



Manipur on the boil again



A man removing a burning tyre after violent protests erupted in Manipur over the arrest of a leader of Meitei outfit Arambai Tenggol in Imphal

PTI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Imphal

A day after protests erupted in Manipur over the arrest of a leader of Meitei outfit Arambai Tenggol, situation remained tense on Sunday with the administration imposing prohibitory orders in five Imphal valley districts and suspending internet services in parts of the northeastern state, police said.

As a preventive measure, prohibitory orders have been clamped in Imphal West, Imphal East, Thoubal, Bishnupur and Kakching districts, while internet and mobile data services, including VSAT and VPN facilities, have been suspended in these valley areas.

Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla on Sunday held a security review meeting with senior officials in the wake of violent protests. A Raj Bhavan statement said the governor also met a delegation of MLAs who apprised Bhalla of the current law and order situation in the state.

“The governor held a security review meeting with senior administrative and security officials. During the meeting, a comprehensive discussion and review of various matters relating to the current law

and order situation in the state were deliberated,” it said.

The security advisor, the director general of police, the commissioner (home), the secretary to the governor, the additional director general of police (law and order), IGAR (S), the inspector general, CRPF and other senior officials were present during the meeting.

“Today, a group of MLAs called on Governor of Manipur, Ajay Kumar Bhalla, at Raj Bhavan during which the MLAs apprised the governor of the current law and order situation in the state and requested his intervention to help find an amicable solution,” the Raj Bhavan statement said. The Governor told the delegation that all “necessary steps are being taken to address the concerns and to restore normalcy”, it said.

Protesters torched tyres and old furniture in the middle of roads in Kwakeithel and Uripok, demanding the release of the leader. They clashed with security forces at different places in the State capital on Saturday night.

A mob also set a bus on fire at Khurai Lamlong in Imphal East District.

Security has been enhanced along the roads leading to the Raj Bhavan here with

additional deployment of central forces. In view of the protests in the restive north-eastern State, an order issued by the district magistrate of Imphal West stated that the “superintendent of police in Imphal West... Has reported serious breach to peace, disturbance to public tranquillity, riot or affray in the area, and grave danger to human lives and properties due to unlawful activities of anti-social elements.”

The district administration banned the assembly of five or more people and the carrying of sticks, stones, firearms, or sharp weapons under sub-section 2 of Section 163 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS). In Imphal East district, people have been prohibited from stepping outside their residences from 10 pm on Saturday, until further orders under sub-section 1 of section 163 of BNSS.

“Violent protests broke out after the arrest of a leader of Arambai Tenggol. All preventive measures are in place,” a police officer said. In Kwakeithel, several gunshots were heard, but it could not be ascertained who fired the shots.

Protesters also gheraoed the Imphal airport gate at Tulihal after the arrest of the Arambai Tenggol leader.

Nine-year-old’s murder sparks protests in Capital

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

In a chilling case that has sent shockwaves through the national Capital, a nine-year-old girl was allegedly raped and murdered in the Nehru Vihar area of North-East Delhi. Her body was discovered stuffed inside a suitcase in a locked house, sparking public outrage with locals gathering in large numbers on Sunday to demand swift action and the arrest of the culprit. Police and paramilitary personnel have been deployed in the area on Sunday to maintain law and order. A massive police manhunt for the absconding accused.

Suspensions grew around a locked house in the vicinity. When residents broke open the lock, they made a horrifying discovery - the girl's body inside a suitcase, partially undressed, with no clothes on her lower half, pointing to a possible sexual assault and took her to the nearby nursing home.

The girl, a resident of Nehru Vihar, had gone to give ice to a relative living nearby around 7 pm on Saturday. Police sources said the perpetrator of the heinous crime seems to have fled after stuffing the body in the suitcase. Senior police officers said all angles are being probed, including sexual assault.

“We are awaiting the autopsy report to confirm the cause of death. Teams have been formed to nab the absconding accused. We are taking this matter with utmost seriousness,” a police officer said.

According to her father the 9-year-old girl who went out to deliver ice was found raped and murdered in Nehru Vihar. When she did not return home for a long time, her parents began searching for her. According to the victim's father, they approached several relatives and neighbours, but no one had seen her after her brief visit to one relative's house. “She had only gone to deliver some ice to our relatives. They said she stayed for five minutes and left. But she never came back. We looked everywhere. Finally, someone told us she was seen entering a house nearby. That's where we found her in a suitcase,” he said.

The girl's father alleged that when he reached the house, it was locked. Suspecting something was wrong, he broke the lock and entered the room.

Inside, he found his daughter stuffed in a bloodstained suitcase. They rushed her to a local clinic, but the doctor asked them to take her to a hospital immediately. At Jag Pravesh Chandra Hospital in Shastrri Park, doctors declared her brought dead, the father said. A PCR call reporting the incident was received at Dayalpur police station around 8.41 pm, police said.

A police team was immediately dispatched to Gali No. 2, Nehru Vihar, where they learned that the girl had already been taken to Jag Pravesh Chandra (JPC) Hospital by her father, a senior police officer said.

Hospital authorities informed the police that the girl was declared dead.

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Delhi to sizzle this week



RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

Get ready to face extreme heat as the temperature is likely to hit 44 degrees Celsius in the next few days. The national Capital region (NCR) is in for a stretch of oppressive weather, with hot and humid conditions expected to continue till Thursday. This is the first time the maximum temperature in the Capital crossed the 40 degrees Celsius mark in the month of June this season.

The maximum temperature in Delhi rose to 42.1 degrees Celsius, 2.1 degrees above the seasonal average, while the minimum temperature was recorded at 27.7 degrees Celsius. Ayanagar was the hottest area in Delhi where the maximum temperature was recorded 44.1 degree Celsius, followed by Palam 43.6 degree Celsius. Ridge was recorded 42.9 degree Celsius while Lodhi Road 42. 3 degree Celsius.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a yellow alert for the next four days, in several parts of North and Central India, including Delhi, over the next few days, warning residents to take precautions against heat-related discomfort. This will also likely be one of the last intense heat spells, before the monsoon resumes progress in other parts of India.

As the monsoon's advance stalls, dry westerlies and relentless sun have turned the Capital into a furnace, with no immediate relief in sight. On June 8, residents woke to stifling heat and humidity, foreshadowing one of the season's most intense stretches yet.

The ByStander



Congress questions BJP defence of EC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

A day after senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi sought the Election Commission's response on his article alleging rigging in Maharashtra polls, sources in the poll watchdog said on Sunday the constitutional body would respond only if the Leader of the Opposition writes to it directly. They also pointed out that as part of its outreach, the EC had invited all six national parties for separate interactions. While the other five met the EC brass, Congress cancelled the May 15 meeting.

Rahul had on Saturday hit back at the Election Commission after sources in the poll panel rejected allegation of rigging in the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly polls, saying evasion would not protect its credibility but telling the truth would. The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha polls had alleged “match-fixing” in the Maharashtra polls and claimed that it would next happen in the Bihar elections and “anywhere the BJP is losing”.

Responding to a question on Rahul Gandhi's demand for CCTV footage of polling stations of Maharashtra of the evening hours, the sources said as per instructions of the EC, the CCTV footage of polling stations can always be scrutinised by the competent high court when an election petition is filed.

“This is done by the EC to protect the integrity of elections as well as protect the



LoP in the Lok Sabha and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi addressing a press conference

privacy of voters. Why does Rahul Gandhi want to invade the privacy of voters which is to be protected by EC as per electoral laws?” a functionary responded.

They also said that by alleging fudging in voters list, Gandhi has actually questioned booth level agents appointed by his own party and polling and counting agents appointed by his own party's candidates in Maharashtra.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said Rahul Gandhi, instead of introspecting on the defeat in the 2024 State Assembly polls, has been repudiat-

ing the mandate given by the people because they rejected him. The leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha is preparing his excuses for future defeats in the upcoming assembly elections, including Bihar, Fadnavis said.

“The people have rejected Rahul Gandhi, and in retaliation, he is rejecting the people and their mandate. It would be more prudent to accept defeat for once and introspect on where you are going wrong, where your connection with the people is lacking, and what you should do about it,” he said.

Flying ovation to Chenab Bridge



An aerial view of the Chenab rail bridge in Reasi district of J and K

PTI

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ New Delhi

The world's highest rail bridge on the Chenab river in Jammu and Kashmir, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 6, has become a craze among air travellers flying to Srinagar.

According to a press statement issued by the railway ministry, flight pilots are making special announcements and passengers are showing eagerness to capture photographs of the Chenab Bridge, the world's highest railway-arch bridge.

“The Chenab Bridge draws admiration from every altitude, where pride rises

from the earth and echoes through the clouds,” Dilip Kumar, Executive Director, Information and Publicity, Railway Board, said on Sunday.

“These days, every flight that passes over the majestic valleys of Jammu and Kashmir witnesses a truly special moment. As the aircraft approaches the Chenab valley, the pilot's voice echoes through the cabin: ‘Below you is the world's tallest railway-arch bridge, the Chenab Bridge,’ he added. The moment the announcement is made, passengers rush to the windows and start recording videos and clicking pictures of this historic marvel on their mobile phones.

“A wave of pride sweeps through the cabin – passengers clap, smile and share words of admiration for the brilliance of Indian engineering,” the press note said.

Days after its formal inauguration, even down below, the enthusiasm is equally contagious, it added. Railway officials stated that locals from nearby villages and mountainous regions are seen taking photographs and recording videos of the bridge from different vantage points.

“Some are live-streaming the moment, while others are sharing it instantly across Instagram and Facebook,” an official said.

Tunnel to ease Capital airport, Gurugram traffic

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

In a move to ease traffic, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will build a tunnel worth Rs 3500 crore connecting Nelson Mandela Marg in Vasant Kunj to Shiv Murti interchange, Mahipalpur. The 4.9 km tunnel will be part of the National Highway 148AE and is intended to provide a direct, bypass route for traffic heading towards or from Gurugram and the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA).

Announcing this, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has approved six major infrastructure projects in Delhi.

One of the key projects is a 5-kilometre-long tunnel that will not only balance the traffic between South Delhi and NCR but will also help curb pollution and transform the overall look of the area. The tunnel, stretching from Shiv Murti-Mahipalpur (Dwarka Expressway) to Nelson Mandela Road (Vasant Kunj), will reduce congestion on multiple routes and create a signal-free corridor.

The NHAI will construct the tunnel, comprise two underground tubes - one each for up and down traffic. Each tube will have three lanes, making a total of six lanes available for smooth traffic movement. The tunnel will also be equipped with modern facilities such as electro-mechanical systems, ventilation, fire safety, CCTV surveillance, control rooms, emergency exits, and cross-passages.

The CM said that after a recent meeting with Union Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari, several projects worth ₹24,000 crore aimed at streamlining traffic and reducing pollution in Delhi and adjoining areas have been approved.

She further explained that the construction of this tunnel will significantly ease traffic congestion on Nelson

Mandela Road (Vasant Kunj), Mahipalpur, and Rangpuri. It will also reduce the traffic load on Dhaula Kuan, Rao Tula Ram Marg, and National Highway 48 (NH-48) in the Mahipalpur area. The tunnel will offer a direct, signal-free alternate route between South Delhi and Dwarka/Gurugram, which is expected to help eliminate traffic jams on NH-48, especially during peak hours.

The CM also noted that in the future, this tunnel will serve as a key connector between Central/East Delhi and multiple

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major expressways and highways including the Delhi Expressway (NE-5), NH-44, NH-10, Delhi-Jaipur Highway (NH-48), and Delhi-Dehradun Expressway (NH-709B) via the Urban Extension Road (UER) and Dwarka Expressway. This will lead to smoother traffic across these routes and a significant reduction in pollution levels.

The CM informed that all technical and formal requirements for the project are in their final stages, and work is expected to commence early next year.

Calling this project, the “foundation for the Delhi of the future,” CM Rekha Gupta said that the tunnel will give a new direction to Delhi's infrastructure and bring relief to millions of citizens. She further added, “We are committed to making Delhi congestion-free and clean. The construction of this tunnel will reduce the burden on roads, eliminate traffic signals, and save fuel.”



Chief of Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi during a visit to the Kedarnath temple

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Call to rename Ranchi Airport as ‘Bhagwan Birsa Munda Airport’ gains momentum



PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

A fresh demand has been raised to rename the Birsa Munda Airport in Ranchi as “Bhagwan Birsa Munda Airport,” in recognition of the tribal icon’s unparalleled legacy and contributions. The appeal comes from Amarpreet Singh Kale, a senior social worker and founder president of “Naman – Shaheedon Ke Sapno Ko,” an organization dedicated to honoring India’s martyrs.

Kale has sent an emotional letter to the Chief Minister

of Jharkhand urging the state government to recommend and take formal steps to rename the Ranchi-based airport with the revered title “Bhagwan” prefixed to Birsa Munda’s name.

Speaking about the inspiration behind his appeal, Kale said that earlier in the morning, while traveling from Ranchi to Delhi, he heard the airport being referred to as just “Birsa Munda Airport” during the in-flight announcement. The mention, he said, stirred a deep emotion and a sense of injustice within him.

“It saddened me that our Dharti Aaba, who is worshipped as a deity by millions, continues to be addressed without the reverence he rightfully deserves. That moment strengthened my resolve to formally raise this demand,” Kale noted in his letter.

He further emphasized that Bhagwan Birsa Munda holds a sacred and unshakable position in the cultural and spiritual consciousness of Jharkhand’s people, particularly the tribal communities. Referring to him simply as “Birsa Munda,” he argued,

does not reflect the magnitude of his sacrifice and struggle.

Kale also reminded the state and central governments that Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the current Chief Minister Hemant Soren, and several former chief ministers have repeatedly addressed him as “Bhagwan Birsa Munda” in their public speeches. “When our leaders unanimously recognize him as ‘Bhagwan,’ then why should our airport not reflect that reverence?” Kale questioned.

He believes that renaming

the airport will not be a mere symbolic act, but a step towards historical and cultural justice, giving due honour to a spiritual and revolutionary icon who laid down his life for tribal rights and dignity.

A copy of Kale’s letter has been dispatched to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister’s Office, Governor of Jharkhand, Chief Minister Hemant Soren, and Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia. The demand has also been shared via Kale’s Twitter handle and email.

The timing of the appeal is significant, as it comes on the eve of Balidan Diwas, observed on June 9 to commemorate the martyrdom of Bhagwan Birsa Munda. Kale expressed hope that the state government would take a “sensitive and prompt” decision on this emotional and long-pending demand.

The suggestion has already started gaining attention on social media, with many expressing solidarity with the call to give due honour to one of India’s most iconic tribal freedom fighters.

Water wealth of Palamu to be resuscitated with Niti Ayog funding

PNS: DALTONGANJ

Rivers in Palamu are its water wealth. But this wealth is either shrinking or decaying. Rains fed rivers abound more than the perennial one.

Efforts are on to resuscitate the sighing rivers. Niti Ayog is to give fund to the tune of rupees 3 crore for the Batane river eco system improvement programme.

This river which has little over 2,011 metre length in Jharkhand’s Palamu district is now a total dry said the nodal officer of the eco system improvement programme Satyam Kumar who is the DFO (divisional forest officer) of Medininagar forest division.

“Batane river should have been a perennial river but instead of that it is a rain fed river now gone all dry and so under the eco system improvement programme we want to turn it into a perennial river” said Satyam known by his first name.

Only this last Friday deputy commissioner (DC) Palamu Sameera S held a top level meeting attended by three IFS officers, two of them from the Palamu tiger reserve namely P K Jena and Kumar

Ashish, DFO Medininagar forest division Satyam Kumar including DDC M Shabbir Ahmad, additional collector Kundan Kumar, to ‘rehabilitate and rejuvenate’ the Batane river.

Sources said the DC Sameera S has asked the team to do everything to preserve and conserve the water wealth of Palamu. Fate of revival of Batane river will be a deciding factor of many more rivers which are battling for its existence and survival.

Deputy development commissioner (DDC) Md Shabbir Ahmad told this correspondent “A GIS (geographic information system) mapping of this river Batane will be done by the GIS expert. Drone camera will also be pressed in.”

“Eco system improvement programme is a multi pronged approach to restore water flow in this river Batane,” reiterated the DDC

Batane river is of the Ganga basin and is a tributary of the Punpun river in Bihar which stretches in Jharkhand Palamu district’s Chhaterpur and Harihurganj police station limits.

The Planning Commission of India had approved the



Batane dam project in 1974 which was completed in 1990.

On how to make this total dry Batane river a water flowing river, the nodal officer Satyam said “Revegetating the surroundings is very important. Plantation of native species promotes revegetation.”

“The second important task is to keep pollution and contamination of the river bed at bay. Any such debris has to be flushed out first” outlined the nodal officer.

Earthen infra structure

facilities like check dams and barriers are another booster for the revival of the river.

“Batane river is now in the ICU. It’s choking. It has to be brought to life breathing and running” admitted administrative sources.

In order to ‘stabilise’ the Batane river wetlands are to be created to reduce flooding. Boulders in mesh of wires are a handy means added the nodal officer.

Additional collector Kundan Kumar has been entrusted with the task of

finding out ways and means for larger participation of the locals living in the contiguity of this river.

DDC M Shabbir Ahmad said the recovery and reclaiming of the Batane river will open a new door of river therapy in Palamu for which the DC is too concerned.

A motley of departments like watershed, MGNREGA, waterways, minority irrigation will converge on this eco system improvement programme of the Batane river added the DDC. End

Medical services at Garhwa Sadar hospital turmoil

NITYANAND DUBEY : GARHWA

The medical services at Sadar Hospital have completely collapsed, with wide-spread negligence and misconduct among doctors and healthcare staff. The hospital’s Deputy Superintendent, Dr. Harenchandra Mahato, and Manager Sunil Mani Tripathi, who are responsible for ensuring smooth operations, are frequently absent from duty under various pretexts.

According to regulations, only allopathic doctors are

authorized to treat patients at Sadar Hospital, and a duty roster is in place to ensure this. However, several doctors routinely neglect their responsibilities in both the Outpatient Department (OPD) and Emergency, instead assigning inadequately trained medical staff or homeopathy practitioners to treat patients during their scheduled shifts.

This has resulted in dire consequences for the patients, many of whom visit the hospital seeking quality treatment. Shockingly, even critically ill patients referred

by MBBS-qualified doctors from Community Health Centers end up being treated by homeopathy doctors at Sadar Hospital. These homeopathic practitioners not only diagnose and treat patients but also freely prescribe allopathic medicines — a clear violation of medical norms. Unaware of the deception, rural patients remain oblivious to the fact that their treatment is being handled by unqualified personnel. This malpractice has led to worsening health conditions and, in some cases, even fatalities.



Know the soul of nation without visiting India



DR. MAYANK MURARI

It is difficult to study ourselves, so life is studied. If we want to understand life, then we have to understand our society. Society means village, city and family. In this too, the village is where India resides. Therefore, the knowing the village means perception of the soul of Bharat without visiting it. If we want to see the life of India, to understand the various colours of man, then Indian village is an ideal place. Life gets some meaning in the village, the moment we spend in the village. Colour and juice are communicated in life. There are stories in the village, traditions, speed, then it has a taste. Phaniswarnath Renu’s novel “Maila Aanchal” is a sacred scripture of Hindi literature in which rural India is renamed. This novel has every taste of rural India.

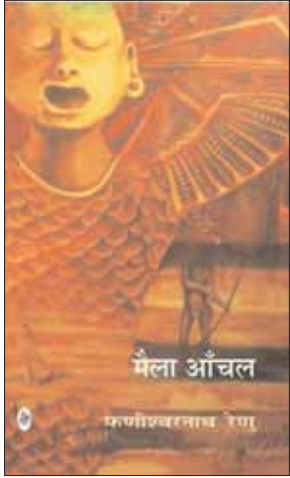
From simplicity to cunning, from charismatic beauty to shameless ugliness, from gross injustice to serious righteousness. Nothing leaves. Renuji argues that his country is still a colony, in terms of both value and behavior. It is based on the lives of people living in a small village in Bihar from 1945 to

1948 in the novel. There is a description of their sufferings and tribulations here.

While reading this novel, every time the idea comes as to why it has been named Maila Aanchal. The term has been used many times in the book and refers to various points of women’s life like Lakshmi, Kamali and Bharat Mata. The main reference was towards India, which is considered a mother and whose aanchal (the decorative part of the sari which is either placed on the head or hanging on the shoulder) has deteriorated due to the actions of some people of this society. These people were earlier also, are still today and will remain in future.

Despite these, it is being wished through literature that we should spend our lives in cleaning this area of Mother India. Perhaps this zone is not as good as it should be today. The writer himself has said that there are flowers, there are also colic, roses, colors, sandalwood, are also natural, also ugliness. And politics, poverty, love, lust, incest, cheating in the village. Everything is there. The title of the novel is taken from Sumitranandan Pant’s poem “Bharat Mata”. Shyamal is spread in the fields, dusty sloppy, tears in the Ganges Yamuna, the idol of clay gloom.

There are some very unique ways to enjoy the memorable moments of life even in the sloppy Aanchal. On all important occasions, specific types of music of that area are celebrated with the beat of instruments. Dhol,



Digga, Mridunga, Nagara and Jhanjh are often used musical instruments.

This novel was published in 1954. Three years ago, in 1951, Tarashankar Bandopadhyay’s “Hansuli Banker Upakha” was published. The background and style of both novels can be seen very brilliantly. The regional novel not only emphasizes the settings, bids and social structure and customs of a particular area, but also emphasizes the nature of the characters and their way of thinking, feeling and interacting.

The circumstances, living, thoughts, society of the village are as relevant today when this book was written. After reading some pages of this book, I started feeling that I am a part of the village and I am directly experiencing the events. It has the main character of Dr. Saheb who does not consider any relationship with heart and lungs, although after seeing Kamali,

he also feels that there is a surface of the heart in this human body. Kamali believes in her Prashant, her love remains on her faith, which remains till the end. Mamma saw a doctor’s chit once but Kamali’s faith is elsewhere. Prashant wants to cultivate love in the village, he will shake the crop of love on the earth wet with flowers. In the novel, it seems that we are also from the same village. The magical language is the shadow until the end. Dhol drums, clouds, electricity. We can hear the thing that is not there in this novel.

It is an excellent work to describe rural and semi-rural life of Bihar (an Indian state) during the Indian freedom struggle. Writing local colloquial Hindi, Renu has beautifully portrayed the real picture of Gandhism, communism, religious fundamentalism and the influences of Congress party politics on the disturbed life of the villagers. I enjoyed reading the book a lot. This novel gives special attention to the changes coming from the political point of view.

This is the ideal of Bihar. Surprisingly, all these benefits could never be taken up by this part of India. In this novel, an attempt has been made to highlight all these things. A love affair between all of them and that too in which the depth of births. Through this, the lover and girlfriend’s mood is introduced. Further, the equality of society is exposed in this style, and you are in such bonds as if they are not close to all of you with these hymns.

EMPOWERING YOUNG WOMEN FOR NATION-BUILDING

15-day residential leadership training camp concludes successfully

PNS : RANCHI

With patriotic fervor and vibrant enthusiasm, the Rashtriya Sevika Samiti, Jharkhand Prant brought its 15-day residential leadership training camp to a successful culmination today at Saraswati Shishu Vidya Mandir, Dhurwa, with a grand valedictory ceremony.

A total of 225 Sevikas from 20 districts of Jharkhand participated in the camp, which aimed to instill discipline, physical robustness, cultural awareness, and a deep spirit of patriotism in young women. The daily schedule included yoga, physical training, intellectual discussions, group dialogues, singing sessions, and community service activities — offering a holistic development experience.

Throughout the duration of the camp, around 14 instructors and 10 state-level officials were consistently present to guide the Sevikas. The training sessions were enriched by the guidance of esteemed national-level leaders — Sunita Haldekar Ji, Chitra Tai Joshi Ji, and Neeta Ba Ji — with continuous mentorship from Padma Devi Ji, the Regional Contact Chief.

Delivering the keynote address at the valedictory event, Akhil Bharatiya Sah Karyawahika Hon. Chitra Tai Joshi Ji remarked:

“Bharat Mata is the very essence of our existence. She fulfills our physical, intellectual, and spiritual needs. Every moment of our lives should be dedicated to her service.”

She highlighted a special focus of this year’s camp — the 300th birth anniversary of Maharani Ahilyabai Holkar calling her a beacon of selfless service, righteousness, and ideal governance.

“Maharani Ahilyabai Holkar was a saintly queen whose legacy continues to inspire generations. She revitalized India’s cultural soul by restoring sacred pilgrimage sites such as Kashi Vishwanath, Prayagraj, Rameshwaram, Somnath, and Mathura. Her contributions toward women’s security, dignity, and empowerment* remain timeless lessons for modern India.”



sons for modern India.”

In the same spirit, she paid homage to Maharani Durgavati, whose heroism was also prominently remembered during the camp:

“Rani Durgavati sacrificed her life defending her motherland against invaders. Her valor is a shining symbol of courage, self-respect, and patriotism. Her life reminds us that women’s strength is integral to the defense and dignity of our nation.”

Chief Guest, Retired Director General of Police, Mrs. Nirmal Kaur, applauded the participants, noting:

“This training initiative by Rashtriya Sevika Samiti is a powerful model for “nation-building through character-building. It cultivates disciplined, ethical, and socially committed* citizens.”

The camp also held intensive discussions and practices on national service, civic responsibility, social harmony, promotion of indigenous products, and environmental awareness. The camp’s chief instructor was Manu Shri. A highlight of the training was the grand route march (Path Sanchalan) held on 6th June, where Sevikas, in full uniform, paraded through the city. The march, beginning from the school campus and passing through Durga Mandir and Bus Stand, was met with cheers and flower showers from the public, symbolizing widespread community support and admiration.



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The valedictory celebration witnessed a gathering of over 2,000 attendees from across society — including educators, intellectuals, social leaders, women’s organizations, and the general public — making it a memorable community event.

Prominent dignitaries from Rashtriya Sevika Samiti included:

Mrs. Usha Singh Ji (Prant Sanchalika), Mrs. Sharda Gupta Ji (Prant Karyawahika), Dr. Tripulada Das Ji (Prant Sah Karyawahika), Mrs. Nirmala Singh Ji (Prant Sampark Pramukh), Mrs. Poonam Singh Ji, Dr. Jigyasa Ojha, Mrs. Shalini Sachdev Ji, Mrs. Rita Singh Ji, Mrs. Suman Sinha Ji, Mrs. Ganita Jha Ji, Mrs. Kusumata Singh Ji, Jay Shri Kujur, Mrs. Sudha Prajapati, and Mrs. Aparna Singh.

The camp was efficiently coordinated under the supervision of Mrs. Jamvanti Mishra Ji (Prant Bauddhik Pramukh) as Class Officer, with logistical leadership by Mrs. Mridul Chaurasia. The program also had the support and presence of Mr. Siddhnath Singh (Central Member, Gram Vikas Ayam, RSS), Mr. Sachidanand Agrawal (Prant Sangchalak), Mr. Ashok Srivastava (Sah Prant Sangchalak), Mr. Vijay Ghosh Ji (Prant Samajik Sadbhav Coordinator), Mr. Guru Sharan Ji (National President, Seva Bharti), Mr. Akhilesh Mishra (Minister, Saraswati Shishu Vidya Mandir), and public representatives like Mr. Ganesh Mishra (BJP), Mrs. Asha Lakra, Aarti Kujur, Satyanarayan Kanth, Snigdha Ji, Mr. Sunil Ji, Achal Ji, members of the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, and numerous women leaders and participants from diverse fields.

Police identifies Siramtoli flyover dangerous ‘stuntman’

The youth, identified as Hunter fled out of fear of the police after which the police seized the bike.

PNS : RANCHI

The Ranchi police have identified the youth who was seen in a video performing dangerous stunts on his motorcycles atop the newly inaugurated the Kartik Oraon flyover popularly known as Siramtoli flyover few days back. The youth, who called himself Hunter, fled out of fear of the police, after which the police seized the bike.

The police team, led by Kotwali DSP Prakash Soy, raided and recovered the bike. But the youth managed to escape. The bike has been seized and kept in Sadar police station. According to the information, the name of the bike rider is Hunter alias Rider alias Kasif. Kasif had hidden the bike in someone else's house.

The youth were openly making fun of the law by doing dangerous stunts. Not only this, the audacity of the

stuntmen increased so much that they also posted the video of the stunt on social media. But this is where the stuntmen made a mistake. Jharkhand government's Transport Minister Deepak Barua taking cognizance instructed Traffic SP Ranchi to identify the stunting youths, explain the rules of transport to them and take immediate action.

The video was posted on Instagram by transport minister Deepak Birua. Transport Minister Deepak Birua posted this viral video on Instagram and wrote, "Ranchi Traffic Police should identify this promising youth and tell him the transport rules and take immediate action. These people are not skilled but hooligans. Ranchi Police should be asked whether life is precious or glory?"

After the minister's tweet, Ranchi Traffic Police has started identifying the youth



seen in the video. The police have said that after the youth is identified, he will be informed about the traffic rules and necessary action

will be taken as per the rules. Ranchi Police has said that their top priority is road safety and they will not tolerate activities like stunts under

any circumstances.

"The bike of the stunting youth was seized on Saturday night while the search for the youth is on. The bike that was

speeding and doing stunts on the flyover has been recovered from Ranchi's Khijurtola, Booti Sadar police station area," said DSP



Kotwali Prakash Soy.

It may be noted that Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Thursday inaugurated the long-awaited Sirmatoli flyover

in the capital, officially naming it 'Kartik Oraon Path' in honour of the late tribal leader and former Union minister. The flyover, stretching 2.34 km from Sirmatoli Chowk to MECON Roundabout via Rajendra Chowk, has been constructed at a cost of ₹355.76 crore and is expected to ease traffic movement significantly in the city's congested zone.

The inauguration was held during the auspicious Abhijit Muhurat, adding a cultural and astrological dimension to the state government's showcase of developmental progress.

The Chief Minister began the day by offering prayers at the Sarna Sthal and planting saplings at the newly constructed Van Bhawan, marking World Environment Day and signalling the government's dual commitment to infrastructure and ecological preservation.

Panki MLA Mehta ends dharna after Minister's assurance

PNS : RANCHI

BJP MLA from Panki Shashi Bhushan Mehta who sat on dharna at Jharkhand Bhawan (New Delhi) over non allotment of rooms ended his dharna after the intervention of Health Minister Irfan Ansari.

Talks were held between BJP MLA Dr. Shashi Bhushan Mehta and Minister Dr. Irfan Ansari regarding room allocation in Jharkhand Bhawan, Delhi. Dr. Mehta, upset with the situation of not being allotted a room, sat on a dharna at the reception counter of the building.

Minister Dr. Irfan Ansari assured Mehta and resolved the entire situation with peace and respect. He



assured the MLA that there is a little problem in the system, which will be rectified soon.

Minister Dr. Ansari said that as soon as Chief Minister Hemant Soren came to know about this situation, he con-

tacted me and instructed to ensure immediate solution. Our government respects all MLAs equally, irrespective of which party they belong to.

Minister Dr. Ansari said that the new Jharkhand

Bhawan is ready, now such problems will not arise. He also extended his heartfelt greetings to Dr. Mehta on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha and invited him to his residence, saying that after returning from Delhi, you should come to my house, where I myself will serve you delicious dishes.

Earlier, MLA Mehta told that he had already booked two rooms and had also confirmed it. But when he reached Jharkhand Bhawan, he was given wrong information. When he himself gathered information, he came to know that one room is booked in the name of the former MLA and the rest of the rooms are vacant. Due to which he became more angry.

Dr Mehta urged the Jharkhand government to make the system of Jharkhand Bhawan transparent and fair, so that the public representatives of the state can get both respect and facilities. He demanded strict action from Chief Minister Hemant Soren and said that if there is bias in the system, it will be opposed.

MLA Mehta raised the question and said that Jharkhand Bhawan has been constructed by spending crores of rupees, but if the MLAs of the state have to face humiliation for the rooms here, then what does it mean. He said that this is an insult to the legislature of Jharkhand and it cannot be accepted under any circumstances.

J'hland to get first sports school

PNS : RANCHI

A major initiative is being taken in the direction of grooming sports talents in Jharkhand and preparing them at a professional level. The State Government is working on a plan to open Jharkhand's first residential sports school in Khelgaon, Ranchi.

The Directorate of Sports has also prepared a proposal for this. This school will take shape in the coming few years.

This sports school will have arrangements for studies from class 6th to 12th and it will be recognized by the Jharkhand Academic Council (JAC). The special thing is that along with studies, special attention will be given to sports training here. Expert coaches will be appointed for each sport, so that talented children can get the right guidance.

Keeping in mind the fitness and performance of the students, a special diet plan will be prepared for them. Along with this, their lifestyle, routine and mental health will also be taken care of, so that they can balance both sports and studies.

This school to be built in Khelgaon will have separate hostel facilities for both boys and girls. All the necessary facilities will be provided in the hostel. Khelgaon is already famous for many sports and there are already built facilities like indoor and outdoor stadiums, grounds, tennis courts, volleyball and football grounds, which will only be slightly maintained.

The condition of the already built hostels in Khelgaon is not good at present, but they will be renovated under the Sports School Project. This will eliminate the need to build new buildings and students will be able to use these facilities directly.

The Sports Directorate will prepare special courses for this school, which will be designed with the help of sports experts. These courses will make children strong in both education and sports so that they can represent the state and the country in the future. At present, no clear information has been given about the fees or semester system of this school.

BJP'S ALLEGATIONS ON SC/ST ISSUE IS HYPOCRISY: JMM

PNS : RANCHI

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) General Secretary Vinod Kumar Pandey has outrightly rejected the allegations levelled by BJP spokesperson Pratul Shah Dev and called it blatant political hypocrisy. He said that the BJP remembers the SC and ST only when it is in the opposition. What they did for these sections while in power is known to the entire state.

Pandey said that the Hemant Government is a true well-wisher of the interests of the tribals, Moolvasis, Dalits and backward classes. "The government's schemes - like 'Marang Gomke Scholarship', 'Sido-Kanhu Krishi Samridhi Yojana', and 'Fellowship Scheme' - are effective steps towards empowering these sections. The BJP's allegation that the SC Commission has not been



formed is completely misleading. The government is working seriously in this direction and the commission will be reconstituted soon," he added.

On the questions raised about the letter of Minister Radha Krishna Kishore, the

JMM General Secretary said that in a democracy every minister has the right to express his opinion, this is the specialty of Chief Minister Shri Hemant Soren, he believes in listening to everyone and taking their opinion with full sensitivity, not one-

sidedly. This is not the dictatorial government of BJP, he added.

Does any BJP minister have the freedom to write a letter to PM Narendra Modi? Or has any BJP minister written a letter to PM Modi? But the BJP is trying to mislead the tribal and Dalit society by making it an issue.

Pandey retorted that before talking about morality, the BJP should tell how many tribal youth it gave jobs to during its tenure, and why it had stopped special schemes for them.

The JMM General Secretary clearly said that the BJP is pretending to be pro-tribal and pro-Dalit, while its real policy has been to push these sections to the margins. The JMM government is walking on the path of development and social justice with full commitment. And this is what is bothering the BJP.

Prioritizing senior women's health: Dr. Anuradha G

PNS : RANCHI

As women reach the milestone of 65, their healthcare needs shift in predictable and deeply personal ways. While we often talk about menopause as a key turning point, much less is said about what follows. Yet the phase that is post-menopause and beyond is just as critical to a woman's health journey.

Why health conversations after 65 matter

Consultant Gynaecologist and Obstetrician, Miror Dr. Anuradha G said that

globally, women tend to live longer than men, but not necessarily healthier. According to the WHO, women spend more years managing chronic conditions such as osteoporosis, arthritis, and cognitive decline. Many of these are preventable or manageable with early attention, but too often, they go unaddressed because symptoms are normalized or dismissed as "just aging."

Every woman entering the senior age must provide



regular attention to women lose bone up to 20 per cent rapidly post-menopause within the first 5-7 years. Screening for osteoporosis and maintaining sufficient calcium and Vitamin D levels is essential, another issue is

Sarcopenia (age-related muscle loss) increases fall risk. Gentle strength-building exercises and adequate magnesium intake can help, next is emotional well-being: memory lapses, foggy thinking, or anxiety can sometimes signal deeper

issues. These symptoms deserve the same seriousness as physical ones

Issue like slower metabolism and altered gut microbiota can affect nutrient absorption, energy levels, and weight. A fiber-rich diet and gut-friendly herbs like Triphala can support this area and as women age, maintaining the energy levels they once took for granted becomes increasingly important. They need to strive to restore natural vitality and combat the fatigue that can interfere with enjoying your favorite activities, spending quality time with loved ones, and pursuing the passions that bring you joy.

Mirror's new product Mom I Love You (MILY), which combines plant-based extracts and essential nutrients specifically for this age group. It includes ingredients traditionally used in Indian wellness like Brahmi for focus, Ashwagandha for stress, and Arjuna for heart health, paired with minerals like magnesium and calcium for physical vitality.

Cong In-Charge in Ranchi on a six-day tour

PNS : RANCHI

Congress' Jharkhand in-charge K Raju reached Ranchi late Saturday evening on a six-day tour of the state. During his 6-day stay, he will participate in various programs and meetings in different districts of the state.

Raju, while talking to the media at Birsa Munda Airport, said that the program of organization creation is going on and PESA law, Sarna Dharma Code is an important issue in this state.

Congress' Jharkhand in-charge will leave for Simdega on Sunday with State Congress President Keshav Mahato Kamlesh. There he will participate in a meeting with the District President, District Observer, ULB Observer, Block President, Block Observer and Mandal Presidents at the District Congress Headquarters. After this, he will participate in consultation on PESA rules with civil society workers of Kolhan region at the Circuit House in Chaibasa.

On June 9, Raju will hold a meeting with the District President, District Observer, ULB Observer, Block President, Block Observer and Mandal Presidents at the District Congress Headquarters in Ramgarh. Apart from this, he will also participate in the district level Save Constitution Rally in Bokaro.

Meanwhile, Jharkhand Pradesh Congress Committee General Secretary Alok Kumar Dubey has described the 11 years of the Narendra Modi Government at the Center as the most unsuccessful period for India's democracy and economic development. He said that the country is going through many deep crises today and in these 11 years, the Modi government has not only shown lack of communication but has also completely ruined the country's security, economic condition and social fabric.

Dubey said, "Modi Government has shaken



the foundation of democracy by keeping distance from communication in 11 years. Not holding a single press conference, running away from questions and being communication-less are dangerous signs for democracy. When the people of the country ask questions, the government remains silent. This clearly shows that the Modi government is afraid of accountability."

The party's State General Secretary also said that the security of daughters in the country is inadequate and a matter of concern. "Atrocities against women are increasing, but the Modi government has neither any concrete policy nor any effective steps. The watchman is asleep and the public is feeling unsafe."

BJP raises question on CM's 72-Hour silence over Kishore's Letter

By not responding to the minister's letter, the govt has admitted that condition of SC and Primitive Tribes in State is dire, says Shahdeo

PNS : RANCHI

By not responding to the minister's letter, the government has implicitly admitted that the condition of Scheduled Castes and Primitive Tribes in Jharkhand is dire - Pratul Shah Deo

BJP state spokesperson Pratul Shah Deo has raised questions over Chief Minister Hemant Soren's silence even after 72 hours regarding a letter written by Minister Radha Krishna Kishore. Pratul stated that Minister Radha Krishna Kishore clearly mentioned that the condition of Scheduled Castes in the state is worse than that of Primitive Tribes.

Pratul said this admission reveals two things: first, the current government has failed to improve the condition of Scheduled Castes in its five-and-a-half-year tenure; second, it has similarly deteriorated the situation of Primitive Tribes. Pratul remarked that the Hemant government claims to represent tribals, indigenous people, and the oppressed, but now its own minister is holding a mirror to it, highlighting the deplorable condition of Scheduled Castes and Primitive Tribes under this government. The BJP government had formed the Scheduled Caste Commission by the end of 2018.

However, due to the 2019 Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, it had limited time to function. Despite being in power for the last five-and-a-half years, the Hemant Soren



government has not constituted this commission, reflecting its negative attitude toward this community.

Pratul said that a similar situation prevails for Scheduled Castes and Primitive Tribes. The minister's letter makes it clear that Primitive Tribes have become a benchmark for backwardness, as the minister himself compares their condition to that of backwardness. Pratul noted that schemes like the 'Dakia Yojana' and 'Pahariya Battalion', initiated under the BJP government, were good starting points, but the current government has done nothing for the upliftment of Primitive Tribes.

He added that Scheduled Tribes are also facing neglect under the Hemant government's tenure.

Forces promoting religious conversion remain active,

with large-scale attempts to convert Scheduled Tribe members.

This government is also labeled as anti-backward, as it conducted panchayat elections without reserving seats for backward classes. Even now, the Backward Class Commission lacks a chairperson, and the local body election commission is also without a head.

Pratul stated that in an era of moral accountability, a chief minister would have resigned over such serious allegations by a cabinet minister, or the minister making such claims would have been sacked. However, this government suppresses issues until they fade away. The government's silence on the minister's letter is a tacit admission of the dire condition of Scheduled Castes and Primitive Tribes in the state.

BJP-led NDA redefined women-led development in 11 years: PM Modi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

A day before his Government marks its first anniversary in third term, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that the ruling BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) has redefined women-led development in its 11 years in power. In all sectors, including science, education, sports, start ups and the armed forces, women are excelling and inspiring several people, Modi said on social media. He cited a number of welfare programmes which, he noted, have benefited women immensely. Various initiatives, from ensuring dignity through Swachh Bharat to financial inclusion via Jan Dhan accounts, the focus has been on empowering the women, he said.

If 'Ujjwala Yojana' brought smoke-free kitchens running on gas cylinders to the poor households, 'MUDRA' loans enabled lakhs of women entrepreneurs to pursue



Prime Minister Narendra Modi

PTI

dreams on their own terms. Houses under the women's name in PM Awas Yojana too have made a remarkable impact, he added. 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' (save daughter, educate daughter) programme ignited a national movement to protect the girl child, he said.

The Prime Minister shared a thread of a Government-run citizenship engagement platform, which listed benefits brought to women by several Government schemes. It said the maternal mortality ratio declined to 93 per lakh live births in 2019-21 from 167 in 2011-13, and the households with tap water connections zoomed to 15.64 crore in May 2025 from 3.23 crore in August 2019.

Over 10 crore cooking gas connections were given under the Ujjwala scheme, it said, while highlighting several other welfare measures targeting women.

In the run up to the anniversary, Modi has been highlighting his government's work for different sections of society, including the poor, farmers and youths.

NIA arrests three insurgents for attack on security forces

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested three insurgents in a case related to a deadly attack on security forces that killed two police commandos and injured several others in ethnic violence-hit Manipur last year, officials said on Sunday.

The three men, along with their associates, planned, conspired and executed the attack on an Indian Reserve Battalion (IRB) post and security forces at Moreh in Tengnoupal district on January 17, 2024, they said. Among the arrested accused is Thangminlen Mate, a resident of Tengnoupal district and member of the Kuki Inpi Tengnoupal (KIT) insurgent group, an official statement said.

He played a key role in orchestrating and carrying out the attack, it said.

"He was apprehended on May 19, 2025, from Silchar, Assam, and produced before the NIA court in Guwahati, which remanded him to custody until May 28. He is currently lodged in Guwahati Central Jail under judicial custody," the

statement issued by the probe agency said. The other accused, Kamginthang Gangte, a member of the Kuki National Army (KNA), and Hentinthang Kipgen alias Thangneo Kipgen, associated with the village volunteers' group in Churachandpur district, were arrested from Imphal on June 6, the statement said.

"They were presented before the duty magistrate, who granted a transit remand until June 9 for their transfer to the NIA special court in Guwahati. The duo was part of the team that executed the deadly attack," it added.

More than 260 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless in the violence between the Imphal valley-based Meiteis and adjoining hills-based Kuki-Zo groups since May 2023.

The Centre imposed President's Rule in Manipur on February 13 this year after Chief Minister N Biren Singh resigned.

The violence started after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe status.

Resignation only option before Justice Yashwant Varma to avoid impeachment by Parliament

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Resignation is the only option before Justice Yashwant Varma to avoid impeachment by Parliament as the Government pushes for bringing a motion to remove the Allahabad High Court (HC) judge over alleged corruption.

Officials aware of the procedure to appoint and remove Supreme Court (SC) and high court judges pointed out that while defending his case before lawmakers in any of the House, Justice Varma can announce that he is quitting and his verbal statement will be considered as his resignation.

Should he decide to resign, he will get pension and other benefits entitled to a retired HC judge.

But if he is removed by Parliament, he will be deprived of pension and other benefits, they noted.

According to Article 217 of the Constitution, a high court judge "may, by writing under his hand addressed to the President, resign his office."

A judge's resignation does not require any approval. A simple resignation letter is sufficient.

A judge may give a prospective date to step down. In such cases, the judge can withdraw the resignation before the date he or she has mentioned as the last day in office. Removal by Parliament is the other way a judge can vacate office.

Then Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna had written to the president and the Prime Minister to remove Justice Varma, mired in the cash discovery row.

Justice Khanna's report was based on the findings of a three-judge in house panel

which investigated the case.

Justice Khanna had prodded Varma to resign but he had refused, sources had earlier said. A motion could be brought in either of the two Houses of Parliament. In the Rajya Sabha, at least 50 members have to sign the motion. In Lok sabha, 100 members have to support it.

According to the Judges (Inquiry) Act of 1968, once a motion to remove a judge is admitted in any of the Houses, the speaker or the chairman, as the case may be, will constitute a three-member committee to investigate the grounds on which the removal (or, in popular term, impeachment) has been sought.

A motion could be brought in either of the two Houses of Parliament. In the Rajya Sabha, at least 50 members have to sign the motion. In Lok sabha, 100 members have to support it

The committee consists of the Chief Justice of India (CJI) or a Supreme Court judge, the chief justice of one of the 25 high courts and a "distinguished jurist".

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju had last week said the present case is "slightly different" as an in-house committee formed by then CJI Khanna has already submitted its report.

"So what is to be done in this matter, we will take a call," he said.

The minister said the process has to be followed, but how to "integrate the inquiry already conducted" needs to be decided.

"As per the rule, a committee has to be

constituted and then the committee has to submit a report and the report will be tabled in the House and discussions will start to impeach. Here, a committee has already been constituted, not by Parliament. But it cannot be brushed aside" as it was constituted by the CJI, he said.

Responding to questions that a committee has to be mandatorily formed under the Judges (Inquiry) Act, Rijiju said the speaker will take a decision in this regard.

He said reconciling the report of the in-house panel and the one under law is a "secondary matter". The primary objective is to bring the impeachment motion.

Monsoon session begins July 21 and ends August 12. A fire incident at Justice Varma's residence in the national capital in March, when he was a judge at the Delhi High Court, had led to the discovery of several burnt sacks of cash at the outhouse.

Though the judge claimed ignorance about the cash, the Supreme Court-appointed committee indicted him after speaking to a number of witnesses and recording his statement.

The apex court has since transferred him to his parent high court, the Allahabad High Court, where he has not been assigned any judicial work.

Supreme Court judge V Ramaswami and Calcutta HC judge Soumitra Sen had earlier faced impeachment proceedings but they resigned.

Justice Varma's removal proceedings will be taken up in the upcoming Monsoon session of Parliament. This will be the first ever impeachment proceeding to be taken up in the new Parliament building.

Congress targets PM over Manipur violence

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

With fresh violence rocking parts of Manipur, the Congress on Sunday targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his "insensitivity" to the suffering of people in the state.

In a social media post, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said the pain, distress, and agony of the people of Manipur continues unabated as five districts of Imphal West, Imphal East, Thoubal, Kaching, and Bishnupur in Manipur have been rocked by violence in the last 24 hours.

A day after violent protests erupted in Manipur over the arrest of a leader of Meitei outfit Arambai Tenggol, the situation remained tense on Sunday with the administration imposing prohibitory orders and suspending internet services in five Imphal valley districts, police said.

Prohibitory orders have been clamped in Imphal West, Imphal East, Thoubal, Bishnupur and Kakching districts, while internet and mobile data services, including VSAT and VPN facilities, have been suspended in these valley areas.

Hitting out at the Government, Ramesh claimed that in February 2022 the BJP "engineered a majority for itself alone" in the Assembly elections.

"But less than fifteen months later from the night of May 3, 2023 Manipur was made to burn. Hundreds of innocent men, women, and children were killed. Thousands were displaced. Places of worship were destroyed," he said.

On June 4, 2023, the Congress leader said the Union Government set up a three-member Commission of Inquiry. That Commission has been given repeated extensions to submit its report and the latest deadline given to it is November 20,



Charred remains of a bus used for transporting central forces, which was set on fire by a mob in Imphal East district, Manipur

PTI

2025, he noted. On August 1, 2023, Ramesh said the Supreme Court observed that there had been an "absolute breakdown of constitutional machinery" in the state for the past two months.

"The Union Home Minister went through the motions of visiting Manipur while the PM maintained absolute silence refusing to say anything and meet anybody from the state.

"Demands were made by the Indian National Congress for the imposition of President's Rule to begin with. That was ignored till the INC announced that it was bringing a no-confidence motion against the CM in the Assembly session beginning February 10, 2025. The BJP read the writing on the wall, got the CM to resign on the night of February 9, 2025 and finally imposed President's Rule on February 13, 2025," he said.

"President's Rule, however, has made no

difference," Ramesh said.

He claimed the Governor himself has been forced to travel from Imphal airport to his residence by helicopter. Law and order in many parts of the state remains in a state of peril, he added.

"When will the PM find the time and inclination to visit Manipur? His drum-beaters once claimed that he had stopped the war between Ukraine and Russia for a while. That claim, like most of his boasts, proved completely bogus.

"The PM has travelled to different parts of the world and visited numerous states of our country to do his trademark inaugurations. But he has never met with political leaders or civil society organisations from Manipur having outsourced the management of the state's affairs to the Union Home Minister who has failed miserably," the Congress general secretary alleged.

Canadian journalist alleges assault by pro-Khalistan activists

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Canadian independent investigative journalist has alleged that he was physically assaulted and threatened by a group of pro-Khalistan activists while reporting on a rally in Vancouver on Sunday. The journalist, Mocha Bezirgan, said he was targeted for his editorial independence and previous coverage of Khalistan-related protests.

The incident occurred while Bezirgan was in the city to cover a rally organised by pro-Khalistan supporters. He alleged that the attackers acted like "thugs" and deliberately targeted him.

"It just happened 2 hours ago and I am still shaking. I was surrounded by multiple Khalistanis who acted like thugs. They surrounded me, threatened me, and got physical with me, and they grabbed my

phone out of my hand," Bezirgan said, sharing the ordeal on social media.

The incident occurred while Bezirgan was in the city to cover a rally organised by pro-Khalistan supporters. He alleged that the attackers acted like "thugs" and deliberately targeted him

The journalist alleged that he was attacked by an individual who had been harassing him for a "long time online using dehumanising language".

"I have been covering Khalistan protests in Canada, UK, US, New Zealand. My only goal is to do independent journalism and record and report what's going on and

because I'm editorially independent, this frustrates some people," Bezirgan added. He further alleged that the pro-Khalistani groups want to "influence" and "buy" him.

"These intimidation tactics won't stop me or influence my editorial independence," Bezirgan asserted, sharing a video of the alleged incident, which shows a man confronting the journalist.

"He refused to keep his distance from my face and began making threats of violence if I were to touch him. I kept walking away from him but his harassing behaviour wouldn't stop... He continued following me around, mobilising others to interfere with my job, and kept appearing behind me despite being told to stay away from me," Bezirgan explained.

He said the alleged attacker had targeted him earlier as well, and that he had filed a police report at the time. He added that

he has filed another report today.

Sunday's incident comes amid a string of attacks on reporters covering the separatist movement. In October 2024, Canadian MP Chandra Arya warned Parliament of "growing violence faced by journalists who report on Khalistani extremism," citing assaults on broadcasters Rishi Nagar, Sameer Kaushal and others, and noting that Bezirgan himself had received death threats.

India has repeatedly raised concerns over Canada allegedly giving a free hand to Khalistani extremists and their supporters.

Bilateral relations between the two countries have hit a new low in recent times, largely due to Ottawa's perceived inaction on the issue and its accusations against New Delhi of targeting pro-Khalistani elements in Canada.

Jaishankar embarks on week-long visit to Europe

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Sunday embarked on a week-long visit to Europe to hold talks with leaders of France, the European Union and Belgium to boost bilateral ties and reaffirm India's policy of zero-tolerance against terrorism.

Jaishankar's visit to Europe comes a month after India launched Operation Sindoor in response to the dastardly Pahalgam terror attack and it is expected that he will apprise the European leaders about New Delhi's firm approach in dealing with cross-border terrorism.

In the first leg of his tour, Jaishankar will visit France, a country that has emerged as an all-weather friend of New Delhi. "The external affairs minister would travel to Paris and Marseille where he would be holding bilateral discussions with his counterpart minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean Noel Barrot," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

Jaishankar would also participate in the inaugural edition of the Mediterranean

Raisina Dialogue to be held in the city of Marseille.

In Brussels, Jaishankar will hold a strategic dialogue with the EU High Representative and Vice President Kaja Kallas. "India-European Union strategic partnership has strengthened over the years across diverse sectors and got a big boost with the first-ever visit of the EU College of Commissioners to India in February this year," the MEA said.

Jaishankar will engage also with the senior leadership from the European Commission and the European Parliament, besides interacting with think tank and media.

In the third and final leg of his visit, the external affairs minister will hold wide-ranging talks with leaders of Belgium. "India and Belgium share warm and friendly relations along with a very robust economic partnership. Today, the collaboration between the two countries spans various domains like trade and investment, green energy, technology, pharmaceutical, diamond sector and strong people-to-people ties," the MEA said.

Shubhanshu Shukla terms preparations for Axiom-4 mission as 'amazing journey'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Ahead of his historic journey to the International Space Station (ISS), Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla has termed the preparations for the Axiom-4 mission as an "amazing journey" and that he was extremely fortunate to be part of something that is "much larger than yourself".

The 39-year-old Indian Air Force pilot is all set to travel with three other crew members to the ISS onboard SpaceX's Dragon spacecraft, mounted on a Falcon 9 rocket, that will lift off from the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida on Tuesday at 5:52 pm IST.

Shukla, who goes by the nickname "Shux", will be the second Indian to travel to space, 41 years after his idol Rakesh Sharma undertook a spaceflight in 1984 onboard erstwhile Soviet Union's Soyuz spacecraft for an eight-day stay in orbit.

"It has been an amazing journey; these are the moments that really tell you that you are getting to be a part of something that is much larger than yourself. I can

only say how extremely fortunate I am to be a part of this," Lucknow-born Shukla said in a short video issued by Axiom Space ahead of Tuesday's launch.

Shukla's crewmates, commander Peggy Whitson and mission specialists Tibor Kapu from Hungary and Slawosz Uznanski-Wisniewski from Poland, describe him as "operational-savvy", "focussed" and "wicked smart" when it comes to space technologies.

It has been an amazing journey; these are the moments that really tell you that you are getting to be a part of something that is much larger than yourself

— SHUBHANSHU SHUKLA, ASTRONAUT

"Shux's wisdom, the knowledge he possesses, shows he could be 130 years old," said Kapu, the second Hungarian astronaut to travel to space since 1980.

"For me, having him as my pilot in the dragon capsule is great. He is already

operational-savvy, and he is just wicked smart when it comes to spacecraft technologies," said Whitson, a veteran US astronaut who has spent 675 days in space and undertaken 10 spacewalks.

Slawosz said Shukla is very focussed in his approach and quick to respond to situations.

"He is very focussed. He will go one, two, three, four in record time. I don't even know how he gets there so fast," the Polish astronaut said.

Shukla heaped high praise on his crewmates, describing them as a "fantastic" squad, saying they would be his "friends for life".

SpaceX's Falcon-9 rocket and the Dragon space capsule were rolled out to the launchpad 39A at the KSC in Florida on Saturday. The Axiom-4 (or Ax-4) crew checked on the spacecraft they will travel in to the ISS.

"Launch is targeted for 8:22 am ET, with a backup opportunity available on Wednesday, June 11 at 8:00 am ET," SpaceX announced in an update about the mission.

ICG inaugurates dedicated jetty at Vizhinjam Harbour

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Indian Coast Guard (ICG) Director General (DG) Paramesh Sivamani, inaugurated a new dedicated ICG jetty at Vizhinjam Harbour, Kerala on Saturday, defence ministry said here on Sunday. The 76.7-metre state-of-the-art berth will support faster deployment and turnaround of ICG vessels, enhancing mission readiness for coastal surveillance, search and rescue, anti-smuggling and fisheries protection.

Strategically located just 10 nautical miles from key international shipping lanes and adjacent to the Vizhinjam International Transshipment Deepwater Port, the jetty is expected to play a critical role in securing India's southwestern coastline. Sivamani highlighted the strategic importance of the new facility, calling it a major step forward in strengthening the coastal security architecture and ensuring faster response capabilities in the region.

GMCH doctor would not be suspended after all: Goa CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Panaji

Amid backlash from the medical fraternity and opposition parties, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Sunday said that the chief medical officer of the Government medical college and hospital, who was accused of misbehaving with patients, will not be suspended.

Earlier on Saturday, Health Minister Vishwajit Rane defended his decision to order suspension of Dr Rudresh Kuttikar, the chief medical officer of Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMCH), citing the latter's "arrogant behaviour" towards a fair trial.

The Goa branch of the Indian Medical Association (IMA) condemned the minister's action and urged the authorities to immediately rescind the suspension and reinstate the doctor while ensuring a fair trial.

The opposition parties, including the Congress, Aam Aadmi Party and Revolutionary Goans Party, had condemned Rane's behaviour.

Government sources told PTI that the chief minister invited Rane for a meeting on the issue in Panaji on Sunday and after the meeting, a statement was issued that the doctor would not be suspended pending a fair inquiry.

Taking to X, Chief Minister Sawant said, "I have reviewed the issue at the Goa Medical College and held discussions with the health minister. I want to assure the people of Goa that Dr Rudresh Kuttikar will not be suspended." He said the state government and its dedicated medical team remain fully committed to ensuring the highest standards of health-care for every citizen. "We also appreciate the tireless efforts and invaluable service of our doctors, who continue to save lives," Sawant added.

The health minister on Saturday said he will not apologise for standing up for a patient who was denied care.

Rane said he took the action after receiving a complaint from a senior journalist that the doctor in the casualty ward of the GMCH had mistreated his mother-in-law.

The GMCH at Bambolim is a state-run



Goa Health Minister Vishwajit Rane speaks to a doctor during a visit to Goa Medical College and Hospital on Saturday

hospital with more than 1,000 beds. It provides medical services to patients from Goa as well as from nearby areas of Maharashtra and Karnataka. Dr Rudresh Kuttikar was fired in public view and later ordered to be suspended by Rane after he "lost his cool" during his surprise visit to the hospital on Saturday.

Talking to reporters on Saturday evening, Rane said, "Yes, as the health minister, I did intervene, and I accept that my tone and words could have been more measured. I am not above reflection or criticism. I take full responsibility for how I communicated, and I assure you that such an approach will not be repeated."

"However, what I will not apologise for is standing up for a patient who was denied care," the minister said. Doctors hold a noble position in society, and most of them at the GMCH serve with great dedication, he noted.

"But when arrogance seeps into duty and compassion is replaced with indifference, it is my responsibility to take action," Rane said. The minister was reacting to criticism he faced on social media and from the IMA for firing the CMO on duty.

"Over the last few hours, a lot has been said and written about an incident at the Goa Medical College today and the sus-

pension of a doctor on duty. I feel it is important to address this directly, not just as your health minister, but as someone deeply committed to ensuring that no citizen is ever denied basic medical care, especially the elderly who deserve our utmost respect and attention," he said.

Rane said he had received a message from a family member of a senior citizen, who was already in pain and advised to receive daily injections, about how she was refused the same at the medical college's casualty ward on a public holiday.

"What made the matter worse was that the casualty (ward) had minimal patient load at the time, and yet, a simple act of compassion and care was withheld. I found this deeply upsetting," he said.

Rane said that often, the outrage is highlighted on some media platforms and by the public when things go wrong at the GMCH.

But when corrective action is taken, it is equally important that "we support efforts to fix the system, not tear them down," he commented. The minister said what he did was in defence of a helpless, elderly woman.

"And I will continue to speak up, act and fight for the rights of every patient who walks into our hospital," he asserted.

BJP hits back as TMC leader Hakim frowns at PM over Sindoor credit

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ Kolkata

War of words erupted between the Trinamool Congress and the BJP hours after Bengal minister and senior TMC leader Firhad Hakim attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for "claiming credit" for the success of Operation Sindoor against Pakistan.

"Firhad Hakim is the same TMC leader who claimed himself to be the resident of 'mini Pakistan' and now he has the audacity of insulting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, my question is whether Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee too thinks the same way, if not whether she will take action against him," State BJP leader Sajal Ghosh said adding, "no one denies the bravery and valour of the Indian Army, but no one also denies the fact that during earlier occasions the hands of the Army was always tied up, it is Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji who

released the defense forces from those shackles." Hakim had on Saturday attacked the Prime Minister for his Kashmir speech where he warned Pakistan of consequences like the one it faced last month for its terror misadventures in India.

Hakim promptly reacting to Modi's speech wondered how the Prime Minister could take credit of the success that the Indian Army brought for India.

"It is very strange seeing Prime Minister Modi taking credit for the success of the Indian Army, it is the Indian Army that brought us victory, it is the Indian Army that taught Pakistan the lesson of its lifetime and not Mr Modi who is claiming the success, How can he take credit for Operation Sindoor?"

The BJP hit back quickly writing on a post "Firhad Hakim — Mamata's loudest mouthpiece and the same man who once called parts of Kolkata "mini

Pakistan" — has now crossed every line. He downplayed Operation Sindoor, insulted PM Modi, this isn't political opposition — this is verbal treason. And Mamata Banerjee? Silent..."

Hakim promptly reacting to Modi's speech wondered how the Prime Minister could take credit of the success that the Indian Army brought for India

State BJP president Sukanto Majumdar too attacked the Hakim saying, he "has never taken a stance against Pakistan. During the UPA time, when his boss the Chief Minister was one of its constituents no such steps were taken against Pakistan. That is why Hakim and people like him now finding the actions taken by Prime Minister Modi tough to digest."

AI to guard Aravalli forests from wildfires

PARVESH SHARMA ■ Gurugram

In a significant move to protect the ecologically sensitive Aravalli forests, the Forest Department is now turning to artificial intelligence (AI) for fire detection and prevention. The Forest Survey of India (FSI) will deploy satellite-based remote sensing and Geographic Information System (GIS) equipment to monitor the region in real-time," officials said.

According to officials, the new AI-powered system will detect fire incidents occurring over areas as small as ten meters within the Aravalli forests. Once smoke or fire is detected, an alert — including a photo and the exact location — will be instantly sent to both the forest and fire departments, enabling a rapid response. This initiative comes in the wake of six fire incidents reported in the Aravalli range during April and

May. Several of these fires broke out near the Bandhwari landfill site, as well as in the hills of Naurangpur and Shikohpur villages in the Manesar region. Until now, the forest department relied on manual patrolling and information from local residents to track fire incidents.

However, by the time such reports reached the authorities, fires often grew uncontrollable, causing considerable damage to vegetation and endangering wildlife. The FSI, which has already implemented similar technology in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, is now expanding its monitoring to the Aravalli belt. The integration of AI is expected to significantly improve response times, reduce forest damage and help protect animal habitats. Forest officials have confirmed that staff has already been deployed for ground-level monitoring.

R Ashoka seeks special session over Bengaluru stampede tragedy



Leader of Opposition of Karnataka Legislative Assembly

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Bengaluru

Leader of Opposition in Karnataka Assembly R Ashoka on Sunday demanded that the Government call a special session of the state legislature for three days, to discuss the June 4 stampede that killed 11 people, as he pointed out that people are seeking answers.

The BJP leader, who reiterating the demand for resignation of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM DK Shivakumar, also announced that all his

party legislators will contribute a month's salary to the kin of those deceased, who are in need, while urging the government to enhance the compensation to ₹1 crore if it is not bankrupt.

The stampede occurred on June 4 evening in front of the Chinnaswamy stadium here, where a large number of people thronged to participate in the RCB team's IPL victory celebrations. Eleven people died and 56 were injured in the incident. "People of the state are raising questions, who was at fault? So call a special session of the legislature, let there be

a discussion as to who was at fault, all the violations or flouting of laws need to be discussed, whether it was by police permission, DAPR, all of this should be discussed," Ashoka said.

Speaking to reporters here, he said, let there also be discussion regarding providing compensation and all about the three inquiries that have been ordered — magisterial enquiry (to be done by Deputy Commissioner), CID probe and one-man inquiry commission under retired High Court judge John Michael D'Cunha.

"All inquiries are being given to Cunha, he is permanent, we had sought for an inquiry headed by a sitting judge of the High Court, we will continue to demand for it. Three days special session has to be called immediately. Leader of Opposition in Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy and I will write a letter in this regard to the Assembly Speaker, Council Chairman and Chief Minister," he added.

Pointing out that the Government has announced compensation of ₹25 lakh to the kin of the deceased after criticism, Ashoka said, his party demands for compensation of ₹1 crore each, if the government is not bankrupt.

A team of BJP leaders will visit the families of the deceased and try to console them, he added. Citing DCP Vidhana Soudha letter to the Secretary to the gov-

ernment on June 4, Ashoka hitout at the Siddaramaiah administration, and said, the Government did not consider what the police had said, and disregarded the conditions laid out by them to organise the victory celebrations.

The DCP's letter clearly states as the celebration event is being organised on the grand stairs of the Vidhana Soudha in a "hurry", he said, it warns that lakhs of people may gather, about shortage of security staff, and that there will be problem in providing bandobast. The officer further stated that still if the event has to be held, the issuing of online or offline passes for visitors to Vidhana Soudha should be completely stopped. Also, as there are chances of the secretariat staff getting their family members for the event, an order should be issued aimed at ensuring that this doesn't happen. It also seeks a holiday to be declared for secretariat staff to ensure that they too don't come, Ashoka pointed out.

"The letter also calls for installation of more CCTV cameras in the vicinity of Vidhana Soudha and nearby places in view of the large gathering expected and highlights the need for an anti-drone system," he said and alleged that Government thrown all these conditions into the "dustbin" and organised the event. Also conditions laid down by the PWD depart-

ment that only 25-30 guests would be allowed on the dias was also completely violated, Ashoka said, "when the rules were flouted on the dias at Vidhana Soudha event, do you expect rules to be followed by the people at the KSCA stadium event, as you have blamed over crowding for the tragedy?"

"You people (in the Government) took the lives of innocent people, but police officers and the police commissioner were suspended," he chided.

The victory cup was won by Virat Kohli and RCB team but the CM and Deputy CM tried to gain credit from it by organising victory celebrations at haste, Ashoka alleged and said, "if there was no friction between these two power centres, such a situation and deaths wouldn't have happened. Because of friction between these two we have seen the deaths."

"Instead of attending to the situation with deaths happening and consoling the families of the deceased, while one went to the stadium to attend the victory celebrations there and kissed the trophy won by the RCB, the other had gone to eat Dosa," he alleged indirectly referring to Deputy CM and CM. He slammed them for going on with celebrations both at Vidhana Soudha and the stadium thereafter, despite deaths due to stampede and called them "inhuman".

Vijay Shah to share stage with MP CM after long absence

GIRISH SHARMA ■ Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Cabinet Minister Vijay Shah, who has been absent from public appearances and key official functions for an extended period, is scheduled to share the stage with Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav on Monday, during an event organised by the Tribal Affairs Department.

The event, scheduled in Beohari, Shahdol district, marks the death anniversary of Birs Munda.

This public appearance comes amidst ongoing controversy surrounding Shah's controversial remarks about an Indian Army Colonel and his extended absence from key cabinet meetings.

Shah, who holds the important portfolios of Tribal Affairs, and Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation, has been notably absent from several significant government events.

His absence from three consecutive cabinet meetings has sparked growing questions about his role and involvement in the state government.

The most recent of these absences was on June 3, 2025, when Shah missed a crucial cabinet meeting in Pachmarhi, which marked his third consecutive non-attendance.

This followed his absence from the special cabinet meeting held in Indore on May 20, 2025, which commemorated the 300th birth anniversary of Queen

Ahilyabai Holkar.

At that event, Shah was notably missing from the official group photograph, which raised eyebrows among political observers.

Sources suggest that Shah's absence from these meetings has not been accidental. Reports indicate that he was deliberately excluded from receiving the cabinet agenda before the sessions, signalling a deliberate move by the party leadership to sideline him amidst the ongoing scrutiny surrounding his controversial comments.

Since the remarks made by Shah on May 12, which referred to an Indian Army Colonel in an insensitive manner, the minister has kept a notably low profile, avoiding media interactions and maintaining minimal public engagements.

His absence from party gatherings and interactions with fellow ministers has further fueled speculation about his political isolation.

While the opposition has seized on this issue, with Congress leaders even putting up 'missing' posters and offering a reward for information on his whereabouts, the state BJP has downplayed the situation. BJP state president VD Sharma attributed Shah's absence to "personal reasons" and emphasized that the matter regarding his controversial comment is currently under investigation, with a Supreme Court-mandated Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe in progress.

Training of village defence guards intensified

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ Jammu

In a strategic move to enhance grass-roots-level security and counter cross-border threats, the Indian Army and Border Security Force (BSF) have intensified their efforts to train Village Defence Guards (VDGs) in the Jammu region.

The VDG training is part of a multi-pronged strategy to secure Jammu and Kashmir, especially ahead of the 2025 Amarnath Yatra starting from July 3, which is set to be the "most heavily guarded" with the deployment of 42,000 paramilitary troops.

The initiative, aimed at empowering local civilians to act as a "second line of defence," involves comprehensive arms training and weapon-handling programs across border villages, particularly in response to the prevailing security scenario in the region.

The intensified training comes in the wake of heightened tensions along the India-Pakistan border, particularly following Operation Sindoor, launched on May 7, 2025, in response to a terrorist attack in Pahalgam that killed 26 civilians.

In the last 10 days, around one dozen training sessions have been organised in the border areas of the Jammu region.

The training programs were organised in the border areas of Samba, Kathua, RS Pura, Arnia, Akhnour, Sunderbani, Rajouri and a few other border tehsils, focusing on equipping VDGs with skills in weapon handling, situational awareness, and security threat response.

According to a senior BSF official, the



initiative follows the success of Operation Sindoor, which dealt a significant blow to Pakistan's terror infrastructure, prompting renewed efforts to fortify border security through community involvement.

"The VDGs are already playing a crucial role in combating terrorism in the hinterlands of Jammu province. Strengthening their presence on the border will help security forces maintain more effective control over suspect activities," the official stated.

On May 29, 2025, a three-day training program commenced in Samba's border villages, including Galar, Chak Faqira,

Khanpur, and Suchetpur, led by BSF personnel. The training included live firing practice, tactical maneuvers and security response drills, designed to prepare VDGs to support regular forces in high-risk areas.

Similarly, on June 4, 2025, the Indian Army conducted a training session for 100 VDGs at the Police firing range in Sunjuwan, Jammu, focusing on building operational confidence and fostering partnership between the Army and local communities.

The VDG initiative, revived in 2022 after a two-decade hiatus due to a resur-

gence of terrorist activities in the region, has gained momentum in 2025.

The Indian Army and Jammu and Kashmir Police have been working in tandem to arm and train civilians in vulnerable border areas, particularly in districts like Rajouri, Poonch, and Kishtwar.

After the attack on civilians in the Dhangri area of Rajouri on January 1, 2023, the Jammu and Kashmir Police have provided semi-automatic weapons to VDGs for self-defence, while the recent involvement of the BSF has introduced training with modern weaponry to counter sophisticated threats.

Lieutenant Colonel Suneel Bartwal, a spokesperson of the Ministry of Defence in Jammu, emphasised the importance of the program: "The aim is to prepare these volunteers to act as a reliable support system for our regular forces, especially in sensitive and high-risk areas. This training not only builds operational confidence among the VDGs but also helps foster a deeper sense of partnership between the Army and local communities."

The training programs have been met with enthusiasm from local communities, who see the VDGs as vital to their safety in a region plagued by cross-border violence. Residents of border villages, often the first to face the brunt of shelling and infiltration attempts, have expressed gratitude for the Army and BSF's efforts.

However, challenges remain, including the need for sustained coordination between VDGs and security forces and ensuring the safety of civilian volunteers in high-risk operations.

Editor's TAKE

A political bromance turned bitter feud

Once a formidable force reshaping US, Donald Trump and Elon Musk are now locked in a fierce war of words

In a turn of events as dramatic as their rise to influence, US President Donald Trump and billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk have severed ties, transforming from strategic allies to fierce public adversaries. What began as a mutually beneficial relationship built on shared interests in deregulation, Government efficiency, and anti-establishment rhetoric has now devolved into a bitter feud, rife with personal attacks, policy clashes, and political threats that may shape the course of the 2026 midterm elections.

The alliance once seemed improbable — Trump, a brash political force with a loyal base, and Musk, the visionary tech magnate behind Tesla, SpaceX, and social media platform X (formerly Twitter), came from different worlds but found common ground. Trump admired Musk's entrepreneurial genius and boldness; Musk appreciated the former president's deregulatory stance and willingness to upend bureaucratic norms. The collaboration reached its peak when Musk was handed leadership of the Department of Government Efficiency, where he led aggressive cost-cutting reforms and reshaped federal spending frameworks.

Under Trump, Musk's ventures thrived with major Government contracts and minimal interference. But the fragile bond began to crack when Musk publicly denounced a major new fiscal bill championed by Trump and Republican lawmakers. Dubbed the "big beautiful bill," it promised sweeping tax cuts and spending reductions but also carried the risk of ballooning the national deficit and stripping health insurance from millions. Musk slammed it as a "disgusting abomination," warning it would increase fiscal instability. His criticism struck a nerve in the White House.

Musk escalated tensions by suggesting Trump should be impeached. Trump responded with threats, hinting at cutting Musk's federal contracts and warning of undefined "consequences" should Musk choose to support Democratic candidates in the upcoming elections. The President's warnings carried weight — Musk's companies rely heavily on federal partnerships, particularly in aerospace and defense.

For Musk, the breakup comes with significant consequences. Musk's criticism of the Trump administration could jeopardise future Government contracts and expose his businesses to political retaliation. On the other hand, his apparent openness to backing Democrats marks a significant departure from recent years, where his alignment with conservative causes and voices had grown stronger. For Trump, the loss of Musk's endorsement may alienate segments of the tech-savvy rightwingers. Yet it also gives him ammunition to portray himself as a populist leader unafraid to challenge. This breakup is more than a personal spat; it is a reflection of deeper tensions between Government power and private influence. As their relationship crumbles, the political and economic reverberations are likely to be felt far beyond Washington DC, shaping alliances, elections, and policy for years to come.

Maithili cuisine: A one of its kind

Spread across parts of Bihar, Jharkhand, and southern Nepal, Maithili culinary tradition is not merely about food — it is a living chronicle of Mithila's history, devotion, Ayurveda and deep ecological harmony

An inalienable part of the robust culinary offerings from Bihar is the Maithili or Mithila cuisine. It spans across parts of Bihar, Jharkhand (Part of Bihar till 2000) and the Koshi, Bagmati and Madhesh provinces of Nepal. Mithila first gained prominence after being settled by Indo-Aryan people who established the Videha kingdom. During the Later Vedic period (c. 1100-500 BCE), Videha became one of the major political and cultural centres of Ancient India, along with Kuru and Panchala. The kings of the Videha Kingdom were called Janakas and the Videha Kingdom was incorporated into the Vajjika League, which had its capital in the city of Vaishali and is also in Mithila. Mithila is one of the most significant pilgrimage sites in Jainism and is associated with Mahavira, the 24th Tirthankara. Lord Buddha also visited this region and during his visit, he is recorded to have preached the Makhadeva and Brahmayu suttas, which are part of the Pali canon.

The region's legacy therefore is unparalleled, and it extends to the culinary sphere as well. In the 14th century, the Maithili book titled Varnaratnakara discussed Maithili cuisine and mentioned the importance of yoghurt (dahi), fish (machha), and various other elements. This historical reference suggests that Maithili cuisine has remained relatively unchanged for many centuries. Maithili cuisine isn't just about tradition, it also follows Ayurvedic principles and adapts to seasonal food cycles. Special dishes are prepared during Maithili festivals like Juddhashtami, Dashahara, Tila Sankranti, and the Chhath Puja.

Local produce is the fundamental and star element of the cuisine, there is also the incorporation of meticulous techniques, leading to dishes known for their simplicity as well as sophistication which resonate with the rich cultural history of the area. Did I mention the simplicity of dishes? There is also an element of grandeur that is associated with the food of this region — the 'Chhappan Bhog'! a feast in honour of people, usually, revered guests, friends, and family. This has its beginnings in being offered to Lord Krishna in gratitude, a total of 56 dishes offered to him by the Brijwasis, representing eight meals for each of the seven days he shielded the people of Vrindavan from Lord Indra's wrath. Chhappan Bhog represents a harmonious blend of six tastes: bitter (karwa), spicy (teekha), astringent (kasaila), sour (khatta), salty (namkeen), and sweet (meetha). By skillfully combining these tastes in various ways, 56 distinct and delectable dishes are made and include Parwal Tarua — Parwal, also known as pointed gourd is sliced into two halves lengthwise, coated in a thick batter, and deep-fried, Kadima Tarua



— Kadima refers to the fresh leaves of the pumpkin in Maithili, after washing the fresh leaves of Kadima, it needs to be folded like a triangle, the leaves are then heated on a low flame and coated in a batter giving it a crunchiness exterior and a soft interior. The list goes on to include dishes made from potato, cauliflower, sesame, flaxseeds, Colocasia leaves (Kachu ke Patte), Chana Daal (Ninwa/Ghewre ki Sabzi), Drumsticks (Sahjan ki Sabzi), and Biriya — a special recipe from the Mithila region of Bihar made by drying chickpea greens and coating them in flour and used in a spicy potato and mustard gravy. It is known for its aroma, texture and slight bitterness, all of which are standout features of the dish.



ANIL RAJPUT

makhaan swarne seho nahin bhatet, which translates to "Fish, betel leaves, and makhana (fox nuts) are not found even in heaven." This saying implies that these items are so highly regarded in Maithili culture that they are considered even more precious than heavenly delights. In Maithili culture, fish is typically not brought in from outside, it is sourced from

local ponds and lakes. Even vegetables and ingredients for making pickles and papads are usually grown in the region itself, often in home gardens. The emphasis on using locally sourced ingredients adds to the uniqueness of Maithili cuisine.

The seasonal focus of the cuisine is reflected through dishes like Bagiya, which celebrates the new rice harvest. Typically enjoyed around November or December, it is made from freshly harvested rice flour stuffed with lentils or vegetables, jaggery and steamed. It is filled with sweet or savoury ingredients making it a powerhouse of flavour. Tilauri, a kind of cracker made from a batter of rice flour, sesame seeds and jaggery or salt, post this it is made in round shapes and dried in the sun — the dried Tilauri is then deep-fried in oil and eaten — this can be both sweet or savoury depending on the ingredients used. Bidhiya is made by drying green leaves like mustard greens (tori), lamb's quarters (beta), or pea leaves (mattar), these leaves are mixed with black lentil batter before being dried — this dish showcases Mithila's resourcefulness in preserving seasonal produce. Kumhrauri is made by drying Ash Gourd and later used in different curries and dishes, and is made to preserve the excess production in the harvest season for other dry seasons. Tarua dish uses different vegetables, dipped in a batter of blended soaked rice and various spices are added to the batter. It is one of the major dishes in Mithila culture which is mandatorily pre-

pared for every festival and occasion.

The variety of the Maithili cuisine is augmented through its sweet dishes like Thakua which holds huge cultural and religious significance. It is also known as Thekuwa or Thokni and is a traditional Indo-Nepali cookie. It is an important item especially during the Chhath festival season — offered as a sacred gift to Lord Surya and Chhathi Maya on the third day of the festival. Another famous recipe is Anarsa — made from rice flour, soaked in sugar syrup, and deep-fried to perfection. The region's culinary story is incomplete without mentioning the Makhana kheer — a sweet rice pudding made with lotus seeds (makhana), milk, and dried nuts, and Kasar, a traditional dish, particularly associated with the Chhath Puja festival — it's dry and prepared with rice flour, jaggery, ghee, and sometimes fennel seeds and dry fruits.

The Maithili cuisine is without doubt a celebration on a plate, it's a burst of flavour that is unmatched and unique. It is reflective of the top-class culinary prowess of the region, and an ode to an unaltered culinary journey through the ages. I firmly believe that the youth and future generation need to discover its full range of variety, nutrition and an environmentally harmonious approach — only then will they understand its true value and grand stature!

(The writer is the Secretary of the Cuisine India Society. Views expressed are personal)

PICTALK



Carpenter gives final shape to the wheel for the chariot of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra ahead of the Rath Yatra festival, in Puri. PTI

Understanding Karma, and divine control through Gita

SECOND Opinion

We are aware of what autopilot is. It is a system that automatically controls a vehicle's path, allowing it to operate with minimal or no human intervention. Why am I using it for us human beings? Believed or not, our material bodies are vehicles, as described in the Bhagavad-Geeta by Lord Krishna in verse # 18.61. He states, "God, present as a part, in the vehicle (our body), resides in the hearts of all beings." Before I go any further, let me give you the Big Picture. There is God on top, as we can imagine. Then, there is the Divine Authority, which works under the superintendence of God. They oversee the working of the material nature, which gives birth to the world along with moving and stationary things. And on account of this, the world cycle goes on. (9.10) Then, there are all living beings with souls, which are parts of God. (15.7) And, of course, there are trees, plants, etc. This entire setup is under the control of God, who is the Controller.

Now returning to the topic, how are we on autopilot? For us to understand this, we must know the 'Karmaphala Principle' and the personal nature. The first one is simple: "What you sow is what you reap." For example, one thinks of starting a business. If the thought is a serious one, he will one day get started on it. Similarly, someone is working as a menial labourer. He gets paid for it. The third

example is of words. Teachers are the best examples of it. They get salaries for the effort made. Personal nature is a little more complex matter. For this, an understanding of the three 'gunas' (modes) is important. Whatever we see is made up of the three gunas, which are goodness, passion and darkness.

These are the basic ingredients of the Creation. Surely, our natures also consist of goodness, passion and darkness in various proportions. A good person will have a higher percentage of the 'sattvaguna' (the mode of goodness) and a small per cent of the 'tamoguna' (the mode of darkness). Similarly, a bad person will have just the opposite proportions, i.e. more tamoguna and less sattvaguna. 'Rajoguna' (the mode of passion) constitutes the majority percentage in nature of a common man. Then, how are our natures formed? Life after life, we associate with the three gunas, and that gets embedded in our natures. And when a person dies, the impression is carried to the next body. For example, a good man associates with objects in goodness. He eats foods, which are wholesome and nutritious. He sees programmes, which have natural scenes and even spiritual content. He hears mostly what is instructive. Contrarily, people, who are greedy, lusty, angry or hateful, engage in acts related to these hellish emotions. Lord Krishna warns, "Lust, anger and



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

greed are the three different doors to hell, which cause ruination of the soul. Therefore, one should give up these three. (16.21) Lord Krishna is very stern about hate. The Lord states, "I send those envious, harmful, cruel and low-grade people

to the world again and again, and that too in demonic species." (16.19)

Now I come to how we are on autopilot. It should be clear to us that karmaphalas generated by pious and impious acts will manifest in our present lives or future ones. There is no escape from it. Even God does not interfere in it.

What God does do in the case of a person in God's consciousness? Lord Krishna states, "Having My consciousness, you will cross all impediments by My grace." (18.58) The rest of us will have to face and tolerate the consequences. There is no escape, which is what autopilot is. We are programmed that way. The other feature of autopilot in our lives is much more serious. Our natures are continuously evolving as a result of what we do or associate with. For example, a person is naturally lusty. He will get attracted to objects of lust automatically. He can stop himself using the free will given to him, but few can do so. One needs God's help to undo what the present nature ordains. So what have we learnt? That we are on autopilot helplessly. Our karmaphalas will determine what happens to us. What we do today will largely determine what we will get in our future and subsequent lives. Our present efforts will have some effect, but not of any great significance. Are we stuck? Not really. God is the Controller. As explained earlier, God can change things. He can help tackle our bad karmaphalas, as well as help us in changing our faulty natures. You will be surprised by the outcome. We would no longer be on autopilot but in good control over our lives.

(The author is a spiritual coach. Views expressed are personal)

Letters to the Editor

Indian workers face harrassment

Labour laws are being violated in Kuwait and many other countries of the world and Indian workers are facing harassment from their employees. Many people migrate in the hope of a better life, but are asked to surrender in front of the powerful authorities there. Companies manipulate labour laws in their favour.

They file fake 'absconding' cases against those who raise their voice against violations of labour laws. They ask the employees to vacate their company flats without giving him/her his/her 'end of service' letter and passport.

The Indian Embassy must intervene and investigate the matter to safeguard the workers' rights. They must also ensure that labour laws are not violated and no person has to go to jail over false allegations. In light of growing reports of Indian workers facing exploitation and false charges abroad, particularly in Kuwait, urgent action is needed.

Many migrate seeking dignity and opportunity but are instead subjected to abuse, illegal evictions, and denial of rightful documents. Companies misuse labour laws to silence dissent.

The Indian Embassy must step in decisively, investigate such cases, and ensure that no worker is left helpless or wrongfully criminalised in a foreign land. Justice and dignity must prevail.

JUBEL D'CRUZ | MUMBAI

Donald Trump Elon Musk part ways

Donald Trump and Elon Musk's friendship is well-known. One is a powerful politician and the other is the richest person. However, differences have started between the two. It is turning into a war of words. US President Donald Trump has announced a reduction in contracts with Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk's companies. Musk has threatened to stop the service of the "Dragon Capsule", which is used to transport astronauts and other materials to the International Space Station, on social media. After the failure of the US Government's Boeing Company's Starliner spacecraft, Indian-origin astronaut Sunita Williams was safely returned to Earth by the Dragon Capsule. Also, NASA has taken help from SpaceX in many military missions.

Elon Musk's Government Efficiency Account (DOSE) was created primarily to reduce Government spending. Musk believes that Trump's policy undermines the original purpose of this account. He described Trump's bill as "disgusting." Trump initially took a tough stance on imposing import tariffs on China. Musk's Tesla company was to directly benefit from it. Because Chinese electric cars have eroded Tesla's position in other major markets. After all, Elon Musk helped Trump in the election with a business perspective or goal in mind. But Trump's new bill will be a problem for Musk's Tesla company.

DATTAPRASAD SHIRODKAR | MUMBAI

Water ATM's in Delhi

The report "Government to install water ATMs across schools and public spaces" (June 7) reveals the Delhi Government's keen interest in safeguarding the interest of the students and increasing the facilities in the schools. The proposal to provide pure cold water along with language laboratories and digital libraries is indeed a welcome step. It will be a great encouragement for the children who struggle a lot in reaching the school, carrying a heavy load of books, study materials and water-bottles. Free Laptops to meritorious students will definitely motivate the students to fare better in studies.

Since most schools have no adequate space and facility for boarding and debarking of students and are located on the edge of the main roads, it often creates problems and chaos, apart from persistent traffic — snarls and even accidents in the vicinity. Though it is mandatory for the management of every school to arrange necessary space and convenience in the compound itself, this rule is not adhered to rigidly. Moreover, the to and fro travel of students between schools and homes, mostly in hired vehicles, packed like sardines, in highly precarious condition, often causes mishaps. Hence remedial steps have to be taken on priority basis to ensure adequate space and convenience within the school precincts.

TT SAKARIA | DELHI

INCREASING WORKING HOURS IS COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE

The news that the Andhra Pradesh Government increasing the daily working hours to 10 hours (7-6-25) shocks one and all. The ruling dispensation takes pride in implementing drastic changes in the name of Reforms, however anti people they are. Even the previous tenures of the present Chief Minister are marked by pro management and anti workers decisions. Now increasing the cap on daily working hours to 10 hours, increasing the overtime in a quarter from 75 to 144 hours and allowing women to take up night shifts are being justified by the concerned minister as acts to allure investors and empower women by enabling them to earn more. Both the claims are absurd.

No doubt, labour is the most flexible and vulnerable component that could be exploited more easily to maximise profit. But experts say any amount of work done for more than 8 hours a day will have

diminishing marginal productivity, besides its serious negative impacts on physical and mental health and social behavior. Investors have never claimed working hours as a disturbing factor for not investing in the State. The minister says ensuring safety in the workplace as a condition to allow women in the night shift. It may remain only in the statutory books as the Government that allures the investors cannot be expected to be strict in enforcing rules.

The Government's apathy towards the wealth creating toiling section could be easily understood from the fact that even the Wage Board is not formed and the Minimum wage of the scheduled employees are not upwardly revised since more than a decade. It would be a wise act on the part of the Government to consult the workers' Unions before taking up such measures which are likely to have far reaching impact on workers.

AG RAJMOHAN | ANANTPUR

How climate change is pushing agriculture to the brink

The rainfall has grown erratic, endangering the livelihoods of millions. From delayed rains and failed crops to groundwater depletion and glacial melt, a cascading crisis is unfolding — one that not only threatens food securitybut also fuels rural distress, mass migration and growing unrest

FIRST Column

Agriculture in India remains deeply intertwined with the monsoon, which accounts for nearly 70 per cent of the country's annual rainfall and supports over half of its cultivated land. However, rising global temperatures have made the monsoon increasingly unpredictable. Early or delayed onsets are now common, while rainfall patterns have grown more volatile, with some regions experiencing intense downpours while others endure prolonged dry spells.

In states such as Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and eastern Uttar Pradesh — where agriculture heavily depends on the monsoon rains — farmers are struggling to cope with these shifting climatic patterns. Smallholder farmers, who typically cultivate less than two hectares and constitute the majority of the agricultural workforce, often lack access to adequate irrigation, storage facilities, and financial support. Consequently, even slight disruptions in rainfall timing or unexpected droughts during critical crop phases can lead to significant yield losses, pushing already vulnerable households deeper into debt.

With monsoon rains becoming less reliable, farmers are increasingly turning to groundwater to keep their crops alive. Borewells and tube wells have become essential lifelines during prolonged dry spells. However, this fallback is fast becoming a crisis of its own. Unregulated and widespread extraction of groundwater is rapidly depleting aquifers, especially in regions already under significant water stress. According to the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), over 1,000 of the 6,607 assessed groundwater blocks across the country have been classified as "overexploited." The situation is particularly severe in the northwestern, western, and southern peninsular regions of the country. In states like Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh, decades of intensive agriculture — especially the cultivation of water-intensive crops such as wheat and paddy — have severely strained groundwater reserves. According to CGWB 2023 data, 87 per cent of Punjab's 153 assessed blocks are classified as overexploited, critical, or semi-critical, leaving only 13 per cent in the 'safe' category. Haryana fares no better, with more than 75.5 per cent of its groundwater blocks deemed unsafe for continued extraction. This unsustainable pattern of groundwater use is driven by a mix of poorly designed policy incentives, unreliable surface water availability, and weak regulatory oversight. Subsidies for electricity used in groundwater pumping and procurement policies that favour water-guzzling crops have inadvertently encouraged overuse.

The growing water crisis in India is made even



worse by changes taking place at higher altitudes, particularly in the Hindu Kush Himalaya region. The region has seen average temperatures rise by +0.28°C per decade since 1951, with some river basins warming at an even faster rate. As a result, glacial melt has accelerated significantly. Scientific assessments indicate that the rate of glacier mass loss has increased by 65 per cent in the past decade, with average losses rising from — 0.17 metres of water equivalent per year between 2000 and 2009 to — 0.28 metres per year between 2010 and 2019.

The rapid retreat of glaciers poses serious risks to downstream water availability, especially for key glacier-fed rivers such as the Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Indus. These rivers are vital lifelines, supporting millions across northern India by providing water for irrigation, drinking, and hydroelectric power. Historically, meltwater from these glaciers played a crucial role in sustaining river flows and replenishing groundwater supplies. However, the accelerated glacial melt and resulting drop in river discharge, especially during dry seasons, are slowing groundwater recharge. This poses a severe challenge to farmers who depend heavily on both groundwater and river water to sustain their crops. Reduced river flows are also undermining canal irrigation systems and hydropower generation, both of which are essential for India's agricultural productivity and ener-



BKP SINHA



ARVIND KUMAR JHA

THE INCREASING SOIL SALINITY IS DRIVING DOWN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY AND ESCALATING RECLAMATION COSTS — OFTEN TOO EXPENSIVE FOR SMALL AND MARGINAL FARMERS. MANY ARE FORCED TO ABANDON FARMING OR SHIFT TO ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS LIKE SHRIMP AQUACULTURE, WHICH CAN FURTHER EXACERBATE SALINITY PROBLEMS

gy security.

As both surface and groundwater sources come under increasing stress, the consequences are becoming visible in the form of rising soil salinity — especially in heavily irrigated regions. This problem is particularly acute in coastal areas such as the Sundarbans in West Bengal and parts of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, where rising sea levels have led to saltwater intrusion into freshwater aquifers and paddy fields. In the Sundarbans alone, nearly 30 per cent of arable land is affected by salinity. Across the country, approximately 6.74 million hectares of land are classified as salt-affected, and this area is expanding by nearly 10 per cent annually. Experts warn that if this trend continues unchecked, nearly half of India's cultivable land could be compromised by 2050.

The increasing soil salinity is driving down agricultural productivity and escalating reclamation costs — often too expensive for small and marginal farmers. Many are forced to abandon farming or shift to alternative livelihoods like shrimp aquaculture, which can further exacerbate salinity problems. With more than half of India's workforce dependent on agriculture, the loss of fertile land presents a dire threat not only to rural livelihoods but also to the country's overall food security. According to the Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas of India, over 30 per cent of the country's total geographical area is undergoing desertification/ degradation, much of it driven by water and wind erosion, and loss of soil fertility. States like Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Telangana are among the worst affected. Experts warn that rising temperatures are compounding the crisis by depleting soil moisture and

increasing water stress during critical crop stages such as flowering and grain filling. The Indo-Gangetic plains, India's wheat basket, are already experiencing significant yield declines of 1 per cent to 8 per cent (depending on the region) due to these climate pressures. However, when indirect impacts — particularly reduced water availability and declining irrigation levels — are taken into account, wheat yields are plummeting even more sharply, with losses ranging from 4 per cent to as much as 36 per cent.

Climate change is also intensifying the threat of agricultural pests and diseases by creating favourable conditions for their proliferation. Rising temperatures, altered rainfall patterns, and changing humidity levels have expanded the range and severity of pest outbreaks. For instance, the locust swarms that ravaged crops across Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and parts of Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra in 2020 were partly triggered by unusually wet weather conditions in the Arabian Peninsula, linked to climate variability. These swarms ravaged nearly 48,669 square kilometres of cropland, with Maharashtra being the hardest hit, losing over 10 per cent of its farmland. Similarly, the incidence of pests such as the fall armyworm, whiteflies, and mealybugs has increased significantly. Climate change is also altering the life cycles of pests and their natural predators, reducing the effectiveness of traditional pest control methods. This has forced farmers to increase pesticide usage, leading to higher production costs, health hazards, and environmental degradation.

These interconnected challenges are deepening agricultural distress, severely impacting farmers' livelihoods and mental health. Financial pressures and uncertainty have contributed to a tragic rise in farmer suicides. In 2022 alone, more than 11,000 suicides were reported, with Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, and Karnataka bearing the greatest burden. As farming becomes increasingly unsustainable, many young people are abandoning agriculture in pursuit of more secure livelihoods, driving a surge in rural-to-urban migration. This demographic shift is putting enormous strain on urban infrastructure, public services, and labour markets. In already overstretched cities, even minor disruptions can trigger social unrest, presenting significant challenges for local governance and law enforcement. Economic desperation in rural India has also been linked to rising protests and growing susceptibility to radical ideologies. Groups like the Naxalites in central and eastern India have historically exploited economic marginalisation and agrarian grievances to fuel anti-state sentiment and recruit disaffected populations.

If climate — induced despair continues unchecked, it risks deepening disillusionment and weakening the bond between vulnerable communities and the state — posing a serious threat to internal stability and national cohesion.

(The writers are former PCCFs, UP and Maharashtra. Views are personal)

From sidelines to centre stage: Women athletes redefine the future of sports

The next Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, in 2028, will have many firsts! The number of women athletes exceeds their male counterparts. There will be a full gender parity in all team events, while the number of women's football teams surpasses men's. There is another first! Kirsty Coventry, a Zimbabwean athlete, elected this year, takes up the mantle of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), becoming the first-ever woman to lead the Olympics in its 131-year history. In the Olympics, in terms of the number, women athletes scaled new heights from 2.2 per cent representation in 1900 in Paris to achieving gender parity in Paris again in 2024, a quarter and a century later. But, the journey remained fraught with multiple challenges. Lack of financial resources impacted the quality of training, facilities, and overall support available to female athletes (Blinde et al., 1993), and hampered the growth and sustainability of women's sports leagues and teams (Sartore & Cunningham, 2014). Potential brands often undervalued women's sports, considering it to be an arena of 'unproven returns'. There was, however, a significant shift in recent times when angel investors and venture capitalists came forward to explore the over-looked market and made use of the best available data, and content on digital/ social media. The emergence of Angel City FC in 2020 in the US National Women's Soccer League (NWSL), set a new precedent, when its all-female founding team 'inverted the accepted business model of sports franchise, moved their brand beyond the local base, to digital brand building'. Within the first three years, it could raise a market valuation of \$250 million in 2024. Such experimental ventures remain not confined to Europe and the USA, but, in areas like the Middle East, where governments are increasingly directing resources towards grassroots initiatives designed to foster greater girls' participation in sports.

In India, around 1200 companies invested a combined ₹526.14 crore in 2022-23 on CSR investments, nearly double compared to the previous financial year (₹291.75 crore), for promoting sports, including women's. However, many sports analysts believe that 'not many companies consider women's sports while choosing their CSR goals' (Goodera). Nevertheless, a 2024 survey (Service Monkey & Parity), found that 'women athletes are trusted influencers', the majority of sports fans (88 per cent) regard them as 'impactful role models' and almost 73 per cent said that they watch women's sports at least a few times a year, which is 81 per cent in case of men's sports, and an overwhelming majority think (92 per cent) that it is 'important' for girls to play while growing up. A 2023 report (Deloitte) highlighted that 85 per cent of women who played sports as children, and are now Fortune 500 CEOs, believed that the 'top skills they developed by playing sports



helped them to succeed in their professional careers'. In 2024, global revenues for women's sports moved up \$1.3 billion, with an impressive 300 per cent growth in just three years (Deloitte). Moreover, sponsorship deals for women's sports have also seen a 20 per cent year-over-year increase since 2020 (Sports United). 'In recent years, attendance, viewership and social engagement for women's sports have spiked, leading to long-overdue financial backing through investments and sponsorships...' said, the CEO and founder of SponsorUnited. Across all countries, 32 per cent of fans of women's sports say they are more likely to purchase products when a brand supports women's sports. While in 2022, there was a 30 per cent surge in the number of advertisements featuring women sports celebrities in India (TAM AdEx). The owner of the UP Warriors in the Women's Premier League (WPL) and the head of Capri Sports, were categorical that 'perception about women athletes as brand endorsers has transformed significantly because of changing consumer mindsets, and growing data-backed proof'. Now, this momentum requires a strategic roadmap that balances innovation with a focus on core business fundamentals for sustained growth and commercial success as well. Industries must move from a short-term return on investment (ROI) to a venture capital mindset driven by values, long-term vision, and a commitment to societal impact for the long-term health of women's sports.

Undeniably, digital space could boost the visibility of women in sports to about 18.5 per cent in 2022, marking a 2.53 per cent average annual increase. But, women sportspersons face a 'different scrutiny on digital space as audiences expectations are still deeply embedded in societal norms' and brand marketing strategies continue to focus more on 'traditional femininity'. A social media analysis during the 2018 Commonwealth Games, found that words like 'strong' and 'talented' were frequently used in the case of male athletes, while women athletes were

labelled with terms like 'pretty' or 'girls'. A similar analysis of the online sports stories and images posted during the Rio Olympic Games found that men athletes were portrayed in 'active or competitive roles', while women athletes were frequently depicted in 'passive or aesthetically appealing ways'. Women athletes' Instagram posts on non-sport-related images receive significantly higher engagement. As a result, many high-profile women athletes adopt branding strategies that promote polished, heteronormative femininity, avoiding controversial political stances and thus limiting their abilities to challenge gendered perceptions in sports', argued a study on feminist neo-liberal marketing strategies. Women sportspersons also continue to face 'widespread, overlapping and grave forms of violence at all levels' (UN). Nearly 21 per cent of professional women athletes experienced sexual abuse as a child in sports, almost double the rate of male athletes (11 per cent). A 2021 study (World Athletics) found that 85 per cent of online abuse in the lead-up to and during the Tokyo Olympics was directed at women. But, sports bodies tend to focus more on curbing doping and match-fixing as sports integrity measures. In India, the prolonged protests by Olympic medal-winning women wrestlers exposed the ineptitude of such bodies.

In 2023, the UN Women and UNESCO outlined a 10-point 'Call to Action' for gender equality in and through sports, addressing issues like fair pay, media representation, and safeguarding standards. Countries must adopt it, and standardise procedures to strengthen the grievance redressal mechanisms of sports bodies with a strong legal framework, ensure survivor support and accountability, and also take technology companies and social media platforms on board to tackle online abuses. Governments, Corporations and media houses should all come together to create a level playing field with resources, exposure and voice to herald an era of equitable, safe and inclusive sports.

(The writer is former Director-General of Doordarshan and AIR. She is also the former Press Secretary to the President. Views expressed are personal)



ARCHANA DATTA

From discipline to display: The silent erosion of traditional Yoga

Growing up, I always learnt and practised yoga in a quiet, disciplined, and almost sacred way. In India, yoga was never just an exercise; it was a deeply spiritual and scientific system, honed over thousands of years to align the body, mind, and spirit. Whether it was traditional forms like Hatha Yoga and Ashtanga Yoga, or guru-shishya lineages such as Sivananda Yoga, Iyengar Yoga, or Satyananda Yoga, the core practices remained largely consistent, with only minor variations, and were intentionally grounded in both physical discipline and profound philosophical wisdom.

Hatha Yoga, which I practice at Sivananda School of Yoga practice, for instance, is not merely about bending the body into various shapes. It is about balancing the masculine and feminine energies within oneself ('Ha' in 'Hatha' means Sun and 'tha' means Moon). The slow, purposeful asanas are designed to prepare the body for deeper spiritual practices like meditation and so on. Ashtanga Yoga, demands discipline and synchronisation of breath with a progressive series of postures, promoting physical endurance and mental clarity.

Iyengar Yoga, developed by BKS Iyengar, emphasises precision and alignment. Props like belts and blocks are used not as gimmicks but as intelligent aids to help practitioners achieve the correct posture safely. Satyananda Yoga, from the Bihar School of Yoga, also a disciple of Swami Sivananda, offers a holistic system combining asanas, pranayama (breath control), and meditation, deeply grounded in ancient scriptures yet highly accessible to modern practitioners. These traditional forms of yoga were complete systems — designed not just to build strong bodies but to cultivate resilience, compassion, inner peace, and eventually, spiritual awakening. But today, the variations presented, especially to attract younger audiences are at times of concern. In the quest to make yoga more "appealing," a whole new breed of hybrid practices have emerged at times sans focus on posture or mind breath and body coordination.

While innovation can often bring new energy to old traditions, in the case of yoga, I worry that something fundamental is being lost. Power Yoga, for example, was developed to suit the Western craving for calorie — burning workouts. It emphasises speed, strength, and sweat — but often sacrifices breath awareness, alignment, and the contemplative aspects that are central to yoga. Aerial Yoga uses silk hammocks to suspend practitioners per cent in mid-air. While it might look beautiful on social media, it introduces new risks to the musculoskeletal system, especially if taught without a proper understanding of traditional postures and body mechanics. HIIT Yoga and CrossFit Yoga attempt to fuse high-intensity interval training and weightlifting

principles with yogic postures.

The fact is that yoga was never intended to be a high-stress activity on the body. Then there's Paddleboard Yoga and Spin and Yoga, both interesting combinations, but ones that often seem to dilute the inward focus that traditional yoga demands. Balancing on a paddleboard or spinning on a cycle while trying to breathe deeply and remain mindful often becomes more of a challenge to one's physical endurance rather than an invitation to stillness and self-inquiry.

What concerns me is not merely the creation of these hybrids, but the way they are marketed: Yoga is increasingly sold as a product — a lifestyle choice that promises flat abs, glowing skin, and mental sharpness in 30 days or less. The ancient aim of yoga — union with the higher self — is often barely mentioned. The sacredness of the practice, its depth, and its inherent science seem at risk of being trivialised into a trendy hashtag or a flashy gym class. Experimenting with traditional practices without a deep understanding of their purpose and structure can be risky. Traditional yoga evolved slowly, through painstaking observation of the human body and mind. Every asana was designed with attention to anatomical, energetic, and psychological effects.

Disrupting this carefully developed sequence — speeding it up, loading it with weights, suspending it mid-air — can lead to injuries ranging from minor sprains to serious spinal issues. Traditional yoga balances the nervous system, calming the fight-or-flight response and cultivating parasympathetic dominance (rest and digest mode).

High-intensity fusions may instead overstimulate the nervous system, leaving practitioners wired and anxious rather than grounded and serene. Having said that, I believe there is always room for creativity. Yoga should be alive, growing, and meeting the needs of new generations. But this growth must be rooted in respect for the science behind traditional systems. Without that grounding, we risk turning yoga into just another fitness fad — here today, gone tomorrow — when in fact it is one of humanity's most precious treasures for holistic health and self-realisation. As someone who has felt the profound benefits of traditional yoga, I urge others — especially younger audiences drawn to 'new-age' yoga, to explore the traditional systems first. Understand the depth before seeking novelty. Build a strong foundation before experimenting. After all, yoga isn't just something we do, it's something we become, and it's a way of life. And that transformation is far too sacred to be rushed, repackaged, or compromised.

(The writer is a certified Sivananda Yoga teacher. Views expressed are personal)



SHARMILA DAS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA **Paramount (US)**

The White House announced that

where a car was set on fire. Protests continued into the evening in Paramount, with several hundred demonstrators gathered near a doughnut shop, and authorities holding up barbed wire to keep the crowd back. Crowds also gathered again outside federal buildings in downtown Los Angeles, including a detention centre, where local police declared an unlawful



Earlier in Paramount, immigration officers faced off with demonstrators at the entrance to a business park, across from the back of a Home Depot. They set off fireworks and pulled shopping carts into the street, broke up cinder blocks and pelt-

The Department of Homeland Security

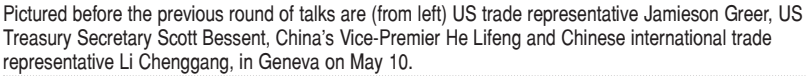
More than a dozen people were arrested and accused of impeding immigration agents, Essayli posted on X, including the names and mug shots of some of those arrested. He didn't say where they were protesting. Trump federalised part of California's National Guard under what is known as Title 10 authority, which places him, not the governor, atop the chain of

Trump signed the order shortly before he went to attend a UFC fight in New Jersey, where he sat ringside with boxer Mike Tyson. Newsom said in his statement that local authorities "are able to access law enforcement assistance at a moment's notice," and "there is currently no unmet need". The California Highway Patrol said Newsom directed it to deploy additional officers to "maintain public safety".

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New York

FBI Deputy Director Dan Bongino said the agency is seeking information regarding the identity of those throwing rocks at vehicles conducting critical law enforcement operations.

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Beijing



US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick wasn't in Geneva but will join the

The Department of Homeland Security

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ MOSCOW

Vladimir Medinsky, a Putin aide who led the Russian delegation, said that Kyiv called a last-minute halt to an imminent swap. In a Telegram post on Saturday, Medinsky said that refrigerated trucks carrying more than 1,200 bodies of Ukrainian troops from Russia had already

Meanwhile, Russia's defence ministry said that its forces shot down 61 Ukrainian drones overnight, including near the capital.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Houston

Kaur, the first Sikh woman elected to the San Antonio City Council, focused her campaign on affordable housing, public transit expansion, and inclusive urban development. "I think we really talked to the community and shared that we want

Her priorities include improving crime response, supporting law enforcement, and ensuring quality of life for residents.

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Rome

The measures were proposed by Italy's main union and left-wing opposition parties. Premier Giorgia Meloni has said she would show up at the polls but not cast a ballot — an action widely criticised by the left as antidemocratic, since it will not help

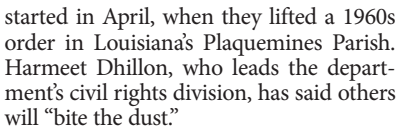


reach the necessary threshold to make the vote valid. "While some members of her ruling coalition have openly called for abstention, Meloni has opted for a more subtle approach," said analyst Wolfango Piccoli of the Teneo consultancy based in London. "It's yet another example of her trademark fence-sitting." Supporters say this reform would bring Italy's citizenship law in line with many other European countries, promoting greater social integration for long-term residents. It would also allow faster access to civil and political rights, such as the right to vote, eligibility for public employment

"Foreigners are also victims of blackmail, as they can't speak up against poor working conditions, exploitation and discrimination, due to the precariousness of the permit of stay," she added.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Ferriday (US)

In a remarkable reversal, the Justice Department said it plans to start unwinding court-ordered desegregation plans dating to the Civil Rights Movement. Officials



It comes amid pressure from Republican Gov Jeff Landry and his attorney general,

who have called for all the state's remaining orders to be lifted. They describe the orders as burdens on districts and relics of a time when Black students were still forbidden from some schools.

The orders were always meant to be temporary — school systems can be released if

Last year, before President Donald Trump took office, Concordia Parish rejected a Justice Department plan that would have ended its case if the district combined several majority white and majority Black elementary and middle schools. At a town hall meeting, Vidalia residents vigorously opposed the plan, saying it would disrupt students' lives and expose their children to drugs and violence.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Rome

“This is an enormous popular response to say enough to the massacre of Palestinians and the crimes of (Israeli leader Benjamin) Netanyahu’s govern-

Earlier this week, the Italian premier urged Israel to immediately halt its military campaign in Gaza, saying its attacks had grown disproportionately and should be brought to an end to protect civilians. Israel faces mounting international criticism for its offensive and pressure to let aid into Gaza during a humanitarian crisis.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■
Deir al-Balah (Gaza Strip)

reaceable as on date, in lieu of which Information Report dated 08.06.2025 bearing No. TN 29005515 has been filed with the Dehli Public Trusts Commission. The said large, i.e., any Person(s), Company(ies), Authority(ies), Society(ies), Organisation(s), Financial Institution(s), Bank(s), HUF(s) having any knowledge, custody or possession of the said untraceable original documents or otherwise having any claims, rights, title, interests, possession etc. in the Schedule Plot, by way of Succession, Mortgage, Charge, Lien, Gift, Trust, Encumbrance etc., may come forward with supporting documents, to be delivered to the undersigned.

Apeksha Sharan
On Behalf of Joint Beneficiaries

**Address: C-1101, Rajeha Althava, Sector-133,
Gurgaon, Haryana. Mobile No. 9873181178**





Choose Happiness

As emotional exhaustion becomes widespread, it is important to cultivate happiness, says ABHI SINGHAL



CELEBRATE YOUR SMALL WINS

In a results-driven world, where we are judged on what big we achieve we often overlook minor accomplishments. Taking time to celebrate small victories, whether finishing a book or making your bed will reinforce self-worth and brings a sense of progress. This habit builds confidence and shifts your mindset from scarcity to achievement. Always remember small achievements bring happiness.



Between the relentless pressure of work deadlines, financial worries, social comparisons, and a constant stream of bad news, many people today find themselves overwhelmed and emotionally drained. Frustration, burnout, and anxiety have become all too common, especially in a world where productivity often takes priority over peace of mind.

Yet, in the midst of this chaos there is one simple yet powerful tool we can all lean on anytime is: a **positive mindset**.

Chronic stress, especially due to high-pressure jobs or unrealistic expectations, slowly drains our emotional energy. Over a long period of time, it affects sleep, appetite, and even memory. Due to continuous pressure on the brain, it becomes nearly impossible to stay positive or feel hopeful about things. Mental well-being is about feeling capable, calm, and connected. Chronic stress deeply disturbs that balance," says Dr

WE'RE OFTEN OUR HARSHTEST CRITICS. REPLACE NEGATIVE SELF-TALK WITH ENCOURAGING WORDS. SPEAK TO YOURSELF AS YOU WOULD TO A FRIEND IN NEED — WITH KINDNESS, PATIENCE, AND UNDERSTANDING



POINTS YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER

START WITH GRATITUDE: Keeping a gratitude journal or simply reflecting on three good things each day can shift your mindset. It's not about ignoring the negatives, but about training your brain to also recognise what's going right.

MOVE YOUR BODY: Physical activity — whether it's a brisk walk or a dance session, all these release endorphins as our brain's natural mood enhancers. Just 20 minutes a day can help boost your mood significantly.

CONNECT WITH OTHERS: Human connection is a cornerstone of happiness. Regular interactions with family, friends, or even neighbours can ease anxiety and promote a sense of belonging. Volunteering is another powerful way to foster positivity. Avoid just socially connecting on the phones, try and meet physically and soak in the happy moments.

MIND YOUR MIND: Practising mindfulness or meditation helps break the cycle of negative thinking. Even five minutes of focused breathing can help reset your emotional state. Over time, mindfulness improves emotional regulation, reduces anxiety, and enhances awareness.



Pavitra Shankar, Associate Consultant, Psychiatry at Aakash Healthcare.

Research has shown that 10 minutes of brisk walking can make a lot of difference, as during brisk walking, "feel-good" chemicals like endorphins are released. It has also been shown that expressing gratitude regularly also helps train your brain to be positive.

Connecting with friends regularly can also help you develop a more positive outlook. Regularly practicing breathing techniques, even for a few minutes daily, can help settle your mind. These small changes, done over a period of time, help maintain a positive outlook even during difficult times," says Dr Pavitra. Ultimately, choosing happiness is an act of self-care, one that not only improves your health but also uplifts those around you. In the words of one wise proverb: A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit. And in today's world, a cheerful face might just be the best medicine of all.

START YOUR DAY BY SETTING AN INTENTION AS SIMPLE AS "I WILL STAY CALM UNDER PRESSURE" OR "I WILL BE KIND TO MYSELF." UNLIKE GOALS, INTENTIONS FOCUS ON HOW YOU WANT TO BE

LIMIT NEGATIVITY

While staying informed is important, constant exposure to bad news or toxic social media can drain your energy. Curate your environment in both online and offline spaces to support your mental wellbeing. This includes setting screen time boundaries, unfollowing accounts that trigger stress, and choosing uplifting content that nurtures your peace of mind.



ENGAGE IN CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Hobbies like painting, journaling, gardening, or music allow emotional release and personal satisfaction. Engaging in creative pursuits can act as a form of meditation, helping you stay present and joyful. Even 15 minutes of creativity everyday can help reset your mood and inspire positivity.

Sleep Habits Impact Brain Ageing

Study says those who stay up late may face an increased risk of memory loss and cognitive slowdown, writes ABHI SINGHAL

People who identify as night owls, which means individuals who naturally prefer staying up late and waking later in the day — may face a heightened risk of cognitive decline as they age, according to a new study published in the *Journal of Prevention of Alzheimer's Disease*. The decade-long study, conducted by researchers at the University Medical Center Groningen in the Netherlands, tracked the cognitive performance of approximately 23,800 individuals. The findings of the study suggest that evening chronotypes, or 'night owls', decline cognitively at a faster pace than their early bird counterparts.

Chronotype Matter More

The lead author of the study — Ana Wenzler explained that one's chronotype — the natural inclination toward a particular sleep-wake cycle — plays a crucial role in brain health. "Are you an early bird or a night owl? It's hard to adjust what your biological clock — your so-called chronotype — is, but you can adjust your life to it as best you can," Ana Wenzler noted. Unhealthy behaviour like smoking, drinking and unhealthy eating happens more often in the evening.



Harmful Habits of Late Sleepers

The study observed that night owls often indulge in behaviours detrimental to long-term cognitive function. Poor dietary habits, lower physical activity and irregular or inadequate sleep routines. "Unhealthy behaviour such as smoking, drinking and unhealthy eating happens more often

in the evening," Wenzler added. "Twenty-five per cent of the risk of cognitive decline can be explained from our research by smoking and poor sleep."

Crucial Role of Sleep Quality

Sleep deprivation emerged as a key factor driving cognitive deterioration. Night owls often experience a mismatch between their internal body clock and early morning societal demands. "They are often people who have to go back to work early in the morning and are

therefore more likely to sleep too short, giving their brains too little rest," Wenzler stated. Good sleep supports: Brain detoxification and memory consolidation, hormonal balance with emotional stability.

Can You Change Your Chronotype?

Interestingly, chronotypes are not permanent. Wenzler pointed out that children typically begin as morning people, become evening-oriented during adolescence, and shift back towards being morning people by their 40s.

SOME PEOPLE CONTINUE BEING NIGHT OWLS AT LATER AGE, WHICH MAY HAVE GREATER RISK. YOU CAN TRY SLEEP EARLY, BUT IF YOUR BODY IS NOT PRODUCING MELATONIN, IT WILL NOT WORK

HOW COGNITIVE DECLINE SHOWS UP

Symptoms of cognitive decline commonly seen include:

- Memory lapses
- Reduced processing speed
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Increased mental fatigue

ADJUSTING TO YOUR BODY CLOCK

As cognitive health becomes an increasing concern with age, aligning lifestyle choices with one's natural rhythm may offer protection. Establishing a consistent sleep routine, avoiding stimulants late at night, dimming lights in the evening, and exposing oneself to natural light during the day are among the ways to support a healthy circadian rhythm.



TRIVIA



Did you know owning a dog can be good for your heart? According to the American Heart Association, pet ownership may reduce blood pressure and cholesterol, improve mental health, and lower your overall risk of heart disease.

FIT FACT



Regular meditation is linked to several health benefits, including improved metabolism, lower blood pressure and positive changes in brain activity. Just a few minutes each day can enhance mental clarity and boost overall well-being.

