three locals have tested positive on Friday. This raises the cumulative total to 61 of which 50 are locals and 11 are migrants. Currently, there are four active Covid-19 cases in the district of whom three are being treated at home and one at the Government Doon Medical College (GDMC).

He further said that 49 samples have been tested for Covid-19 on Friday, taking the total number of samples tested to 621.

UTTARAKHAND STATE DISASTER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (USDMA)
(GOVERNMENT OF UTTARAKHAND)
36, I.T. PARK, SADASTRADHARA ROAD, DEHRADUN-248013, UTTARAKHAND
Email: usdmauttarakhand@gmail.com; Website: www.usdma.uk.gov.in

REFERENCE No.484/e-17596/USDMA/2024 DATE: 20.06.2025

E-TENDER NOTICE
The Uttarakhand State Disaster Management Authority (USDMA) Dehradun Invites bids from eligible bidders for the following packages.

S. No.	Name of Package	Date of Start of downloading the document	Last Date of submission of bids	Bid Security/ EMD (INR)
1	Supply & Delivery of Emergency Essential Resource Reserve (EERR) kits (Lot-1) under USDMA	20.06.2025	04.07.2025	3.50 Lakh
2	Supply & Delivery of Emergency Essential Resource Reserve (EERR) kits (Lot-2) under USDMA	20.06.2025	04.07.2025	0.70 Lakh

Details can be obtained from the website www.uktenders.gov.in and/or www.usdma.uk.gov.in from **20.06.2025, 01:00 PM**. The proposal must be submitted online on the portal www.uktenders.gov.in only. Note -> 1. The corrigendum for the above packages will be uploaded on website www.uktenders.gov.in &/or www.usdma.uk.gov.in, 2. Email -id usdmauttarakhand@gmail.com may be contacted for any information. **ACEO (Admin) USDMA**

Ministry of Rural Development
Department of Rural Development
Expression of Interest

Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India invites Expression of Interest from interested applicants for "Empanelment of Institutions & Individuals as National Level Monitors" for Monitoring and Evaluation Services in respect of schemes programmes of Ministry of Rural Development. The tender can be downloaded from <https://rural.gov.in/hii/documents/advertisement-tenders> and <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>. Applications will be received from online mode only. The last date for submission of Expression of Interest is 14th July, 2025 by 5.00 PM. haps <https://rural.gov.in/hii/documents/advertisement-tenders> CBC-35101/11/0001/2526

BUREAU OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY
(A Statutory body under Ministry of Power, Government of India)
4th Floor, Sewa Bhawan, R. K. Puram, New Delhi - 110066
Website: www.beeindia.gov.in, Ph: 011-26766700

25th NATIONAL CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION FOR ENERGY MANAGERS AND ENERGY AUDITORS

The Bureau of Energy Efficiency will conduct the 25th National Certification Examination for Energy Managers and Energy Auditors on **27th and 28th Sept. 2025 (Saturday and Sunday)**. The interested candidates can register for the exam ON-LINE at www.nceexam.in

The "Prospectus" is available at "Downloads" tab on the website. Link to the above website is also available at www.beeindia.gov.in

Commencement of Online Registration: 27th June 2025 at 11:00 hrs
Closure of Online Registration: 28th July 2025 at 11:00 hrs
CBC 34106/12/0009/2526 (Secretary)

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited Plot No-23, Shal Tower, 3rd Floor, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005

The Authorised ICICI Bank Officer under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notices to the borrower(s) mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice.

Having failed to repay the amount, the Notice is issued to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property described below, by exercising powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property. Any dealings with the property will be subject to charges of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs)	Name of Branch
1.	Prince Bokadiyal/ Satyapal Singh Bokadiyal/ Savita Bokdiyal/ LBDEH00005884420	Khata No. 2100, (Fasli Year 1417 To 1422) Khasha No. 332/3 Ka, Mauja Majra, Pargana Pachwadoon, District- Dehradun, Uttarakhand- 248001/ June 18, 2025	February 28, 2025 Rs. 47,63,884.53/-	Dehradun
2.	Rahul Uniyal/ Indresh Charan Uniyal/ LBDEH00002418443	Shop No 318, 3rd Floor, Without Roof Right, Khasha No. 308, 309Ga, 309Kha, 310 of Village Adhoiwala, Pargana Parvadoon, Times Square Mall, Adjoining Healing Touch Hospital, Sahastradhara Road, Uttarakhand, Dehradun- 248001/ June 18, 2025	February 28, 2025 Rs. 11,30,318.90/-	Dehradun/ Gautam Buddha Nagar/ New Delhi

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/guarantors(s) is/are hereby issued a 30 day Notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold after 30 days from the date of publishing this Notice, as per the provisions under Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.
Date: June 21, 2025
Place: Dehradun
Sincerely Authorised Officer
For ICICI Bank Ltd.

भारत सरकार
अंतरिक्ष विभाग
INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION
DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
राष्ट्रीय अंतरिक्ष अनुसंधान संगठन
NATIONAL REMOTE SENSING CENTRE
बालानगर, हैदराबाद
BALANAGAR, HYDERABAD 500 037

Advt.No.NRSC/RMT/2/2025 **DT:21.06.2025**

National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), one of the constituent Centres of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Department of Space (DOS) invites ONLINE applications for the following Temporary Research Personnel positions:-

Sl. No.	Name of the Position	No.of Positions	Qualification Requirements
01	Research Scientist	04	MSc/MSc Tech/M.E./M.Tech in Geo-informatics/ Remote Sensing/GIS/Remote Sensing&GIS/ Geomatics/Geospatial Information Science/Spatial Information/ Geology/ Applied Geology or equivalent.
02	Project Scientist-I	02	Doctoral degree /M.Tech in the field of Geology/Meteorology/Atmospheric Science/ Climate Science/ Earth Science/Climate Modeling/Earth System Modeling/Land Surface Modeling or equivalent.
03	Project Scientist-B	01	Master's Degree in the field of Forestry/Agroforestry/ Agricultural Science/ Environmental Science/ Remote Sensing & GIS or equivalent.
04	Project Associate-I	01	Master's Degree in Remote Sensing & GIS/ Geo-informatics/Geo spatial Technology/Spatial Science/ Spatial Information Technology or equivalent.
		09	B.E/B.Tech in Computer Science/ Geo-Informatics or equivalent.
05	Junior Research Fellow	17	Master's Degree in Physics/Oceanography/ Ocean Science/ Marine Science / Earth System Science/ Geophysics / Applied Geophysics/ Atmospheric Science/ Meteorology/ Climate Science/ Remote Sensing / GIS / Remote Sensing & GIS / Geophysics /Geo-informatics / Geomatics / Geospatial Technology / Spatial Information Technology or equivalent.

For detailed advertisement and to apply Online please visit <https://www.nrsc.gov.in>

Opening Date for On-line Registration:	21.06.2025 (1000 Hrs)
Last Date for Accepting Applications:	11.07.2025 (1700 Hrs)

CBC 49112/11/0003/2526

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS PUBLIC NOTICE

In birth certificate B-2022:5-90170-006170 of my son, his name mistakenly recorded as Advait. While his correct and real name is Samarth Verma. Ashish Kumar S/o Vijay Kumar, 264 Phase second, Panditwari Dehradun

I, Rakhi Devi, wife of late Vijay Singh Gusain, Army No. 1484340-P. My daughter's name Neha and date of birth 20.09.1999 have been entered incorrectly by mistake. Whereas her correct name is Neha Gusain and correct date of birth is 21.09.1998. In future, she should be known by her correct name and date of birth.

मेरे आधार कार्ड नं० 660036941621 में द्रुतिश मेरा नाम दलत सिंह (DOLAT SINGH) गलत दर्ज हो गया है। जबकि मेरा वास्तविक नाम दयाल सिंह (DAYAL SINGH) है। जो मेरे स्थाई निवास प्रमाण-पत्र सं० UK25ES0100222088 में भी दर्ज है। भविष्य में मुझे दयालसिंह (DAYAL SINGH) पुत्र स्व० गुलाब सिंह के नाम से जाना पहचाना व पुकारा जाए। निवासी ग्राम चोरडा पोस्ट सिलपाटा, गैरसैण चमोली उत्तराखण्ड।

मेरे आधार कार्ड नं० 714003337379 में मेरा नाम देवी (DEVI) दर्ज है। जबकि मेरे जन्म प्रमाण-पत्र पंजीकरण सं० B-2023:5-01020-000010 में मेरा नाम देवेश्वरी उर्फ देवी अंकित है। ये दोनों ही नाम मेरे हैं। भविष्य में मुझे दोनों नामों देवेश्वरी उर्फ देवी के नाम से जाना पहचाना व पुकारा जाए। निवासी ग्राम चोरडा पोस्ट सिलपाटा, गैरसैण चमोली उत्तराखण्ड।

मैं, लक्ष्मीबाई बेदारती M/o आर्मी नं. 18003672M हवलदार लगमना एम. कोन्सू घोषणा करती हूँ कि, मैंने अपना नाम लक्ष्मीबा (पुराना नाम) से बदलकर लक्ष्मीबाई बेदारती (नया नाम) कर लिया है। हलकनामा सप्तम नोटरी एवं एडवोकेट पी.बी. निंबालकर पब्लिक गोकक, दिनांक: 21.04.2025

मेरे हाईस्कूल अनुक्रमांक 25125322 में द्रुतिश मेरा नाम विपुल कुमार (VIPUL KUMAR) गलत दर्ज हो गया है। जबकि मेरा वास्तविक नाम विपुल कुमार तोमर (VIPUL KUMAR TOMAR) है। जो मेरे इण्टरमीडिएट अनुक्रमांक 25628086 व आधार कार्ड नं० 4333-7423-8947 में भी दर्ज है। भविष्य में मुझे विपुल कुमार तोमर (VIPUL KUMAR TOMAR) पुत्र श्री राकेश कुमार के नाम से जाना पहचाना व पुकारा जाए। निवासी-799/4, डोंगरा लाईन त्रिगुनपुर पार्क रुड़की जिला- हरिद्वार उत्तराखण्ड।

PUBLIC NOTICE
Mrs. Rachana Tyagi, wife of Mr. Sandeep Kumar - Landowner; is the owner of the land, Khata Serial No. 783, Khasha No. 233, area 230.02 sqm situated in Mauja Bharuwalla Grant (Plot No. 87, Aakriti Vihar, Cantt Area), Dehradun. In the previous series of this property, two sale deeds are duly recorded and marked on 10.09.2013 in Ledger No. 1. Volume 5370, pages 163 to 188, number 7988, which is registered in the Sub-Registrar Dehradun in favour of Mrs. Kusum Lata and the second sale deed is duly registered on 20.02.2006 in Ledger No. 1. Volume 1547, page 108 of A.D.F. Book 1, Volume 1567, pages 577 to 590, number 1146, in favour of Mr. Ravindra Kumar. Only the original feehold deed/sale deed dated 10.09.2013 and the original copy of 20.02.2006 have been lost somewhere, which could not be found even after a lot of searching. It's report is lodged in Police Station Vasant Vihar. Its GD No. is 26 dated 16 June 25. The applicant wants to take loan on the above property from SBI Bank, Clement Town, Branch Code 03056. If anyone has any objection then he can contact within 15 days. Mrs. Rachana Tyagi, wife of Mr. Sandeep Kumar, resident of Lane No. 6, Turner Road, Dehradun 9635066410

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President Murmu inaugurates Rashtrapati Tapovan and Niketan in Dehradun

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated Rashtrapati Tapovan and Rashtrapati Niketan in Dehradun on Friday. She also inaugurated several public amenities, including the visitor facilitation centre, cafeteria and souvenir shop and laid the foundation stone for Rashtrapati Udyan at Rashtrapati Niketan. Murmu also visited the National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Visual Disabilities (NIEPVD) at Dehradun and interacted with the students on the occasion of her birthday on Friday. She also visited the Model School Science Lab and Computer Lab as well as an exhibition. Speaking on the occasion, the President said that the progress of a country or society can be judged by the way the people treat persons with disabilities in that society. India's history is full of inspiring incidents of sensitivity and inclusiveness. Elements of human compassion and love have always been present in our culture and civilisation. She stated that the government is striving for empowerment and equal participation of the divyangjan through the Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan, which emphasises developing an accessible physical environment, transport, information and communication ecosystem. Murmu said that today's era is the era of science and technology. With the help of advanced technology, even people with disabilities can be able to contribute to



the mainstream. She was happy to note that the NIEPVD is giving special emphasis on the all-around development of students through an inclusive education system and latest technological resources. She said that efforts must be made by society to encourage disabled people in every sphere of life. The President also released a book on the biodiversity of Rashtrapati Niketan, Rashtrapati Tapovan and Rashtrapati Udyan on the occasion. This book catalogues over 300 species of flora and 170 species of fauna, including butterflies, birds and mammals of Rashtrapati Niketan, Tapovan and Udyan. Earlier, she had also inaugurated an amphitheatre at Rashtrapati Niketan on Thursday. Rashtrapati Tapovan, situated on Rajpur Road in Dehradun, is a 19-acre Presidential Estate nestled in the Himalayan foothills, emphasising spiritual retreat and ecological preservation. A dense forest patch rich in native vegetation,

Tapovan hosts 117 plant species, 52 butterflies, 41 bird species and seven wild mammals, including some protected species. The area features natural bamboo groves and undisturbed woodland ecosystems. Established in 1976 as a Presidential Retreat, Rashtrapati Niketan has a rich heritage tracing back to 1838 when the estate served as a summer camp for the Governor General's bodyguard. It spans 21 acres and includes Lily ponds, featuring historic buildings, orchards and stables. Rashtrapati Udyan, a 132-acre public park, will be a model of accessibility and ecological responsibility, a Net-Zero public park, fully accessible to Divyangjan. It aims to become a community engagement hub to promote wellness, culture and civic pride among citizens. The Rashtrapati Tapovan and Rashtrapati Niketan will be open for public viewing from June 24 and July 1 respectively.

Birthday song by visually impaired children leaves President emotional

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

President Droupadi Murmu got emotional on Friday as students of the National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Visual Disabilities (NIEPVD) in Dehradun sang a soulful birthday song for her. The children sang the iconic "Baar baar din ye aaye, baar baar dil ye gaaye, tum jiyo hazaaron saal," filling

perfect unison. Her heart-felt reaction quickly went viral, earning praise across social media platforms. People not only appreciated the sincerity of the children's performance but also lauded the President's genuine and humane response. The video sparked an outpouring of love, with many viewers calling the gesture heart melting and



the hall with warmth and applause. The moment unfolded during the President's ongoing three-day visit to Uttarakhand, which began on Thursday. A video shared from the event shows Murmu listening with deep emotion as the children, many of them visually impaired, sang in

deeply moving. It is pertinent to mention here that Murmu's visit includes several public engagements in Uttarakhand and her interaction with the students stood out as a highlight. Her Uttarakhand tour is scheduled to conclude on Saturday.

U'khand govt to organise Yoga Day programme in Gairsain today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The Uttarakhand government will organise its official State level programme on the occasion of the International Day of Yoga at Bharadisaan in the summer capital Gairsain in Chamoli district on Saturday.

The programme will be organised in the premises of the Vidhan Sabha located at an altitude of 7,800 feet above sea level. Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami and the ambassadors of eight countries will participate in a yoga session in the morning.

The ambassador of Mexico in India Federico Salas, the high commissioner of Fiji in India Jaganath Sammi, the am-

dra Dissanayake, secretary first in Russian embassy in India Christina Ananeena and secretary third Katerina Lazareva and Yoga Guru Swami Bharat Bhushan arrived in Bharadisaan on the eve of the International Day of Yoga.

The pristine and green valleys, natural beauty and clean premises of Bharadisaan enthralled the foreign guests. They praised Gairsain and termed it amazingly beautiful. The Chholia dancers and other folk artists welcomed the guests with their performances. The observers opined that the decision of chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami to organise State level function on

Wall collapse in Uttarkashi kills four members of family

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Uttarkashi

A wall collapse in Moritehsil's Mora Tok in Uttarkashi district killed four members of a family in the wee hours of Friday. The man Gulam Hussain (26), his wife Rukma Khatoon (23), their three-year-old son Abid and 10-month-old daughter Salma died after the wall of their Kuchcha house collapsed due to heavy rainfall at around 2 AM. The family resided in the Gurdar Basti of Odada village who were asleep when the incident occurred, as per the officials. They informed that locals rushed to the spot after hearing the sound of the collapse but by the time rescue efforts began, all four had died under the debris. The local administration including tehsildar of Mori, revenue sub-inspector and police along with the rescue team of the Uttarakhand Special Task Force (STF) reached the site and launched a rescue op-



eration in the wee hours. The rescue teams recovered the bodies of the deceased and will hand them over to the family after post-mortem, the officials said. The incident has left the entire village in mourning. According to villagers, continuous rainfall in the area has put many mud houses at risk. The affected family lived in poverty and did not have a concrete house. Neighbours and residents from nearby areas had

gathered to console the grieving relatives. Locals are urging the administration to provide immediate financial assistance and ensure that the surviving members receive safe and permanent housing. The officials stated that the administration has begun the process of providing initial relief to the family and more financial assistance will be provided after further assessment.

Biometric attendance system made compulsory in hospitals, medical colleges in Uttarakhand

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Taking cognizance of the complaints of late arrival and absenteeism without prior permission, the Uttarakhand government has decided to implement the biometric system of attendance in the hospitals and medical colleges of the State. The State Health minister Dhan Singh Rawat has directed the director general (DG) State Health services and the director Medical Education department to install biometric machines in all the hospitals and medical colleges. The minister said that bio-

metric attendance machines will be compulsorily installed in all district hospitals, sub-district hospitals, joint hospitals, primary health centres, community health centres, sub-centres and all medical colleges of the State. Rawat said that clear orders for installation of the machines have been given to the officers concerned. He said that complaints of absenteeism and late arrival of the doctors and paramedical staff are common and it creates hindrances in smooth functioning of the hospitals. The patients are the worst suf-

ferers of this tendency. Rawat added that all the chief medical officers (CMO) have been directed to take strict action against the doctors and paramedical staff who are absent from their duties without prior information. He said that apart from the CMOs and ACMOs, the officers of the district administration will also undertake regular inspection of the health centres. The minister averred that the officers concerned have been directed to deduct salary and take other punitive action on the absentee employees.

South West Monsoon arrives in U'khand

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The southwest monsoon advanced in Uttarakhand on Friday. As per the State meteorological centre, the northern limit of monsoon passed through Jaipur, Agra, Rampur, Dehradun, Shimla, Manali on Friday. The centre has issued a warning regarding the possibility of heavy to very heavy rainfall with very intense to extremely intense spells likely at isolated places in Nainital, Champawat, Tehri and Dehradun, Tehri and Pauri districts on Saturday. Further light to moderate rainfall accompanied with

thunderstorms is likely to occur at isolated places in the remaining districts of Uttarakhand. Apart from this, thunderstorms accompanied with lightning and intense spells of rain with gusty winds (40 to 50 kmph) are very likely isolated places in all the districts of the State. The provisional State capital Dehradun is likely to witness partly to generally cloudy skies with few spells of rain/thunderstorms likely to occur of which one to two spells of may be intense showers in some areas. The maximum and mini-

mum temperatures recorded in various parts of the State on Friday were 33.7 degrees Celsius and 23.8 degrees Celsius respectively in Dehradun, 31.1 degrees Celsius and 26.2 degrees Celsius in Pantnagar, 20.9 degrees Celsius and 15.5 degrees Celsius in Mukteshwar and 25 degrees Celsius and 18.1 degrees Celsius in New Tehri. Light to moderate rainfall was recorded in various parts of the State with 25 millimetres in Thalisaan, 17 millimetres in Ranikhet, 7.5 millimetres in Jollygrant and 6.0 millimetres in Kalsi.



bassador of Nepal Shankar Prasad Sharma, the ambassador of Surinam in India Arunkoemar Hardien, ambassador of Mongolia in India Ganbold Dambajav, the deputy head of mission in the embassy of Latvia in India Marks Deitons, minister counsellor in embassy of Sri Lanka Laxmen-

the occasion of International day for Yoga at Gairsain is a master stroke to highlight the summer capital of the State. The decision will ensure national and international recognition to Gairsain and help in establishing the area nestled amid Garhwal Himalayas as centre of Ayush and wellness.

Govt planning to close down 1488 schools: Dhasmana

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The vice president of Uttarakhand Congress Suryakant Dhasmana has accused the State government for trying to destroy the system of government education in Uttarakhand.

Interacting with the media persons at headquarters of the State Congress on Friday,

of a cluster school will be merged. Dhasmana warned that the decision will have a long lasting negative effect on the education system in the State. He said that distance of 30 km is substantial in the mountainous areas of the State. The Congress leader said that it is unfortunate that the Education department which has failed to provide textbooks even after three months of the start of new session has prepared a plan to close schools by making decreasing student enrolment a basis. He said that closure of 1488 schools will result in the abolition of thousands of posts of principals, teachers and ministerial employees. Dhasmana warned that the Congress party will not allow closure of the schools and attempts of privatisation of the education system in the State.

OP Agnihotri ■ Haldwani

With the monsoon round the corner, the people of a village fear they will be marooned soon. This is their plight for a number of years now: living cut off from the rest of India as soon as the monsoon fury is unleashed on them. Quite appropriately, this locality is called 'Sri Lanka Tapu' by the locals though in records of administration it is still called Khuriakhatta, the village in Bindukhatta area of Nainital district from which it got detached by river Gaula in 1985. With the village hemmed in by river and forest, the district administration has built a helipad before the advent of the monsoon season for ferrying people in case of emergency. Half of the agricultural lands, spread over about 100 hectares- quite fertile otherwise- were washed away in the previous rains when the swollen Gaula gushed into the village, flooding everything.



The villagers recount fearfully how the only school in the village was swept away by the furiously flowing river during the devastating 2011 flood. "Since then over 30 children of the village keep walking down to an area away from the river to study," said Dharm Singh Koranga, a villager with frustration ringing in his voice.

The electricity is still elusive for the people of the area. "We wonder when we will move out of the lantern age. It is doubtful whether that blessed time will ever arrive for us or not," Koranga rued. They say that they have to cross the Gaula to reach school, hospital and even to vote. Though the village is

about five km away from Lalkuan they have to detour a very long distance via Sitarganj when the river is in spate. "We send about 150 litres of milk daily to the dairy in Lalkuan in the morning and evening shifts, but all this stops during monsoon when the river floods. We keep on suffering loss helplessly," lamented another villager.

This village is inhabited by about 40 families and has more than 150 voters. Their main occupation is livestock rearing and farming. They grow sugarcane, paddy and wheat, principally the first. The elderly reminisce about the terrible flood in Gaula on October 12 and 13, 1985 when

the government should construct an enduring embankment and a hanging bridge over the river aside from providing them with electricity. "These are simple but vital for the survival of this village and its hapless inhabitants," observed Koranga.

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The Authorised ICICI Bank Officer under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notices to the borrower(s) mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice.

Having failed to repay the amount, the Notice is issued to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property described below, by exercising powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property. Any dealings with the property will be subject to charges of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs)	Name of Branch
1.	Pamposh Gulati/ Neeraj Gulati/ LBHDI00006057723/ LBRUD00006078553	Villa No. 47, Tulip Homes Khata No. 00412, Khasra No. 660 Ka Min Village Haldwani Talli, Pargana Bhawar Cha Khata Tehsil Haldwani, Nainital, Uttarakhand- 263139/ 19-June-25	February 25, 2025 Rs.70,89,838.62/-	Gurgaon/ Haldwani/ Mumbai

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/guarantors(s) is/are hereby issued a 30 day Notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold after 30 days from the date of publishing this Notice, as per the provisions under Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date: June 21, 2025 Place: Haldwani

Sincerely Authorised Officer For ICICI Bank Ltd.

Air India cancels eight flights

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

Air India on Friday announced that it has cancelled eight flights, including four international and three domestic routes, due to “enhanced maintenance and operational reasons” while it’s Pune-bound flight from Delhi suffered a bird hit, forcing the airline to cancel its return journey.

According to the airline, affected flights include services between Dubai, Chennai, Delhi, Melbourne, Pune, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and Mumbai.

This comes as the carrier plans to cut 38 international flights per week and suspend services on three overseas routes between June 21 and July 15.

The international flights to be cancelled were — AI906 from Dubai to Chennai, AI308 from Delhi to Melbourne, AI309 from Melbourne to Delhi, and AI2204 from Dubai to Hyderabad.

Air India said four domestic flights — AI874 from Pune to Delhi, AI456 from Ahmedabad to Delhi, AI-2872 from Hyderabad to Mumbai, and AI571 from Chennai to Mumbai have been cancelled.

In a statement, Air India said the move was due to “enhanced maintenance and operational reasons.” “Air India’s international flights AI906 from Dubai to Chennai, AI308 from Delhi to Melbourne, AI309 from Melbourne to Delhi, AI2204 from Dubai to Hyderabad and domestic flights AI874 from Pune to Delhi, AI456 from Ahmedabad to Delhi, AI-2872 from Hyderabad to Mumbai and AI571 from Chennai to Mumbai have been cancelled due to enhanced maintenance and operational reasons,”

Air India said its teams on the ground



are making alternative arrangements for the passengers to fly to their respective destinations at the earliest.

It has also offered full refunds on cancellation or complimentary rescheduling to passengers, the airline said.

The cancellations come days after an Air India flight from Ahmedabad to London crashed.

The airline announced it will cut 38 international flights per week and suspend services on three overseas routes for about three weeks. The Tata Group-owned airline said the reductions aim to restore schedule stability and minimise last-minute inconvenience to passengers following disruptions after the June 12 plane crash in Ahmedabad.

The airline will suspend services on the Delhi-Nairobi, Amritsar-London (Gatwick), and Goa (Mopa)-London (Gatwick) routes until July 15.

Delhi-Nairobi has four flights per week, while Amritsar-London and Goa-London each have three flights weekly.

Additionally, flights will be reduced on 18 international routes connecting cities in North America, Europe, Australia, and

the Far East.

North American routes affected include Delhi-Toronto, Delhi-Vancouver, Delhi-San Francisco, Delhi-Chicago, and Delhi-Washington.

European routes with reduced services are Delhi-London Heathrow, Bengaluru-London Heathrow, Amritsar-Birmingham, Delhi-Birmingham, Delhi-Paris, Delhi-Milan, Delhi-Copenhagen, Delhi-Vienna, and Delhi-Amsterdam. Services on Delhi-Melbourne, Delhi-Sydney, Delhi-Tokyo Haneda and Delhi-Seoul (Incheon) have also been cut.

Meanwhile Air India Pune-bound flight from Delhi suffered a bird hit, forcing the airline to cancel its return journey. The aircraft landed safely and the bird hit was detected after it touched down in Pune, the airline said in a statement.

It has been grounded and extensive checks are being carried out by the engineering team, Air India said.

“Flight AI2470 scheduled to operate from Pune to Delhi on June 20 has been cancelled due to a bird-hit which was detected after the incoming flight landed safely in Pune,” it said.

ICCR to lead Global Yoga Day celebrations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

India will organise thematic events and programmes in 1,300 cities across the globe to mark the International Day of Yoga on Saturday, showcasing the nation’s ancient tradition and soft power.

The Indian High Commission in Pakistan is also organising a yoga event in Islamabad on the occasion, according to a statement issued on Friday by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), the cultural arm of the Ministry of External Affairs.

“On the 10th anniversary of International Day of Yoga, we will practically cover every country in the world where yoga events are being organised. In some countries like the US, we are hosting multiple events across various cities,” ICCR’s Director General, K Nandini Singla, was quoted as saying in a statement. The ICCR will organise various yoga events and programmes in 191 countries on June 21 to mark the IDY, with more than 2,000 events to be hosted at 1,300 locations, covering multiple cities in various nations, it said.

Additionally, the ICCR is also hosting ‘Yoga Bandhan’, a signature event of IDY 2025, where 17 yoga gurus and practitioners from 15 countries,



Youngsters perform aerial yoga on the eve of the International Day of Yoga in Mumbai

PTI

including Brazil, Argentina, Russia, China, South Africa, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Singapore and South Korea, will lead the Yoga Day events across India, Singla said.

In Delhi, yoga events will be led by these foreign yoga gurus at Jantar Mantar, Qutub Minar, Purana Quila and Humayun’s Tomb, while similar ‘Yoga Bandhan’ programmes will be organised at iconic locations in Lucknow, Ayodhya, Varanasi, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bhopal, Gwalior and other cities, she added.

Just as yoga is a ‘union’ between ‘Atma’ and ‘Paramatma’, ‘Yoga Bandhan’ seeks to “unite India and the

world”, the ICCR’s DG said.

“It is a matter of great satisfaction that yoga has come full circle. Yoga went from India to these countries.

People abroad learnt yoga, and today they have come back to India to lead yoga demonstrations by Indian people in India,” Singla added. The theme for IDY 2025 is ‘Yoga for One Earth, One Health’.

This theme echoes a vital truth about the interconnectedness of health, sustainability, and the environment, aligning with India’s “One Earth, One Family, One Future” vision highlighted during its G20

presidency, the ICCR underlined. The ICCR DG noted that preparations for IDY-2025 started several months ago.

“To create awareness about IDY, we did various programmes to mark the 100-day countdown, 75-day countdown, 50-day countdown and 25-day countdown events. Globally, our embassies and consulates hosted special yoga events in the run-up to the IDY,” she said.

India’s 37 cultural centres in different countries also organised numerous yoga programmes during the last 100 days, Singla added.

Leaders hails President Murmu legacy on her 67th birthday



President Droupadi Murmu gets emotional as a group of visually impaired children sing a song to wish her on her 67th birthday at NIEPVD in Dehradun

PTI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and several political figures greeted President Droupadi Murmu on her 67th birthday on Friday.

She is India’s first tribal president and assumed the office in 2022.

Dhankhar had called on President Murmu on Thursday evening to greet her on the eve of her birthday. The president is on a three-day tour of Uttarakhand.

“Heartfelt birthday wishes to the Hon’ble President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu Ji. Her extraordinary journey from humble beginnings to the highest constitutional office, epitomising modesty, simplicity and sublimity,

reflects the true spirit of our democracy,” the vice president posted on social media.

Dhankhar said she has consistently set the highest standards throughout her journey in public service, as an MLA, governor and now as the president of the largest democracy — a legacy worth emulation.

“May this birthday bring her abundant health, happiness and joy, and may the Almighty bless her with continued strength to serve our nation,” the vice president said. Prime Minister Modi said her life and leadership continue to inspire crores of people across the country.

“Warmest birthday wishes to Rashtrapati Ji. Her life and leadership continue to inspire crores of people across the country. Her unwavering commitment to public service, social justice and inclusive

development are a beacon of hope and strength for everyone,” Modi said on social media.

“She has always worked to empower the poor and downtrodden. May she be blessed with a long and healthy life in service of the people,” he added.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said, “On behalf of the Indian National Congress, we extend our warm birthday wishes to the Hon’ble President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu ji.”

“May her wisdom and unwavering dedication to the nation’s progress, welfare, and justice continue to lead the country on the path of truth and virtuousness,” he said adding “We wish her a long, healthy, and fulfilling life.”

Rahul Gandhi said “Wishing you a healthy and long life.”

Parties spent over ₹3,352 crore in 2024 Lok Sabha polls

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) spent nearly ₹1,494 crore, accounting for 44.56 per cent of the total election expenditure, during the 2024 Lok Sabha election, poll rights body the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) said on Friday.

The Congress followed next with ₹620 crore or 18.5 per cent of the total expenses among the 32 national and regional parties whose records were analysed, the ADR said.

Together, these parties spent ₹3,352.81 crore during the Lok Sabha and simultaneous Assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha and Sikkim between March 16 and June 6, 2024.

The national parties accounted for more than

₹2,204 crore (65.75 per cent) of this expenditure.

“Of the total funds collected, national parties collected ₹6,930.246 crore (93.08 per cent) while regional parties received ₹515.32 crore (6.92 per cent),” the report said.

The analysis is based on the mandatory expenditure statements political parties are required to file with the Election Commission (EC) within 90 days of a general election and 75 days of a state poll.

The ADR also found significant delays in submissions, with the Aam Aadmi Party’s (AAP) statement arriving 168 days late and the BJP’s after 139 to 154 days, depending on the state.

Only the Congress submitted a consolidated report for both the Lok Sabha and Assembly polls.

Publicity topped the list of expenses, with the parties spending ₹2,008 crore or more than 53 per cent, of their total declared expenditure on it. Travel expenses came next at ₹795 crore, followed by ₹402 crore in lump-sum payments to candidates.

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The parties also spent over ₹132 crore on virtual campaigns and ₹28 crore on publishing the criminal antecedents of their candidates. Of the total expenditure of the 32 political parties on

publicity, an amount of ₹1,511.3004 crore or 75.25 per cent was spent by the national parties and ₹496.99 crore or 24.75 per cent was spent by the regional parties. Travel expenses were also heavily skewed toward star campaigners.

Of the ₹795 crore spent on travel, ₹765 crore (96.22 per cent) went toward ferrying high-profile party faces, with just ₹30 crore spent on the other leaders.

The ADR flagged several concerns on transparency.

Statements from 21 parties, including the NCP, CPI, JMM and Shiv Sena (UBT), were unavailable on the EC’s website when the report was prepared.

The expenditure statements of the RJD, LJP(RV), AJSU, KCM(M) are not available for the concerned 2024 Assembly elections contested in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal

Pradesh and Odisha.

Meanwhile, two parties — Jammu and Kashmir PDP and Kerala Congress (M) — declared zero expenditure despite contesting.

The ADR noted that a total of 690 unrecognised political parties contested in the general election last year, while one in Arunachal Pradesh, 74 in Andhra Pradesh, 35 in Odisha and two in Sikkim contested in the Assembly polls held simultaneously.

The expenditure statements of these parties were not analysed as part of the report.

The report said wherever possible, expenditure must be limited to transactions via cheques or DD (demand draft) or RTGS, so as to reduce the use of black money in elections in accordance with the transparency guidelines issued by the EC.

India to evacuate 1,000 nationals from Iran

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

Nearly 1,000 Indians will be evacuated in three flights from Iran after it eased airspace restrictions. The first flight is expected to arrive here on Friday while two others are expected on Saturday afternoon, it was learnt.

This development came after Iran eased its airspace restrictions for India to allow its nationals to evacuate as the conflict between the Middle Eastern country and Israel entered its eighth day on Friday. At least 1,000 Indian nationals, including students, are expected



MBBS student Mehak Hussain with her father after returning home following her evacuation from Iran under Operation Sindhu in Srinagar

pti

ed to fly back in three special Iranian aircraft, which will take off from Iran’s Mashhad city. Iranian officials have said more flights will be organised

if needed, adding that all Indians in Iran are safe. Earlier this week, at least 110 students, most of them from Jammu and Kashmir, were evacuated from

Iran on Wednesday under Operation Sindhu. The students arrived in Delhi from the Qatari capital early on Thursday. On Thursday, India also announced that it will begin evacuating Indian nationals who want to leave Israel with arrangements being made for them to leave via land borders because of airspace restrictions.

“In view of the recent developments between Israel and Iran, the Government of India has decided to evacuate from Israel those Indian nationals who wish to leave,” ministry of external affairs ministry said in a statement.

VP Dhankhar slams SC’s Emergency verdict

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Friday slammed the Supreme Court for its verdict delivered during the Emergency, dubbing it as the “darkest” in the judicial history of the world.

According to an official statement, he said the judgment of the Supreme Court overruling that of nine high courts legitimised dictatorship and authoritarianism.

Dhankhar also questioned the then president Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed for signing the proclamation of Emergency on the “instance” of then prime minister Indira Gandhi and not the entire council of ministers.

Addressing a group of Rajya Sabha interns here, the vice president said, “A president cannot act on the advice of an individual, the prime minister. The Constitution is very categorical.

“There is a council of ministers headed by the PM to aid and advise the president. This was one violation, but what was the result? More than 1,00,000 citizens of this country were put behind bars in hours,” he said.

Referring to the role of the judiciary during the Emergency, Dhankhar said, “That was a time when the fundamental essence of democracy capsised in times of distress. People look up to the judiciary. Nine high courts in the country have gloriously defined that emergency or no emergency, people have fundamental rights and there is access to the justice system,” he further said.

Malicious narratives being spread using our video footage: EC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

Fearing use of its electronic data to create “malicious narratives”, the Election Commission has instructed its state poll officers to destroy CCTV camera, webcasting and video footage of the election process after 45 days, if the verdict is not chal-

lenged in courts within that period.

In a letter to state chief electoral officers on May 30, the EC said it has issued instructions for recording various stages of the election process through multiple recording devices — photography, videography, CCTV, and webcasting during the election process.

While electoral laws do not mandate such recordings, the commission uses them as an internal management tool during various stages of the electoral process.

“However, the recent misuse of this content by non-contestants for spreading misinformation and malicious narratives on social media by selective and out-of-context use of

such content, which will not lead to any legal outcome, has prompted a review,” it said.

It has now told its state poll chiefs that the CCTV data, webcasting data and photography of election processes at various stages will be preserved for 45 days.

“If no election petition is filed in respect of a particular constituency, then the said

data may be destroyed,” it instructed. Any person can file an “election petition” challenging the poll verdict in the concerned high court within 45 days. In December last year, the Government tweaked an election rule to prevent public inspection of certain electronic documents, such as CCTV camera and webcasting footage, as well as video

Centre backs heritage vision

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has written to Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta, expressing willingness to work in collaboration to unlock the full cultural potential of the Assembly complex and promised help in identifying conservation

experts for the project. Gupta had written to the minister, seeking his ministry’s help in developing the Assembly building campus as a historical heritage hub. In his letter to Gupta on June 17, Shekhawat commended the speaker on his “thoughtful and visionary initiative, committed to assisting in identifying experts in the fields of conservation, curation and cultural programming”.

ED withdraws summons to lawyer again after SC advocate-on-record body writes to CJI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

The Enforcement Directorate on Friday withdrew its summons to a senior lawyer Pratap Venugopal for reportedly giving legal advice in a case after the Supreme Court Advocates on Record Association (SCAORA) wrote to the chief justice of India for taking note of the action. The ED wrote to senior advocate Pratap Venugopal, intimating him that the summons issued to

him were withdrawn with “immediate effect”. Previous week, ED withdrawn summons to noted lawyer Arvind Datar, after wide protests advocates’ bodies. Later in the evening, ED issued new guidelines directing prior approval of ED Director is mandatory to issue any summons against advocates for giving legal opinions.

SCAORA president Vipin Nair had earlier written to CJI BR Gavai on the “deeply disquieting development” having “serious ramifications for

the independence of the legal profession and the foundational principle of lawyer-client confidentiality”. “It has come to our notice that senior advocate Pratap Venugopal, has received on June 19, a summons dated June 18, by ED under Section 50 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in its investigation into the Employee Stock Option Plan (ESOP) granted by M/s Care Health Insurance Ltd for a purported legal opinion rendered by senior advocate Arvind

Datar, wherein Pratap Venugopal, was the advocate-on-record, supporting the grant of stock options to former Religare enterprises chairperson Rashmi Saluja,” the letter said.

Later in the evening, ED officials said that Pratap Venugopal was actually summoned in the capacity of independent director of Care Health Insurance Ltd and not as advocate. Section 50 of the PMLA deals with “powers of authorities regarding summons, production of docu-

ments and to give evidence, etc.” Venugopal, the letter said, was directed to appear before the ED on June 24. “It would be imperative to mention that a similar notice was earlier issued by the ED to senior advocate Arvind Data, albeit withdrawn subsequently,” it added. Venugopal was said to be a widely respected member of the legal fraternity with an “impeccable” sincerity and professional commitment.

“These actions, by the ED, we believe, amount to an

impermissible transgression of the sacrosanct lawyer-client privilege, and pose a serious threat to the autonomy and fearless functioning of advocates. Such unwarranted and coercive measures against senior members of the bar for discharge of professional duties set a dangerous precedent, potentially resulting in a chilling effect across the legal community,” the letter underscored.

The SCAORA said a lawyer’s role to offer legal advice was privileged and protected and the interference of investigative

agencies into this relationship without just cause and contrary to established legal norms, struck at the heart of the rule of law. Such interventions could dissuade advocates from rendering honest, independent opinions in the discharge of their duties, the bar body said.

The letter, as a result, urged the CJI to take suo motu cognisance of the matter and examine the issue of “the legality and propriety of such summons issued to legal professionals for opinions rendered



अंतर्राष्ट्रीय योग दिवस



21 जून, 2025 (शनिवार)

थीम: "एक पृथ्वी, एक स्वास्थ्य के लिए योग"

विश्व के कल्याण के लिए
देवभूमि में योग का उत्सव



11वें अंतर्राष्ट्रीय योग दिवस का राज्य स्तरीय कार्यक्रम

दिनांक: 21 जून, 2025, समय: प्रातः 07:00 बजे

स्थान: भराड़ीसैण (गैरसैण) विधानसभा परिसर, चमोली, उत्तराखण्ड

मुख्य अतिथि

पुष्कर सिंह धामी

मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तराखण्ड

गरिमामयी उपस्थिति

- 10 देशों के राजदूत और आमजनमानस सहित एक हजार से अधिक अतिथि योगाभ्यास कार्यक्रम में सम्मिलित
- सभी सरकारी कार्यालयों और स्वास्थ्य केंद्रों के कर्मियों की सक्रिय भागीदारी
- व्यापक और भव्य रूप से मनाया जा रहा है प्रदेशभर में योग का उत्सव
- वैश्विक मंच तक योग को जीवनशैली और वैश्विक चेतना बनाने का संकल्प
- सिर्फ भारत ही नहीं, बल्कि पूरी दुनिया ने योग के चमत्कार को माना है



“ योग भारत की प्राचीन और अमूल्य विरासत है। नियमित योग अभ्यास से तन मजबूत, मन शांत और आत्मा निर्मल होती है। योग को केवल एक आसन न समझें, इसे अपनी सोच और व्यवहार का अभिन्न अंग बनाएं। निरोगी शरीर और संतुलित जीवन के लिए योग एक अमिट उपहार है। आइए, 'अंतर्राष्ट्रीय योग दिवस' के अवसर पर माननीय प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी जी की इस वैश्विक पहल को आगे बढ़ाएं। योग का वरदान, देश-दुनिया के जन-जन तक पहुंचाएं। ”

आप सभी को अंतर्राष्ट्रीय योग दिवस की हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं।

पुष्कर सिंह धामी

मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तराखण्ड

सूचना एवं लोक सम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तराखण्ड द्वारा जनहित में जारी

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Editor's
TAKE

Iran-Israel conflict could devastate world peace

Rising Iran-Israel tensions, likely US involvement, and Putin's warning cast a dark shadow over global peace

The drums of war are beating louder than ever. As tensions between Iran and Israel escalate to alarming levels, fresh reports suggest that US President Donald Trump has approved military strike plans on Iran — though final orders are still pending. The world now watches with bated breath as a volatile triangle of Tel Aviv, Tehran, and Washington threaten to spiral into an all-consuming regional war. This isn't just a matter of political one-upmanship; it's a global concern with deep implications for security, energy, diplomacy, and humanity itself. The current situation in the Middle East is a dangerous mix of ideological enmity, nuclear ambitions, and historical grievances. Iran and Israel have long viewed each other as existential threats. Add the United States — a global superpower — to the mix, and the stakes become dangerously high. Recent developments, including President Trump's consideration of a military strike on Iran, signal a major turning point. It could also lead to China and Russia pitching in. Russian President Putin has already warned the US to keep away from it. While the White House maintains it is weighing all options, including diplomatic ones, preparations for a potential weekend strike indicate how close the world is to the edge.

The war, if once started, could lead to dire economic consequences too. The Strait of Hormuz, a vital chokepoint for the world's oil supply, lies at the heart of any Iran conflict. If war erupts, Iran could retaliate by disrupting this route, choking global oil flow and causing energy prices to skyrocket. Iran has deep ties with regional militias and proxy groups — from Hezbollah in Lebanon to the Houthis in Yemen and militias in Iraq and Syria. A military strike on Iran could unleash a chain reaction of asymmetric retaliation, dragging multiple countries — including Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and even Turkey — into a broader regional conflict. An outright war would destabilise international institutions like the United Nations and cause a breakdown of diplomatic channels. In a world already dealing with crises in Ukraine, Gaza, and Taiwan, another warfront would overstretch peacekeeping capabilities and reduce trust in multilateralism.

While Trump's statement — “If it's a choice between fighting and having a nuclear weapon, you have to do what you have to do” — may appeal to hardliners, it oversimplifies a highly complex geopolitical dilemma. True strength lies in de-escalation, diplomacy, and long-term vision, not reactionary force. This moment demands global leadership. The European Union, India, China, Russia, and Gulf nations must step forward to mediate. The Iran nuclear deal, though imperfect, was a framework that kept dialogue alive. Walking away from it without a viable replacement is not a good idea. Beyond the missiles and politics, it is the ordinary citizens who suffer the most. Iranian civilians, already grappling with economic sanctions and political repression, could face mass casualties and humanitarian disaster. Israelis, too, would live under constant threat of retaliatory rocket fire. Missiles do not differentiate between uniforms and schoolchildren. The time to act is not after the war is declared. It is now — through restraint, reason, and relentless diplomacy.

Coexistence must prevail over conflict

Whether acknowledged or ignored, interdependence lies at the heart of existence; life thrives not in isolation, but in interconnectedness. Yet, history is rife with conflict — a result of ego, domination, and the failure to honour this fundamental truth

Whether one accepts it or not, one needs each other. Interdependency is the essence of life. The sooner one realises this, the more effective one's range is. Goodwill for each other is needed not just for the other person but for oneself.

Life itself begins with interdependency when the infant needs the mother and then the father, not only to feed oneself but also to be free from disease, ill health, and more. As one changes because of changes in age, life, and status, the nature of interdependency changes, but dependencies continue. In such a scenario, the scope for arrogance and self-adulation can have little or no space.

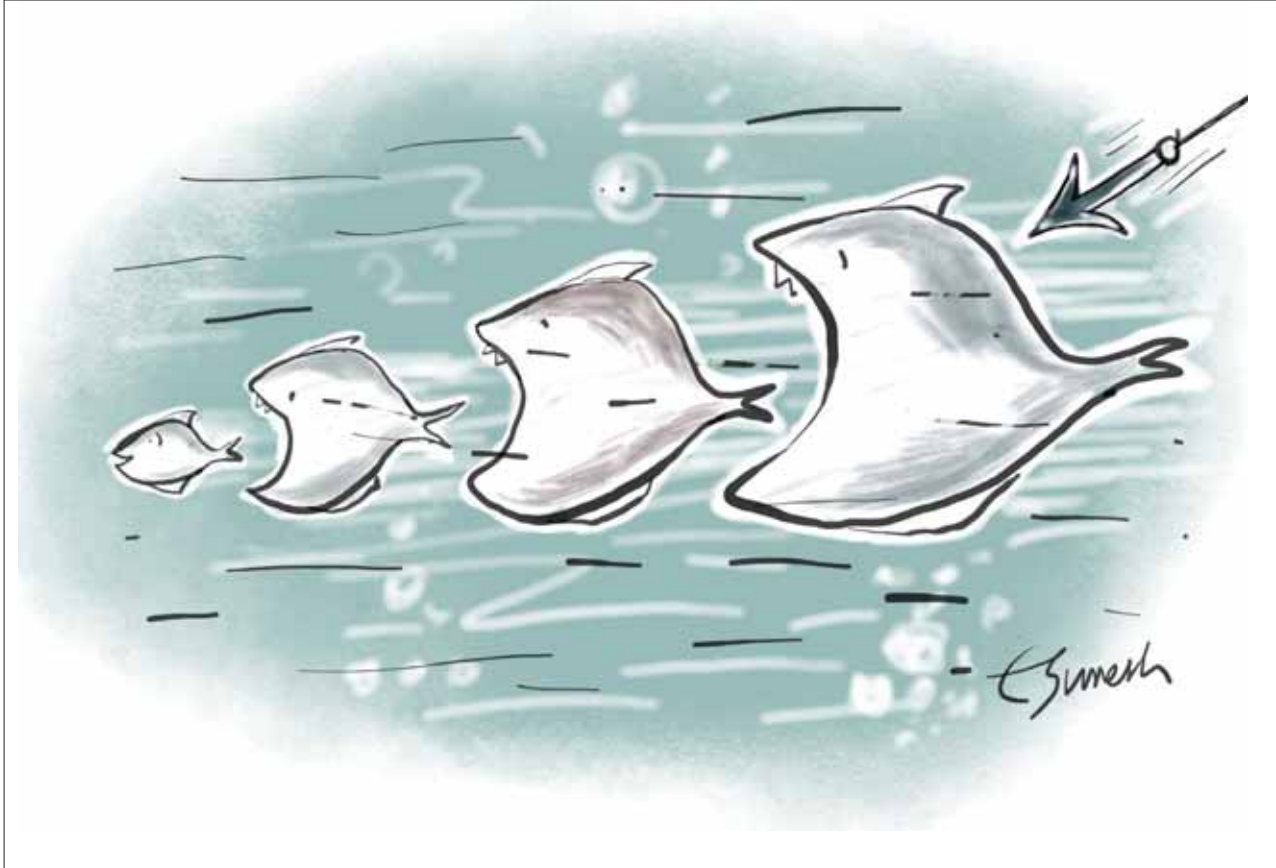
It is unrealistic and impractical. Humility, therefore, becomes the key. Humility is only partly modesty. Essentially, it is a realisation of interdependency that is a hallmark of maturity. This is the core of the existence of living creatures, living beings. Many schools of philosophy across the world have expounded on this.

This approach is true for all living entities and not just human beings. It applies to non-living entities too. Water needs land, and land needs water. Together, they give life to living entities of plants, trees, and more, which in turn bear fruit for living beings. Clearly, interdependence is the key. Together with interdependency is a sense of the requirement of modesty, proportion, and respect for the other entity's needs. Unfortunately, this simple truth is not recognised sufficiently in operation, and some entities destroy another entity's existence in the interest of so-called self-preservation.

A reaction can and does set in. This is a dilemma that is yet to be resolved. Empathy may provide a route to it. Therefore, one of the crucial questions of life is: where does interdependency recede, and the dominant takeover to establish their hegemony?

Attempts at hegemony can and do meet with a reaction sooner or later. This is the origin of war and the struggle for dominance takes on a violent shape. It is not surprising, therefore, that the story of different parts of the planet is dotted with anecdotes of wars, violence, and worse. If the theory of inter-dependencies is so obvious — which indeed it is — why does it escape attention? Philosophers have dilated upon this from the hoary past in Asia to the more recent past from the Renaissance onwards in the West.

The Chinese, the Indian, and subsequently the European thinkers have done their bit to plough the theme of inter-



dependency, but no one has been able to convert this into practical terms for everyone's welfare and everyone's growth. There is a Sanskrit dictum to the effect 'Sarve bhavantu sukhinah; sarve bhavantu niramaya' (freely translated, it means: May all become satiated, may all become without attachment).

This too has often remained a distant ideal, and people do get attached, and people do identify with things material and otherwise. 'This is mine and that is thine' is a driving philosophy.

This has the roots of much conflict at many levels. This includes, as explained, conflict at an interpersonal level, group level, and at a larger social level, leading to wars and more.

Many people talk of wars and conflicts as not helping in solving problems, but they still indulge in wars or conflicts and

worse. The tendency for domination overtakes the feeling of co-existence. To possess more than one's share becomes a need for many. The pursuit of this need overtakes the pursuit of co-existence. The feeling and the realisation that whether one likes it or not, one needs each other, becomes a distant dream.

This planet is divided into races, colours, religions, and other distinctive categories. These constitute groups and periodically one or the other tries to dominate. It may not be fantasy to say that the history of this planet is also the history of wars.

Since time immemorial, groups have coalesced with weaponry and more to dominate other groups.

Dominating other groups has also become the route to access to resources and, therefore, greater physical comfort and material prosperity.

The matter does not stop there. Access to more resources leads to a desire for even more: not just resources but also comforts. This is then converted into more luxurious living, more luxurious housing, palaces, and luxury haunts.

Perhaps reversing this is a time-consuming

and foundational effort. Many saints and philosophers have tried to do so by talking about peace, goodwill, and more. That movement is equally strong, and the names of many philosophers, thinkers, and enunciators come to mind.

The names of Buddha, Confucius, Moses, and others are but a few among literally dozens and hundreds of leading thinkers who would have preached the route and practice of peace and mutual goodwill. Thus, it is the interdependency and conflict that seem to run on parallel lines. Sometimes one seems to have the upper hand; sometimes the other.

Be that as it may, the history of the planet runs between co-existence and conflict. It is for the sake of the sanity of the species and the race that one must support the forces of coexistence and interdependence. This alone will bring to the fore and perpetuate the achievements of the race which dominates this planet. Being 'human' is perhaps the biggest achievement of it all.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. Views are personal)



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

India's race to superpower needs more than GDP & missile

Opinion

For a nation to rise to the level of a superpower, it must possess not only military might, scientific innovation, economic strength, and industrial depth, but also something far less tangible — soft power. In the 20th century, the notion that a newly independent and economically fragile India could one day stake its claim as a global superpower seemed far-fetched. Today, that vision is not only conceivable — it's within reach. Since 1947, India has come a long way.

With a GDP that ranks fifth globally and expected to become the third-largest by the end of the decade, with one of the world's largest and best-trained armed forces, India has many of the hard power ingredients necessary for superpower status. Technologically, India is advancing rapidly, especially in sectors like digital payments, space exploration, and pharmaceuticals.

Yet history tells us something crucial: hard power alone does not create enduring superpowers. True global influence comes when a nation captures not just territory or markets, but the imagination and affection of people around the world. It's here that India must focus its next leap on soft power.

The British Empire understood this well. Alongside its colonial exploits, it spread games like cricket and tennis, cultural symbols like the Christmas tree,

and, of course, the English language, which today connects billions. In the 20th century, America mastered soft power through Hollywood, jazz, jeans, and the global appeal of its democratic ideals. South Korea is now a case study in how cultural exports — K-pop, Korean cuisine, and Samsung's technological prowess — can transform global perception. Even China, often criticised for its authoritarianism, has found admiration through exports like Chinese cuisine, TikTok, and cutting-edge electric vehicles.

India, with its immense cultural wealth, has a deep reservoir of soft power waiting to be tapped. Yoga and meditation have already found a vast following across the West.

Bollywood is now a recognised global brand. Indian cuisine, from North Indian tandoori to South Indian vegetarian dishes, is increasingly mainstream in cities like London, New York, and Sydney. The philosophical legacy of Mahatma Gandhi continues to inspire peaceful resistance movements across the globe.

Then there are unique cultural treasures like the Kama Sutra, a historical celebration of human intimacy, and architectural marvels like the Taj Mahal, among the most visited monuments in the world. India could position itself not just as a cultural superpower but as a "Superpower of Peace," exporting harmony, wellness, and heritage. But to do so, India must confront a critical internal contradiction: its soft power cannot flourish if its artists, thinkers, and come-

dians are under threat. In a democracy, the freedom to think, speak, write, and joke is not a luxury — it's the foundation of cultural confidence. Yet India is currently the only major democracy where comedians and authors can face legal action for offending sentiments. Recently, creators like Ranveer Allahbadia and Samay Raina found themselves in legal trouble simply for making jokes about sex — this, in the land of the Kama Sutra! Compare this with the United States, where even the President isn't spared satire.

During Joe Biden's presidency, American comedians regularly poked fun at his age and perceived cognitive decline, without fear of prosecution. That resilience of free expression is the lifeblood of a vibrant cultural ecosystem. India cannot expect its cultural exports to thrive globally while stifling expression at home. If the world is to embrace Indian ideas, art, and identity, Indians must be free to explore and express them without fear. Allowing creators to flourish, even when they provoke or offend, is not a sign of weakness; it's a marker of maturity. To truly lead the 21st century, India must pair its growing economic and military influence with an equally bold embrace of soft power. That begins with cultural confidence at home. Let India's next great export not be just software or satellites, but the vibrant diversity of its voices — unfettered, fearless, and free.

(The writer is a Global Trendwatcher, Futurist and Bestselling Author based in the Netherlands. Views are personal)



ADJIJEDJ BAKAS

Letters to the Editor

Women in Espionage

Espionage, the clandestine art of gathering intelligence for national security, has existed since the dawn of states, as seen in ancient texts like Kautilya's Arthashastra and the Mahabharata. Spies played vital roles in safeguarding frontiers against unknown threats.

Historically, espionage was a male-dominated field. That's what makes the appointment of Blaise Metreveli as the first female head of Britain's Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) in over a century particularly noteworthy. Since its formation in 1909, MI6 has operated globally to counter terrorism, cyber threats, and hostile states — often invisibly.

Though rare, history records remarkable female spies. Virginia Hall of the US outwitted the Gestapo during WWII, while Melita Norwood passed crucial British atomic secrets to the Soviets over four decades. India too produced brave women like Noor Inayat Khan and Saraswati Rajamani, who contributed significantly to wartime intelligence, with the latter thwarting British plans against Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.

Interestingly, life now imitates art — MI6's historic decision echoes the 1995 James Bond film GoldenEye, where a woman heads the intelligence service. While symbolic, this move challenges entrenched norms. Yet, whether it transforms real-world espionage or merely scratches the surface of male-centric structures remains to be seen.

VIJAY SINGH ADHIKARI | NAINITAL

Rising Covid cases is a cause of concern

The number of active COVID-19 cases is steadily rising across the country and in Haryana, prompting health authorities to intensify surveillance and testing. Hospitals are being urged to resume antigen and RTPCR testing to detect infections early.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), the recent surge in cases is linked to the Omicron sub-variant NB 181, which is showing rapid transmissibility. In response to the growing threat, the Haryana government has extended COVID-related restrictions until March 31, 2026. Governor Bandaru Dattatreya has invoked Sections 2, 3, and 4 of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, to implement precautionary measures aimed at containing the spread.

Health Minister Arti Singh Rao has appealed to both citizens and health officials to remain alert and proactive. The central and state Governments have reiterated the importance of adhering to COVID protocols, including wearing masks, maintaining social distancing, and avoiding large gatherings.

While the Government is responsible for ensuring the availability of medical infrastructure and resources, individual responsibility remains critical. Public cooperation and vigilance are essential to curb the spread and avoid another health crisis.

YUGAL KISHORE SHARMA | FARIDABAD

Trump's bizzaare ceaeafire claims

I fail to understand what kind of leader Donald Trump is. Just yesterday (June 18), Prime Minister Narendra Modi clarified to Trump that India has never accepted third-party mediation on the Kashmir issue and never will.

Yet, only hours later, Trump claimed he "stopped the war" between India and Pakistan after Operation Sindoor, crediting not just PM Modi but also Pakistan's Army Chief General Asim Munir — not their elected PM Shahab Sharif.

This alone reveals who really calls the shots in Pakistan, exposing it as a military-run state. More troubling is Trump's false equivalence: comparing PM Modi, leader of the world's largest democracy, to a Pakistani military general. It's insulting. Why hasn't India objected? Why is our elected leader being likened to someone from a nation that harbours terrorists?

The truth is murky. If a ceasefire happened, was it due to US pressure? Or did Modi act at Pakistan's request? And if so, why didn't he demand the extradition of terrorists hiding in Pakistan, including those behind the April 22 attack?

It's time for PM Modi to be transparent with Indians. Trump may be playing his own game, America is no one's true friend.

BIDYUT KUMAR CHATTERJEE | FARIDABAD

CAN PAKISTAN EXPLOIT THE GEOPOLITICAL SITUATION?

Giving a communal twist to the ongoing Iran-Israel War, can Pakistan join hands with Turkey to unite the Muslim countries in the name of Ummah or the whole community of Muslims bound together by ties of religion? Can it use this trick to put geopolitical pressure on India and blackmail it in any future escalation of tension or on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir? These questions surfaced after a senior military commander and member of Iran's National Security Council, Mohsen Rezaei, claimed that Pakistan had assured the Shia nation it would attack Israel with a nuclear bomb. Pakistan has used the bogey of Jammu and Kashmir in the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Though it has failed almost every time, Islamabad can use the issues of "fight against Zionism" and "Islam in danger" in the Iran-Israel War. It also should be kept in mind that Islamabad has always defended its own nuclear programme as

"Islamic bomb". I strongly feel that it is almost impossible to unite the Muslim countries in the name of the Islamic world or Ummah. They cannot be united even in the name of "fight against Zionism" and "Islam in danger" because each of them prioritises its own interests. Many Muslim countries are upset with the treatment of Muslims, the Citizenship Amendment Act, the National Register of Citizens and the rise of Hindutva and majoritarianism in India. Pakistan wants to exploit the situation for its own strategic needs.

The way Turkey and Azerbaijan joined hands with Islamabad in the recent clashes with India has raised the alarm bells. Should India chalk out its own strategy to checkmate Pakistan's design by seeking help from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia and Malaysia? Should India stop backing Israel and reach out to Iran and mend its own domestic policies?

BHAGWAN THADANI | MUMBAI

India’s quiet power: How yoga became the world’s breath of unity

From UN halls to public parks across continents, yoga has become more than exercise; it’s a shared language of breath and balance. And in a fractured world, that quiet connection may be India’s most revolutionary contribution yet

FIRST
Column

In a world constantly jostling for attention, through missiles, money, and media, India has managed to slip something quietly into the global bloodstream: yoga. Not just the stretch-on-a-mat version that floods Instagram, but the real thing, an ancient, rooted philosophy that has slowly become one of the most persuasive tools of soft power diplomacy in the 21st century. It’s not flashy, it doesn’t demand loyalty, but it lingers; and that’s where its magic lies.

For the past 10 years, yoga’s rise has been deliberate, strategic, and honestly, quite beautiful to watch. The turning point came in 2014 when Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed the idea of an International Day of Yoga at the United Nations.

177 countries backed it, not because they wanted to do India a favour, but because yoga had already embedded itself in their societies. That was the win, not just the declaration itself, but the global readiness to accept that this was more than India’s past; it was part of humanity’s future.

In 2024, that symbolic circle came full with PM Modi leading the Yoga Day celebrations at the UN Headquarters in New York, in the very halls where he had first proposed it.

Over 180 nationalities came together in a collective breath, a rare moment of unity in a fragmented global order. American singer Mary Millben’s soulful rendition of India’s national anthem at the event added a layer of cultural grace that moved many to tears.

It wasn’t just a diplomatic spectacle; it was a deeply human moment, where art, breath, and belief converged into something much larger than protocol. In that gathering of movement and stillness, India didn’t just host the world, it held it.

Since then, June 21 has transformed from a cultural celebration into something much deeper, a show of presence, not power; of balance, not bluster. And that’s what makes yoga such an exceptional soft power tool.

It doesn’t yell, it invites. It doesn’t push a product; it offers a practice. While other cultural exports often come dressed in capitalism or carry subtle imperial agendas, yoga feels clean, disarming even. Its strength lies in its quietness.

From New York to Nairobi, Tokyo to Toronto, the sight of thousands moving together in breath and stillness is not just aesthetic, it’s symbolic. In a time where nations scream over each other, yoga listens, and people respond.

Back home, the Ministry of Ayush has played a crucial role in deepening this influence. From local wellness programs and school modules to international MOUs and yoga certification frameworks, the past two decades have seen real, measurable investment in making yoga accessible, authentic, and global. This isn’t



just branding, it’s cultural stewardship, and it matters. Because when a country not only preserves but exports its deepest values, and does so with humility, it earns something far more valuable than visibility; it earns trust.

This year, the International Day of Yoga 2025 campaign is themed “Yoga for One Earth, One Health”, a line that captures, in five words, everything the world is craving: connection, sustainability, healing.

After years of pandemic panic, mental health breakdowns, and climate anxiety, the idea that the health of our bodies is directly tied to the health of our planet doesn’t feel like a philosophy anymore; it feels like a necessity.

Ayush’s campaigns this year reflect that urgency. Over 30,000 organisations are joining the ‘Yoga

JUNE 21 HAS TRANSFORMED FROM A CULTURAL CELEBRATION INTO SOMETHING MUCH DEEPER, A SHOW OF PRESENCE, NOT POWER; OF BALANCE, NOT BLUSTER. AND THAT’S WHAT MAKES YOGA SUCH AN EXCEPTIONAL SOFT POWER TOOL. IT DOESN’T YELL, IT INVITES

Sangam’, turning parks, schoolyards, hospitals, and railway platforms into yoga grounds. These aren’t token events; they’re public declarations that India’s contribution to global peace and wellbeing will not be transactional, it will be transformative.

And then there’s YogAndhra 2025, one of the most ambitious state campaigns we’ve seen in years. Two crore people, a month-long activation, a mass event along the Visakhapatnam coastline; it’s massive, and honestly, deeply moving.

Not because of the numbers, but because of what they represent: ordinary people coming together, voluntarily, in a moment of pause.

That’s the real diplomacy, not the flags, not the official handshakes. Just breath, stillness, surrender; and in that shared silence, India speaks louder than any press release ever could.

What makes all of this even more powerful is the tenor of yoga itself. It’s not ornamental, it’s



CHAITANYA K PRASAD

Mainstreaming Climate Resilience and Disaster Management

Recent incidents of floods in North East India and cloudburst in Sikkim have resulted in loss of human lives, damage to houses, roads and other infrastructure. It has disrupted normal life and has significant impact on business and industries in these states. The incident of forest fire in Uttarakhand — reported to be 11,256 incidents in the year 2023-2024 and spread in many districts — has caused heavy damage to the biodiversity of the region. These incidents highlight the need to look into the approach followed by Government in dealing with disaster and climate resilience and whether there is need for course correction to contain such massive loss of life, property, business, beside other long-term impacts on the environment and ecology. As per the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction, 2025 (GAR) published by UN Office on Disaster Risk Reduction, the economic cost of disaster is increasing every year. From an average of \$70-80 billion a year (1970-2000), the annual cost is now \$180-200 billion. The real cost of disaster is estimated to be \$2.3 trillion when other related aspects are taken into account. India itself suffered economic losses of about \$12 billion in 2023 against an average of \$8 billion (2013-2021).

Some estimates project the loss of about 2 per cent GDP due to disaster in the medium term. The trend is showing substantial increase in losses and likely to increase in future. Disaster happens almost in all countries across the world and has become a very regular phenomenon, thus affecting the community, infrastructure, flora and fauna, environment and economy. In India, the Disaster Management Act, 2005 provides the framework for effective management of the disasters which include, besides the responses to deal/manage after the occurrence of event, provision for implementing measures in prevention of danger or threat of any disaster. Section 6 of the Act inter alia authorises the NDMA/SDMA — national/state authority — to lay down guidelines to be followed by all departments by integrating the disaster plan in their existing schemes and programmes. It also prescribes for making disaster plan at various level/department of the Government and also allocating the resources in their budget proposal for the same.

Has the Act and its provisions been able to enthuse every departmental functionary at all levels to appreciate and understand the need to take steps necessary for mitigating and addressing the causes and factors leading to disaster? Though the response of the administrative machinery has been laudable after the event (disaster/calamity) has happened, their support in addressing the causes/factors has not been very encouraging. The seriousness to be taken by every department of the Government in designing and developing programmes and making them integral part of their functioning does need a lot of

improvement. The committee approach at various levels has not been able to mainstream the disaster mitigation and related issues addressed appropriately and with desired sincerity in view of large scale and long-term consequences.

There are six main types of disasters — earthquake, floods, storms, heatwaves, forest fire and droughts — which accounted for more than 95 per cent of direct losses noticed/accounted in disasters across the world. The losses include environmental, human displacement cost, health impact, and other social cost including loss of education and business. Disaster impacts almost every walk of life. Almost every sector of the economy — from agriculture, forest, fisheries, small and medium industries and labour — are affected in disaster. In case of special children and Divyang, disaster is a way of life for them as they encounter it every day. This means that every department/institution of the Government needs to design programmes/schemes for mitigation of disaster. For example, a disaster by flooding will require measures from Irrigation Department (to design control measures), Public Works, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Food and Civil Supplies, Education, Forest, Social Welfare/Revenue, Education, Police, Health. This reflects the need for dovetailing the disaster and climate resilience programmes in every department so as to facilitate preventative as well as effective management aspects of such events.

Central level and state level bodies with mainly coordination function do not seem to suffice this requirement. Most Government bodies think that disaster and climate resilience are issues to be addressed by Disaster Department or Forest and Environment Departments.

The exigencies of dealing with climate resilience are not integral to their functioning. Disasters destabilise national economy, strain public finances, deepen poverty and inequality and disrupt long-term development gains, beside social and psychological impact on the community. One example of the disaster is on children — most vulnerable section of the society. At least 242 million pre-primary and upper-secondary students have experienced school disruptions due to climate events in 2024 across 85 countries or territories and three-quarters (74 per cent) of those affected students are in low- and lower-middle-income countries.

In India too, schools are generally the first one affected in any disaster — closed or used as shelter. Nowadays extreme weather events such as heat-wave, pollution especially in the urban areas are having serious and long-term impact on the students. The main events leading to nationwide school disruptions in 2024 in at least 20 countries were heat-waves, tropical cyclones, storms, and floods large-

ly influenced by ongoing climate change. It is estimated that globally 90 per cent of children are exposed to one or more major climate and environmental hazard.

Another major sector affected by disaster and climate change is Health. Globally around 4.2 million premature deaths take place due to air pollution. The emergence of new strain of virus — COVID — also poses serious disaster impacting large and vulnerable population. Unpreparedness of the Health Department infrastructure and, in some cases, a total collapse was noticed during the COVID outbreak.

With such long-term consequences, can disaster management be left to a “postmortem approach” — deal with it after occurrence of the disaster event — or does it need to be looked at differently in view of the serious impacts these disasters have on communities and nations? Presently, climate resilience approach has not been integrated in a manner that every department of the Government follows a focused and continuous approach in addressing the same. At one point of time, a similar approach as adopted by the NDMA Act was followed for dealing with matters relating to North Eastern States. North Eastern Council (NEC) was set up as a statutory body in 1972. Persuading every department to provide for specific component of their schemes for NE states despite issuance of guidelines/advisory was not found to be very effective. Despite NEC having all state Governors, Chief Ministers, Union Minister (Chairman) as members, the approach of exciting/persuading every department in Government was not found to be highly satisfactory. It was thereafter decided in 1998-99 to pre-allocate allocation of 10 per cent of total budget of each department for NE states. The unutilised portion of earmarked funds is maintained in a “non-lapsable pool” of resources. Ministry of Development of NE implements various schemes/programmes from the non-lapsable pool. Re-appropriations or diversion of funds from such allocation is strictly prohibited.

This has really helped and supported in mainstreaming the developmental issues related to NE states. Some of the most affected states — coastal, hilly, adjoining main rivers — do take a proactive approach in bringing stakeholders to appreciate the impact/consequences of such disaster on community, flora and fauna and other economic consequences. However, mainstreaming climate resilience in every agency of Government functioning still remains a challenge. The impact of climate disruption and disaster on future generations is going to be far more due to the significant environmental changes noticed due to various factors such as receding glaciers, rising temperature, forest fire, pollution of land and sea, water crisis and certain emerging technologies such as AI.

(The writer is a retired IAS officer. Views expressed are personal)

World has woken up to the power of Yoga

As we observe the 10th Anniversary of International Day of Yoga (IDY), it is a matter of immense pride for every Indian to see how an ancient Indian tradition has transformed into a global wellness movement. June 21, known as the Summer Solstice in the Northern Hemisphere marking the longest day of the year, is now observed globally as the International Day of Yoga, a day to raise awareness about the benefits of Yoga. While numerous IDY events will be held across India, globally it will be the largest ever spectacle of Yoga. Spearheaded by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), the cultural arm of the Ministry of External Affairs, Yoga sessions, events and programmes will be held in 191 countries, practically covering every nation across the globe.

More than 2,000 Yoga events are being organised in 1,300 cities covering all the continents.

The theme for this year’s IDY is — “Yoga for One Earth, One Health.” This theme echoes a vital truth about the interconnectedness of health, sustainability, and the environment — aligning with India’s “One Earth, One Family, One Future” vision highlighted during its G20 presidency. It is due to Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision that Yoga today has gained international recognition. It is one of India’s greatest cultural diplomacy achievements. The rage for Yoga has grown exponentially over the years, not only in India but across the world. People have taken to Yoga for their well-being and to beat stress. Yoga has become a daily ritual for crores of people across the globe. The success of IDY can be gauged from the fact that in 2018 around 9.60 crore people participated globally, while the participation jumped to almost 25 crores in IDY-2024. This year, when the largest ever participation of people is expected across the globe, new records will surely be set this time.

In India, while various Yoga events are being organised, the signature event of IDY-2025 will be “Yoga Bandhan” where 17 Yoga Gurus and practitioners from 15 countries including Brazil, Argentina, Russia, China, South Africa, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Singapore and South Korea, will be leading the IDY events across India. These Yoga practitioners are those training others in their countries. To make this even more memorable, iconic locations have been chosen to host “Yoga Bandhan” programmes.

For instance, in Delhi, Yoga events are being led by these foreign Yoga gurus at Jantar Mantar, Qutub Minar, Purana Kila and Humayun’s Tomb which showcases our National Capital’s rich cultural and architectural heritage. Similar “Yoga Bandhan” programmes are being organised in iconic locations in Lucknow; on the ‘ghats’ of Ayodhya and Varanasi; at the marvellous locations in Jaipur,

foundational. Yoga doesn’t demand performance, it demands presence.

And in a hyper-digitised, algorithm-driven world, that’s revolutionary. Yoga has no nation, but it does have an origin; and every time someone anywhere rolls out a mat and begins their practice, they are, whether they know it or not, engaging with India, not politically, but spiritually and philosophically. That’s legacy, and that’s how soft power works.

Health diplomacy is another layer in this story that often gets overlooked. In a time when the world is buckling under non-communicable diseases, burnout, and post-pandemic trauma, India’s offering isn’t just ancient, it’s relevant.

Yoga is preventive and sustainable; it teaches you to listen to your body, manage your mind, and regulate your breath.

That’s public health without a prescription. It’s affordable, scalable, and deeply human. The fact that international bodies like the WHO are now aligning with Ayush to explore integrative health models is no coincidence; it’s recognition.

But to fully understand yoga’s impact, you have to go beyond the policy speak.

Yoga isn’t about flexibility; it’s about balance. It’s not about how you look, it’s about how you feel. It doesn’t sell transformation in 21 days; it teaches you to surrender to slow, patient evolution.

When someone in Buenos Aires Berlin or Bengaluru sits in silence, they’re not just accessing a wellness tool; they’re entering a cultural portal, one that leads, always, back to India.

And that’s what makes yoga such a rare diplomatic asset. It doesn’t just generate influence; it generates affection. It’s not transactional. It’s not about lobbying.

It’s about resonance, and resonance lasts. India, through yoga, is not trying to dominate global narratives. It’s anchoring them, centring them, reminding the world that wellness, at its core, is not a luxury; it’s a right. And that stillness, in a fractured, frantic world, is not weakness; it’s power.

So as India gears up for another powerful edition of IDY, it’s not just about the scale of participation or the number of countries involved. It’s about what yoga continues to signify: that even in a global order shaped by conflict, chaos, and competition, there is space, sacred, silent, strong; for something slower, deeper, and more human. Yoga isn’t just India’s cultural gift; it’s its geopolitical signature. Not loud, but lasting.

And maybe that’s the whole point. In a world obsessed with speed and spectacle, yoga reminds us that the real revolution begins when we learn to just stop, breathe, and listen; to ourselves, and each other.

(The writer is former Civil Servant. Views are personal. Inputs provided by Zoya Ahmad & Vaishnavi Srinivasan)



DINESH KUMAR TYAGI



SANDEEP JOSHI

Yoga is becoming something that is not just being practised at the United Nations or just a June 21 event. People are genuinely adopting Yoga, they are making it a part of their lives for their own well-being, health and happiness.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken the idea of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam”, which means “The world is one family”, far and wide. He has emphasised the interconnectedness of all living beings and promoted global unity and cooperation.

India also believes in “Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinaḥ” (May all be happy, may all be free from illness, may all see what is good, may none experience suffering). We believe that we are all made of energy vibrating in different frequencies, but we are all made of the same energy. We are one, and Yoga is the best expression of that belief and value system. If we want peace, harmony and well-being in the world, then humanity has no option but to go to Yoga. Yoga is the need of the hour. The reason why Yoga is growing in popularity is because people globally are looking up to Yoga to boost their well-being. Today there is increasing burnout, although we live in the most comfortable of times. But spiritually and mentally, we are the most isolated, and in most unease. Yoga is helping people discover the inner peace; you have to be still, you have to be quiet, you have to delve within. It is then you realise that we can have a peaceful world only when we have peaceful human beings, because the world is us.

(The writer is a freelance journalist. Views are personal)

Trump says he will decide whether US directly attack Iran within two weeks

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Beersheba (Israel)

President Donald Trump said on Thursday he will decide within two weeks whether the US military will get directly involved in the conflict between Israel and Iran given the “substantial chance” for renewed negotiations over Tehran’s nuclear programme, as the two sides attacked one another for a seventh day.

Trump has been weighing whether to attack Iran by striking its well-defended Fordo uranium enrichment facility, which is buried under a mountain and widely considered to be out of reach of all but America’s “bunker-buster” bombs. His statement was read out by White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt.

Earlier in the day, Israel’s defence minister threatened Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei after Iranian missiles crashed into a major hospital in southern Israel and hit residential buildings near Tel Aviv, wounding at least 240 people.

Israel’s military “has been instructed and knows that in order to achieve all of its goals, this man absolutely should not continue to exist”, Defence Minister Israel Katz said.

As rescuers wheeled patients out of the smoldering hospital, Israeli warplanes launched their latest attack on Iran’s nuclear programme.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he trusted that Trump would “do what’s best for America”.

Speaking from the rubble and shattered glass around the



Soroka Medical Centre in Beersheba, he added: “I can tell you that they’re already helping a lot.”

A new diplomatic initiative appeared to be underway as Iran’s Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi prepared to travel Friday to Geneva for meetings with the European Union’s top diplomat and counterparts from the United Kingdom, France and Germany.

Britain’s foreign secretary said he met at the White House with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and envoy Steve Witkoff to discuss the potential for a deal that could cool the conflict.

“A window now exists within the next two weeks to achieve a diplomatic solution,” Britain’s David Lammy said in

a social media post after Thursday’s meeting.

The open conflict between Israel and Iran erupted last Friday with a surprise wave of Israeli airstrikes targeting nuclear and military sites, top generals and nuclear scientists. At least 657 people, including 263 civilians, have been killed in Iran and more than 2,000 wounded, according to a Washington-based Iranian human rights group.

Iran has retaliated by firing 450 missiles and 1,000 drones at Israel, according to Israeli army estimates. Most have been shot down by Israel’s multi-tiered air defences, but at least 24 people in Israel have been killed and hundreds wounded.

Many hospitals have trans-

ferred patients underground

Israel’s Home Front Command asserted that one of the Iranian ballistic missiles

fired Thursday morning had been rigged with fragmenting cluster munitions. Rather than a conventional warhead, a cluster munition warhead carries dozens of submunitions that can explode on impact, showering small bomblets around a large area and posing major safety risks on the ground. The Israeli military did not say where that missile had been fired. At least 80 patients and medical workers were wounded in the strike on Soroka Medical Centre. The vast majority were lightly wounded, as much of the hospital building had been evacuated in recent days.

Iranian officials insisted they had not sought to strike the hospital and claimed the attack hit a facility belonging to the Israeli military’s elite technological unit, called C4i. The website for the Gav-Yam Negev advanced technologies park, some 3 kilometres from the hospital, said C4i had a branch campus in the area.

The Israeli army did not respond to a request for comment. An Israeli military official, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with regulations, acknowledged that there was no specific intelligence that Iran had planned to target the hospital.

Many hospitals in Israel, including Soroka, had activated emergency plans in the past week. They converted parking garages to wards and transferred vulnerable patients underground. Israel also has a fortified, subterranean blood bank that kicked into action after Hamas’ October 7, 2023, attack ignited the ongoing war in the Gaza Strip.

Doctors at Soroka said the Iranian missile struck almost immediately after air raid sirens went off, causing an explosion that could be heard from a safe room. The strike inflicted the greatest damage on an old surgery building and affected key infrastructure, including gas, water and air-conditioning systems, the medical centre said. The hospital, which provides services to around 1 million residents, had been caring for 700 patients at the time. After the strike, the hospital closed to all patients except for life-threatening cases.

Iran rejects calls to surrender or end its nuclear programme

Iran has long maintained its nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes. But it is the only non-nuclear-weapon state to enrich uranium up to 60 per cent, a short, technical step away from weapons-grade levels of 90 per cent.

Israel is widely believed to be the only country with a nuclear weapons programme in the Middle East but has never acknowledged the existence of its arsenal.

The Israeli air campaign has targeted Iran’s enrichment site at Natanz, centrifuge workshops around Tehran, a nuclear site in Isfahan and what the army assesses to be most of Iran’s ballistic missile launchers.

The destruction of those launchers has contributed to the steady decline in Iranian attacks since the start of the conflict. Israeli airstrikes reached into the city of Rasht on the Caspian Sea early Friday, Iranian media reported. The Israeli military had warned the public to flee the area around Rasht’s Industrial City, southwest of the city’s downtown. But with Iran’s internet shut off to the outside world, it’s unclear just how many people could see the message.

On Thursday, anti-aircraft artillery was audible across Tehran and witnesses in the central city of Isfahan reported seeing anti-aircraft fire after nightfall. Trump’s announcement of a decision in the next two weeks opened up diplomatic options, with the apparent hope Iran would make concessions after suffering major military losses.

But at least publicly, Iran has struck a hard line.



Europeans spot chance for diplomacy with Iran

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Geneva

Iran’s foreign minister plans to meet in Geneva on Friday with leading European counterparts, who hope to open a window for a diplomatic solution to the week-old military conflict that has seen Israeli airstrikes target Iranian nuclear and military sites and Tehran firing back.

British Foreign Secretary David Lammy, who will meet Iran’s Abbas Araghchi together with his French and German counterparts and the European Union’s foreign policy chief, said that “a window now exists within the next two weeks to achieve a diplomatic solution.”

The talks will be the first face-to-face meeting between Western and Iranian officials since the start of the conflict.

Lammy is traveling to Geneva after meeting in Washington with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and President Donald Trump’s Mideast envoy, Steve Witkoff. Trump has been weighing whether to attack Iran by striking its well-defended Fordo uranium enrichment facility, which is buried under a mountain

and widely considered to be out of reach of all but America’s “bunker-buster” bombs. He said Wednesday that he’ll decide within two weeks whether the US military will get directly involved in the war given the “substantial chance” for renewed negotiations over Tehran’s nuclear programme.

The talks will be the first face-to-face meeting between Western and Iranian officials since the start of the conflict

“Now is the time to put a stop to the grave scenes in the Middle East and prevent a regional escalation that would benefit no one,” Lammy said.

Israel says it launched its airstrike campaign last week to stop Iran from getting closer to being able to build a nuclear weapon. Iran and the United States had been negotiating over the possibility of a new diplomatic deal over Tehran’s programme, though Trump has said Israel’s campaign came after a 60-day window he set for the talks.

India powerful player in science and technology space: UK minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ London

The UK must harness scientific and academic relationships with India as it becomes an increasingly powerful player in the science and technology space, Britain’s minister for science, research and innovation has said.

During a session on ‘Unlocking UK-India Collaboration for a New Era of Innovation’ at India Global Forum’s Future Frontiers Forum at the Science Museum in London on Thursday, Lord Patrick Vallance called for greater mobility of high-skilled

professionals through the Global Talent Visa and the need to tap into complementary skills across all sectors.

The minister revealed the UK government’s much-anticipated Industrial Strategy would be released in a few weeks, forming the blueprint for focus areas for such a partnership with India.

“There is already a strong relationship between India and the UK, and I think it’s growing,” said Vallance.

“But Government-to-Government relationships on science aren’t actually what drives everything. It has to be a scientist and a scientist as well.

“There are important academic links. I’d like to see more of that as India becomes an increasingly powerful player in the science and tech space,” he said.

The forum was addressed by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal earlier on the sector-wide benefits of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) struck between the two countries, as it “adds value to science, technology and innovation”.

“A Free Trade Agreement demonstrates to the world that the two countries are friends, allies, and plan to work together closely; they trust each other,” said Goyal.

Pro-Palestinian activists say they damaged planes on UK air force base

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ London

British police are searching for suspects after pro-Palestinian activists claimed to have broken into a Royal Air Force Base and damaged two planes with red paint, officials said on Friday.

The group Palestine Action said two members entered RAF Brize Norton on Wednesday and used electric scooters to approach the Voyager jets, which are used for air-to-air refuelling. The duo sprayed red paint into the planes’ turbine engines with repurposed fire extinguish-

ers and caused further damage with crowbars, according to the group, which released video footage appearing to show an individual approach a jet and spray paint into the engine.

The activists left the base without being detained, Palestine Action said.

The group said in a statement that “despite publicly condemning the Israeli government, Britain continues to send military cargo, fly spy planes over Gaza and refuel US/Israeli fighter jets”. It called the UK “an active participant in the Gaza genocide and war crimes across the Middle East”.

Hungary PM Orbán warns of Ukraine threat before vote

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Budapest

As Hungary heads toward national elections next spring and the populist Government’s popularity slumps, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has zeroed in on a central theme he hopes will sway voters: an alleged threat posed by neighbouring Ukraine.

While most European Union countries have offered political, financial, and military support to Kyiv since Russia’s full-scale invasion in 2022, Hungary under Orbán has charted a starkly different course - refusing to supply Ukraine with weapons or allow their transit through Hungarian territory, demanding sanctions relief and rapprochement with Russia, and adopting a combative stance toward both Kyiv and its EU backers.

With his ruling Fidesz party slipping in the polls and a new opposition force gaining momentum, Orbán has escalated a sweeping anti-Ukraine campaign — presenting the upcoming election as a referendum on peace or war.

Going further, he has accused his leading political opponent of entering into a treasonous pact with Kyiv to overthrow his government and install a pro-Western, pro-



Ukraine administration.

Orbán opposes Ukraine’s accession to the EU

Some of his ideas mirror the growing anti-Ukraine messaging coming from right-wing populists in the West, including from President Donald Trump.

“Let’s be under no illusions: Brussels and Ukraine are jointly building up a puppet government (in Hungary),” Orbán said on June 6 in comments to state radio.

“They want to change Hungary’s policy toward Ukraine after the next elections, or even sooner.”

At the heart of Orbán’s

claims is Ukraine’s ambition to join the EU, something Kyiv believes would place it firmly within the embrace of the West and provide a measure of security against potential Russian attacks in the future.

While Orbán was a firm supporter of Ukraine’s eventual EU accession shortly after Russia launched its full-scale invasion, he now argues that its membership — which will likely take many years — would flood Hungary with crime, cheap labor and low-quality agricultural products, threatening national sovereignty and economic stability.

He has also spuriously

claimed that Brussels and Kyiv intend to force Hungarians to fight Russia on the front lines. On Monday, Orbán posted a video to his social media page depicting animated, artificial intelligence-generated scenes of bloodied, machine-gun wielding Hungarian soldiers engaged in armed conflict, and rows of caskets lined beneath Hungarian flags.

“We don’t want our children, in the form of the Hungarian army, to be deployed to the Ukrainian front lines or to Ukrainian territory and to come back in coffins,” he said in the video.

Campaign targets the main

opposition leader

Central to Orbán’s life-or-death narrative of the Hungarian election is his growing campaign against his main political rival, Péter Magyar, a former Fidesz insider whose new Tiszta party has surged in popularity.

Once married to Hungary’s former justice minister, Magyar has become the most formidable challenger to Orbán’s rule since the EU’s longest-serving leader took office in 2010. With Tiszta leading Fidesz in most independent polls, some analysts and domestic critics believe Orbán may be laying the groundwork to discredit or even disqualify Magyar ahead of the 2026 election.

Péter Krekő, director of the Budapest-based Political Capital think tank, said Orbán’s attempt to link Magyar and Tiszta to the image of a dangerous Ukraine is aimed at neutralizing his domestic opposition as popular sentiment appears to be turning against him.

“There is an ongoing campaign against any critical voices in Hungary saying that they are agents of Ukraine, and this can be used also against the ‘Tiszta party,’” he said.

“If you can’t win back public opinion anymore, then you can try to use a more authoritarian toolkit.”

UK lawmakers to vote on allowing terminally ill adults to end their lives

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ London

British lawmakers are set to vote Friday on whether to back a bill to help terminally ill adults end their lives in England and Wales, in what could be one of the most consequential social policy decisions they will ever make.

Members of Parliament supported legislating assisted dying when they first debated the issue in November by 330 votes to 275.

Since then, the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill has undergone months of scrutiny leading to some changes in the proposed legislation, which is being shepherded through Parliament by Labour lawmaker Kim Leadbeater rather than the government.

Leadbeater is confident lawmakers will back the bill.

“We have the most robust piece of legislation in the world in front of us tomorrow, and I know that many colleagues have engaged very closely with

the legislation and will make their decision based on those facts and that evidence, and that cannot be disputed,” Leadbeater said on Thursday on the eve of the vote alongside bereaved and terminally ill people.

Proponents of the bill argue those with a terminal diagnosis must be given a choice at the end of their lives. However, opponents say the disabled and elderly could be at risk of being coerced, directly or indirectly, to end their lives to save money or relieve the burden on family members. Others have called for the improvement of palliative care to ease suffering as an alternative. The vote is potentially the biggest change to social policy since abortion was legalised in 1967.

What lawmakers are voting on

The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill would allow terminally ill adults aged over 18 in England and Wales, who are deemed to have less than six



months to live, to apply for an assisted death.

The terminally ill person would have to be capable of taking the fatal drugs themselves.

Proponents of the bill say wealthy individuals can travel to Switzerland, which allows foreigners to legally end their

lives, while others have to face possible prosecution for helping their loved ones die.

How the vote may go

The outcome of the vote is unclear, as some lawmakers who backed the bill in the fall only did so on the proviso there would be changes made. Some

who backed the bill then have voiced disappointment at the changes, while others have indicated Parliament has not been given enough time to debate the issues.

The vote is a free one, meaning lawmakers vote according to their conscience rather than on party lines. Alliances have

formed across the political divide. If 28 members switched directly from backing the bill to opposing it, while others voted exactly the same way, the legislation would fail.

Timeline if the bill passes

Friday’s vote is not the end of the matter.

The legislation would then go to the unelected House of Lords, which has the power to delay and amend policy, though it can’t overrule the lower chamber. Since assisted dying was not in the governing Labour Party’s election manifesto last year, the House of Lords has more room to maneuver. Any amendments would then go back to the House of Commons.

If the bill is passed, backers say implementation will take four years, rather than the initially suggested two.

That means it could become law in 2029, around the time the next general election must be held.

Singer Chris Brown pleads not guilty in assault case

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ London

Grammy-winning singer Chris Brown pleaded not guilty Friday to a charge related to the serious beating of a music producer with a bottle in a London nightclub in 2023. Brown, 36, wearing a blue suit, white shirt and black-rimmed glasses, was arraigned in London’s Southwark Crown Court on one count of attempting to unlawfully and maliciously cause grievous bodily harm with intent.

Brown’s friend and fellow musician Omololu Akinlolu,

39, who performs under the name “Hoody Baby,” pleaded not guilty to the same charge. Prosecutors previously said Brown and Akinlolu assaulted producer Abe Diaw at a bar in the Tape nightclub in the swanky

Mayfair neighbourhood in February 2023. Brown allegedly launched an unprovoked attack on Diaw and hit him several times with a bottle and then punched and kicked him.

Brown was originally charged with a single count of grievous bodily harm after his arrest in May, but prosecutors subsequently brought an indictment adding two counts: assault causing actual bodily harm and having an offensive weapon, a bottle.

When a court clerk asked Brown how he pleaded to the grievous bodily harm count, he replied: “Not guilty ma’am.”

Brown did not enter pleas on the additional counts and was ordered to return to court July 11 to face those charges after wrapping up the European leg of his world tour. His trial was scheduled for October 26, 2026.

IRAN-ISRAEL CONFLICT

Government meets stakeholders to assess impact on India’s trade

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■
New Delhi

The Commerce Ministry on Friday will meet stakeholders, including shipping lines, exporters, container firms and other departments, to assess the impact of the Iran-Israel conflict on India’s overseas trade and address related issues, an official said. The industry official said that the meeting will be chaired by Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal.

“The meeting is today. We will raise issues related to freight rates,” the official said. Barthwal has earlier stated that India is keeping a close watch on the situation.

Exporters have stated that the war, if escalated further, would impact world trade and push both air and sea freight rates. They have expressed apprehensions that the conflict may impact the movement of merchant ships from the Strait of Hormuz and the Red Sea.

Nearly two-thirds of India’s crude oil and half of its LNG imports pass through the Strait of Hormuz, which Iran has now threatened to close.

This narrow waterway, only 21 miles wide at its narrowest point, handles nearly a fifth of global oil trade and is indispensable to India, which depends on imports for over 80 per cent of its energy needs.

According to think tank GTRI, any closure or military



Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal

disruption in the Strait of Hormuz would sharply increase oil prices, shipping costs and insurance premiums, triggering inflation, pressuring the rupee, and complicating India’s fiscal management. Meanwhile, Israel’s June 14-15 strike on Houthi military leadership in Yemen has also heightened tensions in the Red Sea region, where Houthi forces have already attacked commercial shipping.

For India, this poses another serious risk. Nearly 30 per cent of India’s west-bound exports to Europe, North Africa, and the US East Coast travel through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, now vulnerable to further disruption, the GTRI has said.

The present conflict that began with an attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, had brought cargo movement through Red Sea routes to a halt due to attacks

ping route connecting the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean, escalated due to attacks by Yemen-based Houthi militants.

Around 80 per cent of India’s merchandise trade with Europe passes through the Red Sea, and substantial trade with the US also takes this route. Both these geographies account for 34 per cent of the country’s total exports.

The Red Sea Strait is vital for 30 per cent of global container traffic and 12 per cent of world trade.

India’s exports to Israel have fallen sharply to \$2.1 billion in 2024-25 from \$4.5 billion in 2023-24. Imports from Israel came down to \$1.6 billion in the last fiscal from \$2.0 billion in 2023-24.

Similarly, exports to Iran, amounting to \$1.4 billion, which were at the same level in 2024-25 as well as in 2023-24, could also suffer. India’s imports from Iran were at \$441 million in FY25 as against \$625 million in the previous year.

The conflict adds to the pressure that the world trade was under after the US President Donald Trump announced high tariffs.

Based on the tariff war impact, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) has already said that global trade will contract 0.2 per cent in 2025 as against the earlier projection of 2.7 per cent expansion.

India’s overall exports had grown 6 per cent on year to USD 825 billion in 2024-25.

Air India bookings down 20 per cent after tragedy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■
New Delhi

Bookings for Air India flights have declined by around 20 per cent on domestic as well as international routes while the average fares have dropped by 8-15 per cent in the aftermath of the Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner crash last week, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) President Ravi Gosain said on Friday.

An Air India spokesperson did not respond to a query seeking comments from the airline. A London-bound Air India flight, AI-171 carrying 242 passengers and crew members crashed in Ahmedabad on June 12. All but one on board the plane died along with nearly 29 on the ground when the aircraft smashed into a medical complex in Meghaninagar area of

the city shortly after takeoff.

“Following the unfortunate incident involving Air India, we have observed a temporary decline in bookings, particularly on international sectors. While the exact percentage varies by route, our estimates indicate a dip of around 18 to 22 per cent on international bookings and a 10 to 12 per cent decline domestically in the immediate aftermath.

However, this appears to be a short-term sentiment-driven reaction, as confidence typically stabilises over time,” Gosain said. The IATO president shared that there has been a moderate adjustment in fares across key Air India routes.

“On an average, ticket prices have reduced by 8 to 12 per cent on domestic sectors where the airline competes directly with low cost carri-

ers like IndiGo and Akasa. On international routes, especially to Europe and Southeast Asia, fares have seen a drop of 10 to 15 per cent, depending on route occupancy and competition. These reductions are mix of promotional strategies and yield correction due to lowered demand,” Gosain said. Asked whether there have been cancellations by travellers for Air India flights booked via tour operators, the IATO president said, “Yes, we have witnessed a noticeable rise in cancellations, particularly from corporate and high-end leisure travellers who prefer to switch to alternative carriers.”

He informed that the increase in cancellations was 15 to 18 per cent internationally, and 8 to 10 per cent domestically over the past week.

GNF signs MoU with TNAPEX

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi/Chennai

Global Nurse Force (GNF), a global leader in ethical healthcare recruitment, has signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Tamil Nadu Apex Skill Development Centre for Logistics (TNAPEX), a Government of Tamil Nadu initiative. This partnership aims to create international career pathways for nursing professionals across the State — completely free of cost to the candidates.

The collaboration will empower skilled nurses from Tamil Nadu to access overseas job opportunities in high-demand countries such as the United Kingdom, United States, Germany, Ireland and those in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region. GNF will provide globally benchmarked training, international licensure support and placement services, while TNAPEX will mobilise nursing talent from across the State.

The program will feature future-ready, competency-based training aligned with international clinical standards. Participants will undergo hands-on clinical practice, receive personalised English language coaching

and benefit from one-on-one mentorship. Their progress will be tracked on a transparent digital platform, ensuring accountability and measurable outcomes.

This initiative addresses the pressing need for professional growth and better working conditions among nurses in Tamil Nadu. It offers not only a dignified global career, but also a pathway to financial security, professional respect and personal transformation.

Lalit Pattanaik, CEO of Global Nurse Force, said, “The aspirations of Tamil Nadu’s nurses deserve world-class platforms. This partnership brings them one step closer to international recognition and rewarding careers.”

Paramananda Santra, Chief Business Officer at GNF, added, “Our goal is to make India the global skill Capital. This collaboration with TNAPEX ensures that even nurses from humble backgrounds can access ethical, zero-cost global opportunities.”

Sanju Thomas Abraham, Director of TNAPEX, emphasised, “Our nurses will now bring home not just global experiences but also remittances and best practices — strengthening communities and healthcare outcomes across Tamil Nadu.”

Sun TV shares tumble over rift between Maran brothers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■
New Delhi

Shares of Sun TV Network tumbled over 5 per cent in intra-day trade on Friday before recovering most of the lost ground to end 1 per cent lower amid concerns over a rift between brothers Dayanidhi and Kalanithi Maran.

According to reports, Dayanidhi has sent a legal notice to his brother and several others, accusing them of “fraudulent practices” and “misgovernance” in taking control of Sun TV after their father Murasoli Maran’s death in 2003.

The stock of Sun TV dropped 5.20 per cent to ₹581.55 during the day on the BSE. Later, it ended at ₹606.80, down 1.09 per cent.

On the NSE, shares of the firm tanked 5.25 per cent to ₹580 during the day. The stock later ended at ₹605.75 apiece, a decline of 1.04 per

cent. A day after reports emerged of former Union minister Dayanidhi Maran accusing his brother of “fraudulent practices” and “misgovernance”, the elder sibling Kalanithi-run Sun TV on Friday said the division between the promoter family done 22 years back was in compliance with all legal obligations.

Defending its promoter Kalanithi, Sun TV Network in a regulatory filing said the agreements between the two brothers had been “duly vetted” by “intermediaries” concerned before the company’s public issue. The board of Sun TV Network is led by Kalanithi as Executive Director and Chairperson.

Kalanithi, as a promoter, owns 75 per cent shareholding in Sun TV Network.

Sun TV Network said, “The alleged matter dates back to 22 years, when the company was a closely held private limited company.”

SUMMER SPECIAL TRAINS-2025								For the convenience of rail passengers, Railways have decided to run the following Summer Special Express Trains as per schedule given below:-							
Train No.	Station From	Dept. Time	Station to	Arr. Time	Fre-quency	Day	Period								
04088	New Delhi	15:50	Patna Jn	08:40	Daily		upto 10.07.2025	05057	Gorakhpur Jn	22:45	Delhi Jn	12:50	Weekly	Thu	06.02.2025 till further advice
04087	Patna Jn	10:00	New Delhi	03:20			upto 11.07.2025	05058	Delhi Jn	14:00	Gorakhpur Jn	06:25		Fri	07.02.2025 till further advice
04064	New Delhi	09:30	Sheikhpura	04:30	Bi-weekly	Mon, Thu	upto 10.07.2025	01701	Jabalpur	19:40	Ayodhya Cantt	11:00	Weekly	Wed	upto 25.06.2025
04063	Sheikhpura	06:00	New Delhi	01:10		Tue, Fri	upto 11.07.2025	01702	Ayodhya Cantt	13:30	Jabalpur	04:15		Thu	upto 26.06.2025
04066	New Delhi	21:35	Saharsa Jn	22:00	Bi-weekly	Mon, Thu	upto 10.07.2025	03309	Dhanbad Jn	10:10	Jammu Tawi	22:40	Bi-weekly	Tue, Sat	upto 28.06.2025
04065	Saharsa Jn	23:55	New Delhi	23:30		Tue, Fri	upto 11.07.2025	03310	Jammu Tawi	23:30	Dhanbad Jn	13:00		Wed, Sun	upto 29.06.2025
04022	New Delhi	14:00	Gorakhpur	05:00	Weekly	Fri	upto 11.07.2025	02397	Gaya	14:15	Anand Vihar (T)	07:10	Weekly	Sun	upto 29.06.2025
04021	Gorakhpur	07:00	New Delhi	23:10		Sat	upto 12.07.2025	02398	Anand Vihar (T)	08:20	Gaya	00:30		Mon	upto 30.06.2025
04081	New Delhi	23:45	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	11:40	Tri-weekly	Mon, Wed, Sat	upto 12.07.2025	03257	Danapur	07:30	Anand Vihar (T)	00:30	Weekly	Sun	upto 27.07.2025
04082	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	21:20	New Delhi	09:30		Tue, Thu, Sun	upto 13.07.2025	03258	Anand Vihar (T)	05:00	Danapur	20:45		Mon	upto 28.07.2025
04012	Delhi Jn	19:30	Darbhangha Jn	20:30	Bi-weekly	Tue, Fri	upto 11.07.2025	03697	Gaya	14:15	Delhi Jn	07:45	6 Days a week	Exc-Sun	upto 30.06.2025
04011	Darbhangha Jn	22:00	Delhi Jn	22:40		Wed, Sat	upto 12.07.2025	03698	Delhi Jn	08:55	Gaya	00:30		Exc-Mon	upto 01.07.2025
04024	Delhi Jn	19:30	Varanasi Jn	09:45	Tri-weekly	Mon,Thu,Sat	upto 10.07.2025	05577	Saharsa Jn	20:00	Anand Vihar (T)	00:30	5 Days a week	Except Thu, Sat	upto 30.06.2025
04023	Varanasi Jn	18:35	Delhi Jn	08:50		Tue, Fri, Sun	upto 11.07.2025	05578	Anand Vihar (T)	05:15	Saharsa Jn	10:30		Except Sat, Mon	upto 02.07.2025
04026	Delhi Jn	23:05	Raxaul Jn	19:00	Weekly	Thu	upto 10.07.2025	02393	Rajendra Nagar (T)	19:45	New Delhi	12:10	6 Days a week	Except Thu	upto 30.06.2025
04025	Raxaul Jn	22:00	Delhi Jn	17:45		Fri	upto 11.07.2025	02394	New Delhi	18:30	Rajendra Nagar (T)	10:00		Except Fri	upto 01.07.2025
04018	Anand Vihar (T)	09:00	Muzaffarpur Jn	04:30	Weekly	Thu	upto 10.07.2025	02877	Ranchi	23:55	New Delhi	03:00	Weekly	Fri	upto 27.06.2025
04017	Muzaffarpur Jn	06:15	Anand Vihar (T)	03:10		Fri	upto 11.07.2025	02878	New Delhi	04:00	Ranchi	05:00		Sun	upto 29.06.2025
04020	Anand Vihar (T)	19:30	Barauni Jn	18:00	Weekly	Sun	upto 06.07.2025	05736	Katihar Jn	21:00	Amritsar Jn	09:45	Weekly	Wed	upto 25.06.2025
04019	Barauni Jn	20:00	Anand Vihar (T)	19:00		Mon	upto 07.07.2025	05735	Amritsar Jn	13:25	Katihar Jn	23:45		Fri	upto 27.06.2025
04096	Anand Vihar (T)	04:59	Jaynagar	05:20	Bi-weekly	Mon, Thu	upto 10.07.2025	09183	Mumbai Central	22:50	Varanasi Jn	10:30	Weekly	Wed	upto 25.06.2025
04095	Jaynagar	07:30	Anand Vihar (T)	08:10		Tue, Fri	upto 11.07.2025	09184	Varanasi Jn	14:30	Mumbai Central	04:20		Fri	upto 27.06.2025
04098	Anand Vihar (T)	05:00	Sitamari	02:30	Bi-weekly	Tue, Fri	upto 11.07.2025	03223	Rajgir	06:05	Haridwar Jn	06:05	Weekly	Fri	upto 27.06.2025
04097	Sitamari	03:45	Anand Vihar (T)	01:30		Wed, Sat	upto 12.07.2025	03224	Haridwar Jn	07:20	Rajgir	07:15		Sat	upto 28.06.2025
04094	Anand Vihar (T)	23:55	Jogbani	07:30	Weekly	Thu	upto 10.07.2025	03221	Rajgir	14:00	Martyr C Tushar M	23:05	Weekly	Mon	upto 30.06.2025
04093	Jogbani	09:30	Anand Vihar (T)	16:00		Sat	upto 12.07.2025	03222	Martyr C Tushar M	03:15	Rajgir	15:00		Wed	upto 02.07.2025
04207	Lucknow Jn	08:05	New Delhi	18:30	Weekly	Mon	upto 07.07.2025	05742	New Jalpaiguri	13:40	Ayodhya Cantt.	09:30	Weekly	Sun	upto 29.06.2025
04208	New Delhi	20:20	Lucknow Jn	06:35		Mon	upto 07.07.2025	05741	Ayodhya Cantt.	11:40	New Jalpaiguri	09:30		Mon	upto 30.06.2025
04217	Varanasi Jn	06:25	Lucknow Jn	11:45	Daily		upto 30.06.2025	03311	Dhanbad Jn	23:50	Chandigarh	04:30	Bi-weekly	Tue, Fri	upto 27.06.2025
04218	Lucknow Jn	16:30	Varanasi Jn	21:50			upto 30.06.2025	03312	Chandigarh	06:00	Dhanbad Jn	09:00		Thu, Sun	upto 29.06.2025
04219	Shahganj Jn	22:35	Ayodhya Dham Jn	01:40	Daily		upto 10.07.2025	05113	Chhapra	15:45	Anand Vihar (T)	14:25	Weekly	Wed	upto 16.07.2025
04220	Ayodhya Dham Jn	02:10	Shahganj Jn	04:40			upto 10.07.2025	05114	Anand Vihar (T)	16:00	Chhapra	14:00		Thu	upto 17.07.2025
02270	Lucknow Jn	14:15	Chhapra	21:30	06 days a week	Except Tuesday	upto 11.07.2025	05301	Mau Jn	04:00	Ambala Cantt	00:30	Weekly	Thu	upto 17.07.2025
02269	Chhapra	23:00	Lucknow Jn	06:30		Sun	upto 11.07.2025	05302	Ambala Cantt	01:40	Mau Jn	22:00		Fri	upto 18.07.2025
04604	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	18:15	Varanasi Jn	19:00	Weekly	Sun	upto 06.07.2025	05193	Chhapra	14:00	Martyr C Tushar M	23:05	Weekly	Mon	upto 14.07.2025
04603	Varanasi Jn	05:00	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	06:00		Tue	upto 08.07.2025	05194	Martyr C Tushar M	00:10	Chhapra	08:00		Wed	upto 16.07.2025
04206	Varanasi Jn	14:50	Chandigarh	07:45	Weekly	Sat	upto 05.07.2025	07363	Hubballi Jn	20:30	Yog N Rishikesh	23:30	Weekly	Mon	24.02.2025 till further advice
04205	Chandigarh	09:30	Varanasi Jn	01:20		Sun	upto 06.07.2025	07364	Yog N Rishikesh	06:15	Hubballi Jn	06:30		Thu	27.02.2025 till further advice
04518	Bhatinda Jn	20:50	Varanasi Jn	17:30	Bi-weekly	Mon, Fri	upto 11.07.2025	01491	Pune	17:30	Hazrat Nizamuddin	18:10	Weekly	Fri	upto 27.06.2025
04517	Varanasi Jn	20:40	Bhatinda Jn	17:00		Tue, Sat	upto 12.07.2025	01492	Hazrat Nizamuddin	22:10	Pune	23:55		Sat	upto 28.06.2025
04302	Yog N Rishikesh	15:20	Muzaffarpur Jn	13:00	Weekly	Tue	upto 15.07.2025	09101	Vadodara Jn	16:45	Haridwar Jn	14:30	Weekly	Sat	upto 28.06.2025
04301	Muzaffarpur Jn	15:00	Yog N Rishikesh	14:20		Wed	upto 16.07.2025	09102	Haridwar Jn	16:45	Vadodara Jn	12:00		Sun	upto 29.06.2025
04610	Jammu Tawi	06:20	Varanasi Jn	05:10	Weekly	Thu	upto 09.07.2025	07023	Charlapalli	20:45	Hazrat Nizamuddin	02:00	Weekly	Sun	upto 29.06.2025
04609	Varanasi Jn	09:00	Jammu Tawi	07:45		Fri	upto 10.07.2025	07024	Hazrat Nizamuddin	04:00	Charlapalli	06:30		Tue	upto 01.07.2025
04304	Yog N Rishikesh	15:20	Gorakhpur	06:20	Weekly	Sat	upto 12.07.2025	07621	H Sahib Nanded	08:45	Hazrat Nizamuddin	14:00	Weekly	Sat	upto 28.06.2025
04303	Gorakhpur	09:00	Yog N Rishikesh	00:55		Sun	upto 13.07.2025	07622	Hazrat Nizamuddin	21:40	H Sahib Nanded	00:35		Sun	upto 29.06.2025
04602	Firozpur Cantt Jn	15:10	Patna Jn	18:00	Bi-weekly	Wed, Sat	upto 12.07.2025	09309	Indore Jn	17:00	Hazrat Nizamuddin	05:00	Bi-weekly	Fri, Sun	upto 29.06.2025
04601	Patna Jn	20:50	Firozpur Cantt Jn	23:55		Thu, Sun	upto 13.07.2025	09310	Hazrat Nizamuddin	08:20	Indore Jn	21:00		Sat, Mon	upto 30.06.2025
04608	Amritsar Jn	20:10	Darbhangha Jn	02:30	Weekly	Fri	upto 11.07.2025	09003	Mumbai Central	10:30	Delhi Jn	10:00	Bi-weekly	Tue, Fri	upto 27.06.2025
04607	Darbhangha Jn	04:00	Amritsar Jn	10:30		Sun	upto 13.07.2025	09004	Delhi Jn	13:05	Mumbai Central	13:30		Wed, Sat	upto 28.06.2025
04212	Sultanpur Jn	04:00	Lokmanya Tilak (T)	14:00	Weekly	Mon	upto 23.06.2025	09425	Sabarmati	17:20	Haridwar Jn	17:00	Bi-weekly	Thu, Sun	upto 29.06.2025
04211	Lokmanya Tilak (T)	16:35	Sultanpur Jn	23:00		Tue	upto 24.06.2025	09426	Haridwar Jn	21:00	Sabarmati	22:30		Fri, Mon	upto 30.06.2025
05559	Raxaul Jn.	05:30	Udhna Jn.	12:35	Weekly	Sat	upto 26.07.2025	09603	Udaipur City	01:50	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	06:35	Weekly	Wed	upto 25.06.2025
05560	Udhna Jn.	15:35	Raxaul Jn.	00:15		Sun	upto 27.07.2025	09604	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	10:50	Udaipur City	13:55		Thu	upto 26.06.2025
04058	New Delhi	19:30	Saharsa Jn.	19:50	Bi-weekly	Tue, Fri	upto 11.07.2025	01705	Jabalpur	15:45	Haridwar Jn	13:50	Weekly	Wed	upto 25.06.2025
04057	Saharsa Jn.	21:40	New Delhi	23:30		Wed, Sat	upto 12.07.2025	01706	Haridwar Jn	17:40	Jabalpur	17:50		Thu	upto 26.06.2025
04072	Delhi Jn.	11:00	Darbhangha Jn.	13:30	Bi-weekly	Mon, Thu	upto 10.07.2025	04050	New Delhi	21:35	Aishbagh	12:35	Bi-Weekly	Fri, Sun	upto 13.07.2025
04071	Darbhangha Jn.	15:00	Delhi Jn.	18:50		Tue, Fri	upto 11.07.2025	04049	Aishbagh	18:45	New Delhi	11:00		Sat, Mon	upto 14.07.2025
04074	Anand Vihar (T)	23:55	Jogbani	07:30	Weekly	Fri	upto 11.07.2025	04525	Saharanpur Jn.	04:40	Ambala Cantt.	06:45	Daily		upto 15.07.2025
04073	Jogbani	09:30	Anand Vihar (T)	16:00		Sun	upto 13.07.2025	04526	Ambala Cantt.	20:20	Saharanpur Jn.	22:30			upto 15.07.2025
03255	Patna Jn	22:20	Anand Vihar (T)	18:35	Bi-weekly	Sun, Thu	02.01.2025 till further advise	04068	New Delhi	14:00	Bhagalpur	13:30	Bi-Weekly	Sun, Wed	upto 09.07.2025
03256	Anand Vihar (T)	23:30	Patna Jn	18:35		Mon, Fri	03.01.2025 till further advise	04067	Bhagalpur	14:30	New Delhi	14:30		Mon, Thu	upto 10.07.2025
05049	Chhapra	10:15	Amritsar Jn	13:50	Weekly	Fri	07.02.2025 till further advice	04030	Anand Vihar (T)	09:00	Muzaffarpur Jn	04:30	Bi-Weekly	Tue, Sat	upto 08.07.2025
05050	Amritsar Jn	17:45	Chhapra	23:55		Sat	08.02.2025 till further advice	04029	Muzaffarpur Jn	06:15	Anand Vihar (T)	03:10		Wed, Sun	upto 09.07.2025
04092	New Delhi	19:30	Howrah Jn	21:40	Bi-weekly	Wed, Sat	upto 19.07.2025	04618	Amritsar	20:10	Saharsa Jn.	02:30	Bi-Weekly	Mon, Tue	upto 08.07.2025
04091	Howrah Jn	23:50	New Delhi	01:00		Thu, Sun	upto 20.07.2025	04617	Saharsa Jn.	04:40	Amritsar	14:00		Wed, Thu	upto 10.07.2025
04216	Sultanpur Jn	04:00	Sabarmati	07:30	Weekly	Friday	upto 27.06.2025	05219	Muzaffarpur Jn.	13:30	Anand Vihar (T)	10:00	Weekly	Saturday	upto 19.07.2025
04215	Sabarmati	08:50	Sultanpur Jn	11:00		Saturday	upto 28.06.25	05220	Anand Vihar (T)	12:00	Muzaffarpur Jn.	09:45		Sunday	upto 20.07.2025
09639	Madar Jn	04:30	Rohtak Jn	12:50	Daily		upto 30.06.2025	05447	Pilibhit Jn.	12:10	Shahjahanpur	13:50	Daily		upto 30.06.2025
09640	Rohtak Jn	13:20	Madar Jn	22:35			upto 30.06.2025	05448	Shahjahanpur	14:35	Pilibhit Jn.	16:30			upto 30.06.2025
04504	Chandigarh	23:35	Patna Jn	22:10	Weekly	Thursday	upto 10.07.2025	05283	Muzaffarpur Jn.	06:30	Anand Vihar (T)	05:00	Weekly	Friday	upto 27.06.2025
04503	Patna Jn	22:45	Chandigarh	23:10		Friday	upto 11.07.2025	05284	Anand Vihar (T)	07:00	Muzaffarpur Jn.	04:50		Saturday	upto 28.06.2025
03435	Malda Town	09:30	Anand Vihar (T)	13:40	Weekly	Monday	upto 30.06.2025	04687	Banihal	18:40	Budgam	20:20	6 Days a week	Expt. Fri	upto 03.08.2025
03436	Anand Vihar (T)	15:45	Malda Town	23:30		Tuesday	upto 01.07.2025	04688	Budgam	08:35	Banihal	10:40		Expt. Fri	upto 03.08.2025
06597	Yasvantpur Jn	07:00	Yog N Rishikesh	10:20	Weekly	Thursday	upto 03.07.25	04606	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	21:30	Guwahati	19:10	Weekly	Friday	upto 11.07.2025
06598	Yog N Rishikesh	17:55	Yasvantpur Jn	19:45		Saturday	21.06.25 to 05.07.25	04605	Guwahati	23:20	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	20:45		Monday	upto 14.07.2025
05305	Chhapra	22:00	Anand Vihar (T)	22:10	Bi-weekly	Mon, Thu	17.02.2025 till further advice	0707							

Tuned to the World

From soulful classics to today's stirring voices, music speaks when silence holds what words cannot express, says SAKSHI PRIYA

There are days when we speak. And then there are days when a song speaks for us. Have you ever sat in the back of a moving car, looking out of the window while an old tune plays and suddenly, you're not in the car anymore? You're in a memory, a feeling, a moment you thought you had forgotten. That's what music does. It doesn't knock. It just enters quietly and sits beside your heart.

Music has always held the uncanny ability to stay behind even after it leaves the room. In that way, it is like perfume, clinging to people, places and moments long after the notes have vanished. Today is **World Music Day** and perhaps it is time to ask what music means not only to our ears, but to our lives.

Every culture, every street, every generation has had its songs. They form a kind of invisible architecture for us to move through. The lullaby whispered to a baby in Kashmir might never reach a jazz bar in Harlem, but the intention behind them is not all that different comfort, connection, meaning.

Think of Jagjit Singh's *Hothon Se Chhoo Lo Tum*. It continues to play not because of nostalgia, but because his voice carries the weight of longing. Or the way KK's *Yaaron Dosti Badi Hi Haseen Hai* lived in every classroom, farewell party and hostel night. The words brought friends closer and turned casual bonds into lasting memories. When Kailash Kher sang *Saiyyan*, it stirred something deeper. His voice revealed. The notes felt like they had come from somewhere ancient, from a place we don't often visit but know exists within us. Roop Kumar Rathod's *Maula Mere Maula* floats into spaces that are hard to describe. The song halts thoughts. It makes you close your eyes, not to escape, but to feel everything more clearly.

Yet, World Music Day gives us a chance to remember why music is our national

therapy. Why is music so important? Because it speaks where words fail. It calms anxiety, lifts depression, fuels creativity and strengthens memories. Scientific research even suggests that music stimulates the same pleasure centres in the brain as food and love.

Whether it's a lullaby that comforts a child or a patriotic song that stirs a nation, music creates emotional bonds and triggers deep feelings. In every note, someone is trying to be heard. In every beat, someone is trying to hold on. And in every chorus, perhaps, someone is trying to return to the person they were before the world became loud.

"MUSIC IS PRESENT IN OUR INBUILT SYSTEM", SAYS KAILASH KHER

In this world, music and yoga are complementary to each other. This is synonym for each other. The kind of life we are in — all of us, any being, any species, you know, they all are born of yoga. And in one way if we say, music itself is yoga, yoga itself is music, because all of us are on a spiritual journey. We all are living in a spiritual journey. Whenever we achieve everything, we still are in the seeking of something which is yet to be achieved. And that is all spiritual goal.

So when you attain those goals, when you achieve those targets, that becomes possible only through yoga and music. What is music? Music flows in our arteries. Music is present in our inbuilt system. When the rhythm of the heart, when we feel our pulse, when its rhythm gets disturbed, then science may give it any name, but it reflects the measure of our rhythm, it sees its pace. Even in our silence there is a sound, which we call the sound of Om. So music is inbuilt with all the beings actually. Birds, even though birds are small — within them hides music. Their lungs are very small, yet still there are many birds which are called singing birds, meaning their chirping is like singing.

So the Creator has sewn music into every living being, we just have to keep that music balanced. And that is possible because of yoga. Yoga is of

two types — one is external, which we practise outwardly. One is internal, practised within the inner mind. When we maintain balance in both these states, then our life becomes filled with music and yoga. And those who live such a sattvik life, they are very peaceful, very happy, and what we call stress, they live without that, they live a stress-free life. And this is not found in material things. It's not necessary that this comes from luxuries or comforts, it comes through sadhana, not through possessions. That is why music and yoga have a mutual connection. They fall on the same day, so on this Music Day, I also send my best wishes for Yoga as well.

PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR



PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR

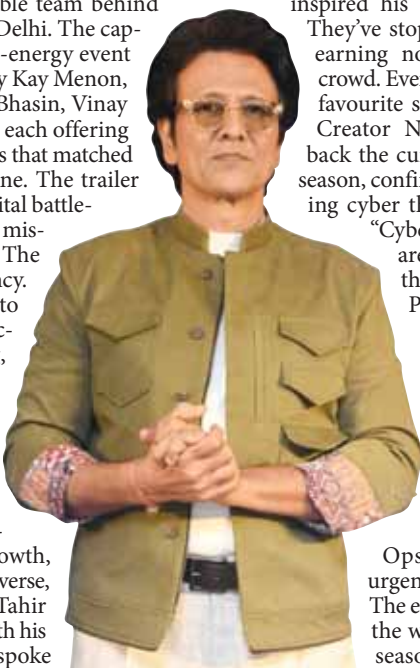


Who watches the watchers?

BY TEAM VIVA

In a city where politics often dominates conversation, espionage took over the atmosphere as the formidable team behind *Special Ops 2* arrived in Delhi. The capital played host to a high-energy event led by Neeraj Pandey, Kay Kay Menon, Karan Tacker, Tahir Raj Bhasin, Vinay Pathak, and Shivam Nair each offering sharp, candid perspectives that matched the show's razor-edge tone. The trailer throws viewers into a digital battlefield, cyber threats, secret missions, shifting loyalties. The visuals crackle with urgency. Kay Kay Menon slips into Himmat Singh like a second skin, calm, cutting, aware. His admiration for the writing was evident as he credited the layered subtext for shaping his performance.

Karan Tacker brought a sense of scale to the proceedings. He spoke of growth, of his character, of the universe, of the action sequences. Tahir Raj Bhasin, stepping in with his sharp screen presence, spoke



about his role having ideology and reason, making his antagonist feel terrifyingly real. Vinay Pathak balanced gravity with humour, pointing to the grit and instincts of Delhi Police who inspired his character. "They're sharp. They've stopped me too," he quipped, earning nods and laughs from the crowd. Ever wonder how much of your favourite spy thriller mirrors reality? Creator Neeraj Pandey just pulled back the curtain on his show's second season, confirming that its pulse-pounding cyber threats are terrifyingly real. "Cybersecurity and cyber threats aren't just future concerns, they're a present-day reality," Pandey revealed.

He's highlighting how our digital lives, from our online identities to every transaction, leave us increasingly vulnerable. Are you ready to see just how close to home these digital dangers can get?

This chapter of *Special Ops* feels more real, more urgent. The threats feel familiar. The enemies walk among us. And the war has already begun. This season aims to shake you up.

Vibrant vistas: Sound that danced through the city

Walters created not concerts, but spaces where music became memory and movement together, says SAKSHI PRIYA

In the beginning, there was sound and from it, language, memory and music. Across borders and generations, music remains one of the few things that needs no translation. On **World Music Day**, observed globally on June 21 as *Fête de la Musique*, the conversation turns not to industry charts or celebrity buzz, but to the collective power of harmony and identity. This year, in India, that conversation has a beating heart and his name is David Walters. This year, finds a vivid expression in India through Walters' tour, presented by the French Institute in India and the Alliance Française network. The performances, part of the global *Fête de la Musique* festival, are gatherings and rooted in a sense of belonging.

Music carries what words cannot, it reaches the skin, the spine, the quiet place in the chest where memory lives. On a monsoon-kissed evening in the Capital, David Walters brought that kind of music. Barefoot, eyes alight, the French-Caribbean artist stepped onto the stage and the air changed. It was the kind of entry that needed no fanfare, just presence.

One beat at a time, the room started to move. Shoulders swayed, feet found the floor. His voice, weathered and warm, felt like both call and comfort. There is no pretense in Walters' performance. What he offers feels lived, songs shaped by childhood, migration, kitchen tables, old stories, open seas. His music carries the salt of the Caribbean and the pulse of cities where cultures fold into each other.

Each number from *Soul Tropical* was played as if it had been written that morning alive, unguarded, unpolished in the best way. There was a point when he stepped back from the mic, letting his body drum the air and the audience, strangers a moment ago, responded as one. It was instinct. You don't need to understand the lyrics to hear what he means. The music carries the intent,



PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR



WALTERS REMINDED THAT MUSIC IS MEMORY. IT WAS A REMINDER OF WHAT MUSIC CAN STILL BE, PERSONAL, ROOTED AND GENEROUS. THAT RHYTHM IS RELATIONSHIP. THAT SOMETIMES, A DRUMBEAT IS ENOUGH TO SAY, I SEE YOU

loss, joy, a touch of rebellion. The kind of sound that holds the past without clinging to it. His percussion-heavy arrangements, textured with guitar and breath, felt earthy and sky-bound at once. The crowd leaned in, not out of politeness but because they were being held. Some danced, others simply watched, but everyone stayed. It felt like an invitation. There was no need for spectacle. No visual

drama, no over-rehearsed banter. Walters gave what every artist hopes to, presence without performance. He looked at the crowd as if recognising something, someone, a rhythm he had heard before. What struck me most was how the audience responded.

There was a shared attentiveness in the room, a kind of listening that felt collective. Strangers were nodding in time together, smiling without realising, holding still without being told to. When Walters stepped away from the mic and let the instruments speak, you could feel the music settle into the bodies in the room. Just a slow fade, a smile and the kind of silence that feels earned. People stayed after, not waiting for an encore, but to hold the moment a little longer.

ZUBIN NAUTIYAL ON MUSIC, MEMORY AND THE SOUND OF SELF

Zubin Nautiyal believes music is born from wounds and love. The voice behind chartbusters like *Tujhe Kitna Chahain Aur* and *Loot Gaye*, he calls the studio his sanctuary. For him, every note is a memory, every heartbreak a muse and every song deeply, achingly personal.

With music as our theme this month, Beyond specific songs, what single sound truly brings you back to your authentic self?

"The sound of a guitar is so special to me. No matter where a guitar is played, I freeze, to play it in any form. Whether it's an acoustic guitar or an electric guitar. And I think whenever we talk about love and romance, somewhere a guitar is an instrument that is closely related to love. Like piano is related to melancholy, sadness. Similarly, guitar is related to romance, vibrance, first love. Guitar is that sound for me."

THE UNSEEN EMBRACE: MUSIC IN TIMES OF LOSS

What does music do in times of loss? Ask someone who has grieved with headphones on. Ask the girl who stood in the corner of her room after heartbreak, pressing replay not to forget but to survive. Ask the boy in a war-torn town who learned to play the violin so that at least something around him sounded like beauty. Music, in its simplest form, gives us back to ourselves. And presence is precisely what modern life lacks. We consume more, scroll faster, speak louder and yet feel less. Music interrupts that. It returns us, moment by

moment, to what we actually feel. I still remember the first time I heard *Tum Itna Jo Muskura Rahe Ho* by Jagjit Singh. I was a child, not yet aware of sorrow. But the line "Kya gham hai jisko chhupa rahe ho?"

This Made me pause. I didn't know what grief meant then, but the question stayed with me. Years later, during a time of personal silence, I heard it again and this time, it spoke directly to me. That's the secret of great music. It finds you when you are ready.

