

FALAKNUMA



ENGLISH DAILY

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VOL: 1 Issue No: 4 MONDAY, 18 MAY 2026 PUBLISHED FROM HYDERABAD PAGES: 4 RS.1/-

India, Netherlands elevate ties with 2030 roadmap

New Delhi, May 17 (GNS) Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Dutch Prime Minister Rob Jetten have unveiled an expansive five-year roadmap to elevate India-Netherlands relations into a full-fledged Strategic Partnership, signalling a major deepening of co-operation across semiconductors, critical minerals, defense, clean energy, maritime connectivity, water management, healthcare, education, and emerging technologies.



The "Roadmap of India-Netherlands Strategic Partnership 2026-2030," adopted on Saturday (Netherlands time) during Modi's visit to The Hague, lays out time-bound initiatives and institutional mechanisms aimed at transforming bilateral engagement into a comprehensive strategic framework at a time of shifting global supply chains and growing geopolitical focus on resili-

ent economic and technological partnerships. The roadmap institutionalises annual reviews by the two countries' foreign ministers and calls for regular high-level political engage-

ment between heads of government, cabinet ministers, and senior officials. Both countries also agreed to intensify coordination across ministries to expand cooperation in sectors identified as strategically important.

A major focus of the partnership is economic cooperation and technology collaboration, particularly in semiconductors and high-tech manufacturing. In one of the most significant announcements of the visit, India's Tata Electronics and Dutch semiconductor equipment giant ASML signed an agreement to support India's first front-end semiconductor fabrication facility in Dholera, Gujarat.

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President Murmu approves increase in SC Judge strength from 33 to 37

New Delhi, May 17 (GNS): President Droupadi Murmu has promulgated the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026, increasing the sanctioned strength of judges in the Supreme Court from 33 to 37, excluding the Chief Justice of India. The move is aimed at addressing the growing pendency of cases and ensuring faster delivery of justice in the country's highest court.



Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal announced the development through a post on X. "The President is pleased to increase the Judge strength of the Supreme Court from 33 to 37 Judges

(Including the Chief Justice of India) by promulgating The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026, which has further amended the 'Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956'," Meghwal said in his post.

The ordinance comes days after the Union Cabinet approved a proposal to amend the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956. Earlier on May 5, the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi had cleared the proposal for introducing

the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026 in Parliament to increase the number of Supreme Court judges by four. According to the government, the decision has been taken in view of the increasing workload of the apex court and the rising number of pending cases. The expansion in judicial strength is expected to improve efficiency in disposal of matters and reduce delays in hearings.

An Act to increase the judge strength of the Supreme Court of India was originally enacted in 1956. Since then, the sanctioned strength of judges has been revised several times in line with the increasing demands on the judiciary.

'Clock is ticking' for Iran: Trump

Washington, May 17 (GNS) US President Donald Trump warned Iran on Sunday, May 17, that time was running out for its leadership to act amid escalating tensions in the region. "For Iran, the Clock is Ticking, and they better get moving, FAST, or there won't be anything left of them. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE!" Trump wrote in a post on Truth Social.

Lebanon's health ministry said on Sunday that fresh Israeli strikes in southern Lebanon killed five people, including two children, despite an ongoing

ceasefire. The ministry said three people, including a child, were killed in the town of Tayr Felsay, while two others, including another child, were killed in Tayr Debba. According to the ministry's preliminary toll, 11 people were also wounded in the strikes.

US President Donald Trump met members of his national security team on Saturday to discuss Iran, according to a report by Axios. Axios, citing a source familiar with the matter, said Trump discussed developments related to Iran amid rising regional tensions.

Rahul targets govt over exam row, says Minister failed all age groups

New Delhi, May 17 (GNS) Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday led a fresh opposition offensive against the Centre over a string of examination and policy controversies, accusing union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan of "failing every single age group of India's students at once."

Citing three separate incidents, Gandhi argued that the Education Ministry's handling of NEET, CBSE Class 12 results, and a new Class 9 language mandate had thrown lakhs of students into uncertainty.



"First the NEET paper leak affecting 22 lakh students," a statement shared by Gandhi on platform X read. The NEET 2026 exam was cancelled this month after reports of a widespread paper leak, with the

CBI now investigating the issue. This came after NEET 2024 was also hit by a confirmed leak, though that exam was not cancelled.

The statement pointed to CBSE's evaluation process: "Then CBSE Class 12

students receiving unexpectedly low marks from a broken OSM system - many losing their college eligibility." Students and schools have alleged discrepancies in marks under the On-Screen Marking system this year, saying the errors cost many their university admissions. CBSE has said the system cuts errors and that re-evaluation is available.

The third issue flagged was a sudden change in language policy. "Now lakhs of CBSE Class 9 students suddenly asked to learn a new language from July 1, with no teachers,

no textbooks, and Class 6 books being handed to 14-year-olds as a 'transitional' fix," the statement said. The change is part of CBSE's alignment with the National Education Policy's three-language formula, but teachers' bodies have warned that schools lack faculty and materials for a mid-year rollout.

Linking the three, Gandhi's statement said: "Three exams. Three age groups. One Minister. Dharmendra Pradhan ji has not failed once. He has failed every single age group of India's students at once."

Ship carrying 20,000 tonnes of LPG from gulf arrives in Kandla



New Delhi, May 17 (GNS) A ship carrying 20,000 metric tonnes of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) arrived at the Deendayal Port Authority at Kandla on the Gujarat coast after having safely sailed through the Strait of Hormuz earlier amid the West Asia crisis, officials said on Sunday. The Marshall Islands-flagged MV SYMI started its journey from Qatar and docked at the port in Kandla around 11.30 pm on Saturday after crossing the Strait of Hormuz on May 13, the officials said.

Since early March, 13 India-flagged vessels, comprising 12 LPG tankers and one crude oil tanker, have crossed the Strait of Hormuz, a narrow waterway close to the coast of Oman, through which one-fifth of the world's oil and gas exports transit during normal times.

However, ship movement through the narrow waterway has been severely disrupted by the conflict in West Asia that started on February 28, with the US and Israel launching joint attacks on Iran, triggering retaliatory strikes. It has resulted in one of the worst energy crises the world has seen in recent decades.

India has strongly condemned attacks on commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz, calling them 'unacceptable' at a special meeting of the United Nations Economic and Social Council on safeguarding global energy and supply flows.

UN Chief Welcomes Extension Of Lebanon-Israel Ceasefire

United Nations, May 17 (GNS): UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres welcomed the announcement of a 45-day extension of the cessation of hostilities between Lebanon and Israel, said his press office.

Guterres reaffirmed the support of the world body to all efforts to end hostilities and alleviate the suffering of communities on both sides of the Blue Line, a border demarcation line between Lebanon and Israel established by the United Nations in 2000, said the press office in a note to correspondents, Xinhua news agency reported. "The



secretary-general urges all actors to fully respect the cessation of hostilities, cease any further attacks and comply with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, at all times," said the press office. The United Nations

is committed to supporting all diplomatic efforts to advance the full implementation of Security Council Resolution 1701, which is intended to resolve the 2006 Lebanon War fought between Hezbollah and Israel, it said. Israel and Lebanon have agreed to a 45-day extension of their ceasefire that took effect last month, a spokesperson for the US State Department said. "The April 16 cessation of hostilities will be extended by 45 days to enable further progress," State Department spokesman Tommy Piggott said on X on Friday (local time).

Israel and Lebanon will resume political negotiations at the US State Department on June 2-3, while their military delegates are set to launch parallel security talks at the Pentagon on May 29, Piggott said.

The two countries held their third round of direct talks here on Thursday and Friday, which Piggott described as "highly productive." Despite the ceasefire, clashes between Israel and Hezbollah in southern Lebanon have continued. Israeli strikes killed at least nine people and wounded dozens in southern Lebanon on Friday.

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Wishing a very Happy Engagement ceremony to ASRAR RAHEEM brother of Ather Raheem (Editor in Chief, Falaknuma News, Hyderabad) with brothers & friends

India, Netherlands elevate ties to strategic partnership with ambitious 2030 roadmap

FROM PAGE 1

The two sides described the semiconductor partnership as central to building "trusted and resilient supply chains" and pledged to strengthen cooperation in artificial intelligence, photonics, cybersecurity, quantum technologies, and advanced electronics. The roadmap also seeks to connect the Dutch Semicon Competence Centre with the Indian Semiconductor Mission to support industries, startups, SMEs, and suppliers through talent development and research collaboration.

Prime Minister Modi, while interacting with leading Dutch business executives alongside Jetten, welcomed the growing interest of Dutch firms in India's economic ex-

pansion and manufacturing ambitions. "We are very happy that companies like ASML, NXP and Philips are creating world-leading solutions with Indian talent," Modi said, according to official statements released after the meeting.

The Prime Minister also underlined the contribution of Dutch companies in India's ports, shipping, and logistics sectors and encouraged greater investments in maritime infrastructure, renewable energy, digital technologies, healthcare and artificial intelligence.

The roadmap reflects a wider strategic effort by both nations to diversify global value chains amid rising geopolitical uncertainty. India and the Netherlands agreed



to deepen cooperation in critical minerals through a dedicated memorandum of understanding covering exploration, research, supply chain resilience, recycling, ESG standards, and industrial collaboration.

The two countries also committed themselves to expanding bilateral trade and investment through the Joint Trade and Investment Committee while encouraging business forums, industrial partnerships, technol-

ogy collaboration, and SME participation. Sectors identified for priority cooperation include renewable energy, pharmaceuticals, medtech, agriculture, infrastructure, telecommunications, urban development, chemicals, tex-

tiles, and metals. In a significant development linked to the global clean energy transition, India and the Netherlands announced plans to establish a "Green and Digital Sea Corridor" aimed at creating an

environmentally sustainable and digitally integrated maritime route between India and Europe. The initiative is expected to support India's ambitions to become a major exporter of green hydrogen to European markets.

Both countries also agreed to collaborate on renewable hydrogen, battery storage, bioenergy, circular economy projects, and waste-to-energy initiatives through frameworks such as the International Solar Alliance and the Global Biofuels Alliance.

Maritime cooperation emerged as another key pillar of the strategic partnership. India and the Netherlands will jointly work on green energy solutions for ports, inland waterways, and

shipping while strengthening cooperation under their renewed maritime cooperation agreement. A separate roadmap for a future-ready maritime corridor is expected to focus on sustainability, digital integration, and economic efficiency.

The partnership also places strong emphasis on water management and climate resilience, areas where Dutch expertise has long been recognised globally. India and the Netherlands agreed to renew their Strategic Partnership on Water beyond 2027 and enhance collaboration in integrated water resource management, flood resilience, urban water systems, and river basin management, especially in the Ganga Basin.

Delhi Govt to provide collateral-free loans up to Rs 10 Cr for women startups

New Delhi, May 17 (GNS) The Delhi government has arranged for an option of collateral-free loans up to Rs 10 crore for the women self-help groups and startups.

Interestingly, the government has also decided to be the guarantor for these loans, the Chief Minister's Office said. According to Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, the Delhi Government is working on a large scale to make women of the capital self-reliant, entrepreneurial, and economically empowered. She has announced that the Delhi Government will now regularly provide suitable platforms for indigenous products in malls and large shopping complexes so



that local products can get a wider market. On Saturday evening, during her address at the inauguration ceremony of the two-day 'Mega Self Help Group (SHG) Mela-2026', she said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has consistently been presenting before the country the vision of 'Vocal for Local', 'At-

manirbhar Bharat', and 'One District, One Product'.

Carrying forward the same vision, this mela is a strong effort to promote indigenous products prepared by women and connect them with the market, Gupta added. She said that women of the country, while staying at home, are not only increasing their fam-

ily income through small-scale industries and handmade products, but are also strengthening the country's economy. Gupta said that currently, there is a need to provide national and international recognition to household and handmade products being prepared by women, and appealed to people to use more local and indigenous products instead of foreign goods.

And the only requirement is better branding and marketing of these products. Gupta said that currently, there is a need to provide national and international recognition to household and handmade products being prepared by women, and appealed to people to use more local and indigenous products instead of foreign goods.

HM Amit Shah launches Rs 620 Crore civic infrastructure projects in Gandhinagar



Gandhinagar, May 17 (GNS): Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on Sunday inaugurated and laid foundation stones for 47 development projects worth Rs 620 crore undertaken by the Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation. The event was held in the presence of Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, with the projects spanning healthcare, water supply, sewage treatment, roads, gardens, sports infrastructure and urban civic facilities across the Gandhinagar parliamentary constituency.

The programme included the inauguration of 21 completed works and the foundation laying for 26 new projects aimed at strengthening urban infrastructure and improving public services. Addressing the gathering, Union Minister Amit Shah said the uninterrupted development journey initiated in Gujarat by Prime Minister Narendra Modi was being efficiently carried forward by the Bhupendra Patel-led government. "Victory in local self-government elections

reflects the people's trust in development," he said. HM Shah said the municipal corporation had undertaken projects including drinking water facilities in areas such as Pethapur, libraries, PHC and CHC centres, and cement roads.

He said the state government and the municipal corporation had jointly focused on sewage water treatment, beautification of lakes, supply of pure Narmada water to households and the establishment of yoga centres. "Self-confidence and not arrogance is the identity of our government. Gandhinagar is being developed into a modern and convenient city. It is one of the most well-equipped parliamentary constituencies in the country," he said.

Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel said the state government was committed to developing pollution-free, garbage-free and slum-free cities with green surroundings alongside basic infrastructure. "Small cities and surrounding areas are being developed as City Economic Regions," he said.

Patel said HM Amit Shah had adopted a long-term and sustainable development approach for the Gandhinagar Lok Sabha constituency with a plan to make it the greenest parliamentary constituency in the country. "Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation has set a target of planting five lakh trees this year," Patel noted. Among the major projects inaugurated was a modern sewage treatment plant at Kolvada built at a cost of Rs 16.11 crore. The plant has the capacity to treat three MLD, or nearly 30 lakh litres, of polluted water daily using ISR technology. Officials said the plant would help address foul smell, pollution and mosquito-related problems in the area while helping revive the Kolvada lake through the release of treated water. The treatment process includes enzyme dosing in an equalisation chamber, oxygen infusion in aeration chambers to reduce COD and BOD levels, and multi-stage filtration using compressed sand filters, activated carbon tanks and pneumatic filters before chlorinated water is

released. A modern garden developed in Sector-1 at a cost of Rs 10.51 crore was also inaugurated. Spread across 19,038 square metres, the facility includes walking tracks, yoga spaces, open gym equipment, a children's play area, seating arrangements, gazebos, CCTV surveillance, toilets, a borewell, an underground water tank and a pump room.

During the inauguration, HM Shah planted a banyan tree and appealed for increasing greenery. Modern yoga studios developed in Sector-25 and Sargasan at a cost of Rs 2.95 crore were also opened to the public. The facilities include all-weather indoor yoga halls with specialised flooring, advanced lighting and sound systems, separate changing rooms for men and women, drinking water arrangements, landscaped surroundings and administrative rooms for yoga trainers. Officials said the centres were expected to benefit more than 2,000 residents and would also be used for wellness workshops and International Yoga Day events.

India's 14 lakh annual STEM graduates are key economic strength: Piyush Goyal

Gandhinagar, May 17 (GNS): Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Sunday said that India's annual output of around 14 lakh STEM graduates had become one of the country's biggest advantages in technology, manufacturing and innovation.

Speaking at the inauguration of the Innovation and Incubation Centre at the National Institute of Design (NID) in Gandhinagar, Goyal said India's growing pool of scientists, engineers and technology professionals was attracting global investment and strengthening the country's position in emerging industries. "Around 14 lakh STEM graduates — in



science, technology, mathematics and engineering are produced every year in India. When I tell foreign ministers this, they are astonished. This huge youth force is India's greatest strength," he said.

The minister said India's

youth population, digital infrastructure and startup ecosystem had made the country a preferred global destination for technology and innovation.

He described India as "the world's fastest-growing major economy with the third-

largest startup ecosystem and expanding manufacturing capabilities".

"Hardly any country has expanded 5G to every corner so quickly or provides digital connectivity and data so cheaply," Goyal said, adding that low-cost internet access had democratised opportunities across the country.

He said innovation was no longer limited to metropolitan cities and that young people from smaller towns were increasingly building startups and global businesses. "People from small towns are now working internationally with their innovations, building global businesses and creating unicorns," he said.

Rajdhani Express Fire: Swift emergency evacuation by RPF, rail staff saves 68 passengers in B-1 coach

Bhopal, May 17 (GNS): It was a swift, around 15-minute emergency evacuation protocol by onboard Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel and railway staff that helped successfully disembark all 68 passengers from the B-1 coach of Train No. 12431 TVC-NZM Rajdhani Express on Sunday. A massive fire broke out in the Thiruvananthapuram Hazrat Nizamuddin Rajdhani Express 12431 in the morning, causing widespread panic.

The incident occurred around 5:30 a.m. between the Luni Richha and Vikramgarh Alot stations under the Kota Division of the West Central Railway,



located approximately 110 kilometres from Ratlam in Madhya Pradesh. The blaze reportedly originated in the third AC coach designated as B-1, which was situated near the SLR luggage brake van coach towards the front of the Delhi-bound premium train. Thick smoke

was initially seen billowing from the undercarriage of the coach, and within moments, the fire intensified rapidly, engulfing both the third AC coach and the adjacent SLR coaches in towering flames that were visible from a great distance. A major tragedy was

averted due to the swift action of the train guard, who promptly noticed the fire and alerted the loco pilot, bringing the high-speed train to an immediate halt.

Passengers were temporarily shifted to other coaches as the Railway Police and the staff raced against time and the blaze to save the passengers. Fire brigade teams and senior railway officials, including the Ratlam Divisional Railway Manager, rushed to the site to supervise the firefighting operations. As a safety precaution, the overhead electric supply was disconnected, and the two damaged coaches were detached from the rest of the train rake.

Lucknow Bulldozer Action: 240 lawyers' chambers demolished following High Court order

Lucknow: Tension flared in Uttar Pradesh's capital on Sunday as the Lucknow Municipal Corporation, backed by heavy police deployment, carried out a demolition drive against allegedly illegal advocates' chambers and shops constructed outside the district court premises following directions from the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court.

According to officials, nearly 240 illegal chambers and shops located near the civil court and district magistrate's office were demolished during the anti-encroachment operation. Bulldozers were deployed at the site amid



tight security arrangements, including personnel from the Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC), as lawyers gathered to protest the action. The demolition triggered strong resistance from sections of the legal fraternity, leading to heated exchanges and

scuffles between protesting advocates and police personnel. Visuals from the site showed lawyers raising slogans against the administration and attempting to stop the demolition drive. In one dramatic incident, an advocate allegedly attempted to hang

himself in protest against the demolition. Police personnel intervened in time and removed him from the chamber before any harm could occur. The incident further escalated tensions at the site, prompting authorities to increase security presence.

Several lawyers accused the administration of carrying out the demolition without proper communication or rehabilitation measures. Advocate S.P. Singh, speaking during the protest, expressed anger over the action and claimed that neither notices were served properly nor chambers were identified before demolition.

Ipl 2026: RCB seal playoff berth with 23-run victory against punjab kings

Dharamshala, May 17 (GNS): Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) became the first team to qualify for the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 playoffs after defeating Punjab Kings by 23 runs in a high-scoring contest at the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association Stadium on Sunday.

Defending a massive total of 222/4, RCB produced a disciplined bowling effort led by Rasikh Salam Dar, who claimed three wickets, to restrict Punjab Kings to 199/8 despite a fighting half-century from Shashank Singh. The victory helped RCB move to 18 points from 13 matches and secure a place in the playoffs. Punjab Kings endured a disastrous start to the chase as Bhuvneshwar Kumar removed Priyansh Arya for a duck in the opening over. The experienced pacer struck again in his next over when Prabhshimran Singh edged a good-length delivery to first slip after scoring just two runs.

RCB tightened their grip further when impact substitute Rasikh Salam Dar dismissed Punjab Kings skipper Shreyas Iyer for one. With wickets falling around him, Cooper Connolly launched a counter-attack alongside Suryansh Shedge. Shedge took on Josh Hazlewood with a boundary and a six, while Connolly attacked Rasikh to help Punjab Kings recov-



er to 49/3 at the end of the Power-play. Connolly continued to play aggressively before Romario Shepherd provided the breakthrough in the eighth over. Attempting another big shot, Connolly was caught at deep square leg after scoring 37 off 22 balls, including three fours and three sixes.

Shedge then stitched together a useful partnership with Marcus Stoinis as the pair rebuilt the innings with regular boundaries and sensible strike rotation. However, RCB struck again when Virat Kohli completed a sharp catch at long-off to dismiss Shedge for 35 off 22 deliveries.

Punjab Kings still had

hope with Stoinis at one end and Shashank Singh launching an aggressive assault at the other. Shashank changed the momentum of the chase by smashing three sixes in an over off Suyash Sharma before adding more boundaries to keep the required run rate under control.

Brief scores: *Royal Challengers Bengaluru* 222/4 in 20 overs (Venkatesh Iyer 73*, Virat Kohli 58, Devdutt Padikkal 45; Harpreet Brar 2-35, Yuzvendra Chahal 1-42) *beat Punjab Kings* 199/8 in 20 overs (Shashank Singh 56, Cooper Connolly 37, Suryansh Shedge 35; Rasikh Salam Dar 3-36, Bhuvneshwar Kumar 2-38) by 23 runs.

Axar holds nerve as DC edge RR in IPL thriller

New Delhi, May 17 (GNS) In a high-voltage IPL 2026 clash at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, Delhi Capitals pulled off a tense chase against Rajasthan Royals, finishing a pressure-filled run chase that went down to the wire, with Axar Patel emerging as the calm force in a chaotic finish. Rajasthan had earlier posted a strong 193/8 in their 20 overs, built on aggressive batting and sharp intent from the start. The innings began with early fireworks as Yashasvi Jaiswal struck quick boundaries before falling early, but the real momentum came through young sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, who smashed 46 off just 21 balls,



setting the tone for a high-scoring innings. The middle overs were controlled by skipper Riyan Parag, who played a composed yet aggressive knock of 51 off

26 deliveries, keeping the scoreboard moving even as wickets fell around him. Dhruv Jurel added crucial stability with a well-completed 53 off 40 balls, ensur-

ing Rajasthan did not lose momentum despite regular breakthroughs.

However, Delhi's bowling attack refused to let the innings completely escape. The standout performer was Mitchell Starc, who ripped through the Rajasthan middle and lower order with four key wickets, applying pressure at crucial stages. Support came from Lungi Ngidi, who picked up two important scalps, and Madhav Tiwari, who also chipped in with two wickets to keep the Royals from crossing the 200-mark.

In reply, Delhi began confidently, with Abishek Porel providing a blazing start, scoring 51 off 31 balls. His

aggressive intent ensured Delhi stayed ahead of the required rate early in the chase. At the other end, KL Rahul anchored the innings with a composed 56 off 42 deliveries, playing the perfect stabilizing role as wickets fell around him.

The middle overs saw some turbulence as Rajasthan's bowlers tightened their grip. But Delhi remained in control thanks to smart rotation and calculated risks. As the match entered its final phase, the pressure mounted, with the equation narrowing sharply and tension rising at the packed Delhi stadium.

That is when Axar Patel stepped into the spotlight.

Hockey: India U18 men and women go down to australia in the second match of series

Bhopal, May 17 (GNS) : It was a challenging day for the hosts as both the Indian U18 men's and women's hockey teams suffered defeats against Australia U18 in their respective second matches at the Udhav Das Mehta (Bhai Ji) Central SAI Centre in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, on Sunday.

In the men's encounter, Australia secured a 3-1 victory to take a 1-0 lead in the four-match series, following the 2-2 draw in the opening game. Arjun Brian (16') opened the scoring for Australia early in the second quarter, but India responded quickly through Ashish Tani Purti (24'), who found the back of the net to



bring the hosts level. However, Australia regained control in the third quarter, with Sam Peoples (39') and Angus McMullen (45') contributing a goal each to seal the win for the visitors.

In the women's match, the India U18 team suf-

fered a 1-4 loss against the visitors. Diya (11') gave India an early lead in the first quarter, allowing the hosts to stay in control during the initial exchanges.

However, Australia staged a powerful comeback, with Anneliese Cullen (26'),

Giselle Thompson (31'), Aurora Kovacevich (36'), and Stella Bartholomeusz (48') all scoring to secure Australia's second consecutive win of the tour. The Indian U18 women's team will look to bounce back when they take the field for their third match of the series on Monday at the International Sports Complex, Nathu Barkheda in Bhopal.

Meanwhile, the Indian U18 men's team will also be in action for their third match of the series against Australia tomorrow, May 18, at the Udhav Das Mehta (Bhai Ji) Central SAI Centre in Bhopal.

Earlier on Friday, the Indian men's team was held

to a 2-2 draw in its opening clash, with Akash Deep (11') and Deepak Prakash Toppo (45') scoring for the hosts. For Australia, Jett Johnstone (2') gave the visitors an early lead, while Franky Baker (60') found a late equaliser in the final minute of the game to ensure the spoils were shared.

In the women's opener, the Australia U18 women's team clinched a 4-3 win. Aurora Kovacevich (21') gave the visitors the lead before Diya (22') quickly restored parity for India. The hosts then surged to a two-goal advantage, with Kiran Ekka (42') and captain Sweety Kujur (48') finding the back of the net.

Metro cargo plan to boost urban mobility by 2047: Minister

New Delhi, May 17 (GNS) The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) observed its 31st Foundation Day today at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. The occasion was attended by Shri Manohar Lal, Hon'ble Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs & Power, as the Chief Guest. Smt. Rekha Gupta, Hon'ble Chief Minister, GNCTD, was present as the Guest of Honour. Hon'ble Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs and Power, Shri Manohar Lal ji, joins Hon'ble Chief Minister Smt Rekha Gupta ji on the occasion of the 31st Foundation Day of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi

In his address, the Hon'ble Minister highlighted the significant role that Delhi Metro



plays in the daily life of the common citizen in Delhi. He emphasized that easy, reliable, and safe mobility is the fundamental right of every citizen, and that urban transport systems like the Delhi Metro have become an indispensable part of urban living.

Looking ahead, the Hon'ble Minister underlined that by 2047, nearly 50% of India's population will re-

side in urban areas, making it imperative to plan and strengthen urban mobility infrastructure today. He shared a visionary idea of adding cargo compartments to metro trains, enabling small businessmen, vendors, and hawkers to seamlessly transport their goods across the city — a step that would save time, reduce energy consumption, and enhance

business efficiency for the urban working class.

Furthermore, Shri Manohar Lal ji emphasized the need to integrate green and renewable energy solutions in metro operations, aligning with the nation's sustainable development goals. He reiterated that metro systems will be the lifeline of every city in India, and their continued expansion and modernization is key to building smart, inclusive, and future-ready urban centers. Other dignitaries in attendance included Shri Katikithala Srinivas, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and Chairman, DMRC; Shri Dharmendra, Chief Secretary, GNCTD; and Dr. Vikas Kumar, Managing Director, DMRC.

New Express Trains Flagged Off, Pune Rail Projects Near Completion: Vaishnaw

New Delhi, May 17 (GNS) Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw today said, that considering the historic and industrial significance of Pune city, the government has decided to completely transform Pune railway station. He added that under this major initiative world class facilities will be provided on the railway station including four new platforms.

He was speaking after inaugurating two new express trains — Hadapsar-Jodhpur Express and MGR Chennai Central-Bhagat Ki Kothi Express — by flagging them off from Hadapsar near Pune in Maharashtra. Minister of State for Cooperation and Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol, Minister for Higher and Technical Education and



Parliamentary Affairs Chandrakant Patil, and Members of Parliament Shrirang Barne and Medha Kulkarni were present on the occasion. Union Ministers of State L. Murugan (from Chennai) and Gajendra Singh Shekhawat (from Jodhpur) joined the event virtually. Vaishnaw said that development plan for six

on new alignments for the Pune-Nashik railway corridor, which holds strategic importance due to the presence of a world-class testing laboratory at Khodad. Additionally, work on the third and fourth railway lines on the Pune-Lonavala route will be completed shortly.

Minister of State for Cooperation and Civil Aviation, Murlidhar Mohol expressed confidence that the Hadapsar-Jodhpur Express will greatly benefit the Rajasthan community residing in Pune. Railway development projects worth 1 crore are underway in the state. Under the Amrit Bharat Scheme, development works are progressing at Pune, Hadapsar, Uruli, and Shivajinagar stations.

He also stated that discussions have been held with Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis regarding the introduction of a Pune-Nagpur Vande Bharat train. He added that trial runs are underway

India Poised to Become Global MICE Hub, Says Gajendra Singh Shekhawat

New Delhi, May 17 (GNS) India is set to emerge as the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) capital of the world and the government and the private exhibition industry has to work together to make the country a centre of MICE tourism, Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has stressed. With the construction of the state-of-the-art exhibition and conference complexes in the country, India is all set to become MICE tourism capital of the world.

"The exhibition and conference infrastructure we see across the nation including Mumbai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Jaipur and even



small cities post G20 meet indicates that India is standing at the threshold of strong possibilities for this sector," said Shekhawat, while inaugurating a seminar organised by the Indian Exhibition Industry Association (IEIA). Several events which are happening globally can be calendarised and brought here in India, the minister suggested.

"Besides being a destination India, the country is also becoming a big exhibition and conference hub with planned expansion in road, aviation and railway sectors along with expansion of the conference and exhibition sector, the country has a great future for economic growth," Shekhawat said. After 2014, India has shown a tremendous growth curve in infrastructure, be it the construction of roads over 1,50,000 kms, new railway stations, semi high-speed trains, inland waterways and more than 150 operational airports. "All of these have contributed to India's prowess with regards to the MICE events.

Piyush Goyal Highlights India Growth & Partnerships

New Delhi, May 17 (GNS) Pathbreaking initiatives like Make in India, 'Digital India' and achievements in sectors like energy, IT, infrastructure, health, and tourism are also being showcased at the six-month-long Expo 2025 in Japan, Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has informed. In a post on X social media platform, the minister said that the India Pavilion- BHARAT at the expo in Osaka is "a remarkable representation of India's cultural richness and commercial successes, and welcomed its 5,000th visitor today". "This space is a stunning display of India's growing international presence and the giant strides that



the country has taken in the last decade, under PM@NarendraModi ji's leadership," Goyal added.

One of the highlights of the pavilion has been the display of the Chandrayaan-3 landing on the moon's south pole and India's advances in space technology. "I am confident this expo will provide a big boost to

trade and tourism in India and further cement our role as the world's trusted partner," the minister mentioned. Meanwhile, Goyal said he had met Navroz D Udhwadia, Co-founder and Partner of Alpha Wave Global, during his visit to London this week. "Highlighted how India's rapidly expanding middle class, manufacturing capability and rise of digital economy offer a unique opportunity for investment and growth," he posted on X. Goyal also met Francois Michel, Group CEO, John Cockerill in Brussels. "We discussed how the group's expertise in innovation in diverse technology solutions can further assist India's

India sets up panel to develop reparability index framework

New Delhi, May 17 (GNS) The government on Saturday said that the committee constituted for the Framework on Reparability Index (RI) in mobile and electronic sector has submitted its report, to help consumers who witness issues while seeking repair for their devices. The panel has submitted its report to Nidhi Khare, Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs. The committee's recommendations have been framed in alignment with the best global practices without causing any impediment to the industry with regard to innovation and ease of doing business.

The original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) are

required to self-declare the Reparability Index based on a standards scoring criteria provided in the framework with no additional compliance burden, said Ministry of Consumer Affairs. Further, the committee recommended that the Reparability Index should be displayed at the point of sale/purchase, E-commerce platforms and in form of QR code on packaged products to enable consumer to make informed choices. In September 2024, the Department of Consumer Affairs constituted a committee under the chairmanship of Bharat Khara, Additional Secretary for developing the framework of the Reparability Index (RI).

Telangana statehood movement activists to be identified in four categories

Hyderabad, May 17 (GNS) The high-level committee constituted by the Telangana government to identify "Telangana Udyamakarulu" (statehood movement activists) has decided to identify the genuine activists in four categories.

The first meeting of the committee headed by government advisor on public relations and education, K. Keshava Rao, was held on Sunday.

Minister Ponnabrahma, MLCs Prof Kodandaram and Addanki Dayakar, former MLC Ramulu Naik, and Mothe Shobhan Reddy,

who are members of the committee, participated in the meeting. According to an official release, the panel proposes to accord first priority to those who lost their lives during the Telangana movement. The second category will cover those who sustained injuries during the movement. Those who were imprisoned, arrested, or faced legal cases in connection with the Telangana movement will be recognised as Telangana activists in the third category.

Activists hailing from various states who actively participated in the move-

ment at the grassroots level will be designated under the fourth category.

To identify activists in the fourth category, it was suggested that references be made to newspaper clippings documenting their involvement in the movement. The panel will also invite proposals from individuals within civil society who played pivotal roles during the Telangana movement. A decision was made to hold consultations with activists from the 1969, 1972, and 1996 movements to collect their proposals.

The panel, constituted two



days ago, has been tasked with framing strict criteria to identify genuine activists and compiling a comprehensive database for welfare support and state honours. The committee stated that it was constituted with the objective of safeguarding the legacy of the Telangana movement and affirmed that the selection of activists would be conducted in a manner transcending political affiliations. Noting that the previous administration had extended assistance to only a select few, the committee resolved to ensure that the current selection

process is conducted in a non-partisan manner, independent of political parties. During the meeting, the Committee expressed its gratitude to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for officially constituting a government committee dedicated to the recognition of Telangana movement activists.

The Committee resolved to establish its office within the premises of 'Amaraveerula Jyothi' (Martyrs' Memorial Flame) in Hyderabad.

The panel decided to convene an all-party meeting shortly to solicit proposals regarding the recog-

nition of martyrs.

It was resolved to seek proposals from various entities, including the Telangana Movement Activists' Joint Action Committee (JAC), activists from the 1969 movement, employee unions, the Artists' JAC, the 'Sabbanda Vargala' (All-Sections) JAC, caste associations, the Lawyers' JAC, and various movement organisations formed across different districts. The committee decided to undertake tours across the districts to conduct extensive public consultations and gather opinions.

Kishan Reddy slams Telangana govt over delay in paddy procurement

Hyderabad, May 17 (GNS) Union minister for coal and mines G. Kishan Reddy on Sunday slammed the Congress government in Telangana for what he called the delay in paddy procurement from farmers. Stating that the Telangana government is not bearing even a single rupee burden for the procurement of paddy, he claimed that the Centre itself is footing the bill for every new paisa.



to procure paddy, the procurement process must be conducted smoothly, ensuring that farmers face no difficulties whatsoever, he said. He alleged that it is attempting to deflect the blame for its own negligence onto the Central government and administrative officials.

Kishan Reddy claimed that in several regions, farmers have taken to the streets to stage protests, demanding that the government procure their harvested grain. It remains baffling as to why the State government is failing so miserably today, especially given that the Central government is extending substantial and robust support regarding grain procurement, he said.

"The Central government provides every single penny required for grain procurement; consequently, not a single rupee of financial burden falls upon the State government. When the Centre bears the entire cost—covering gunny bags, transportation, credit for payments, interest on those loans, and warehouse storage rentals—the State government owes an explanation as to why it is delaying the procurement process," he told a news conference here.

Telangana currently boasts the highest paddy production in the country. When the Central government has stepped forward

774 drunk driving cases booked in Hyderabad

Hyderabad, May 17 (GNS) Hyderabad and Cyberabad Traffic Police booked a total of 774 drunk driving cases during special enforcement drives conducted over the weekend to improve road safety. Hyderabad Traffic Police conducted a two-day special drive on May 15 and 16 and caught 474 motorists driving under the influence of alcohol. Among them, 417 were two-wheeler riders, 24 were three-wheeler drivers and 33 were four-wheeler and other vehicle drivers. According to police, 103 offenders recorded Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) levels between 30-50 mg/100 ml, while 188 cases fell in the 51-100 range. Twelve motorists were found with BAC levels above 300 mg/100 ml.

Meanwhile, Cyberabad Traffic Police conducted weekend special checks and apprehended 300 offenders, including 253 two-wheeler riders, nine three-wheeler drivers and 38 four-wheeler drivers. Police said all offenders would be produced before the court.

Asaduddin Owaisi urges OU exam postponement on Eid day

Hyderabad, May 17 (GNS) All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) chief and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi has appealed to the Telangana government to defer several Osmania University (OU) degree examinations scheduled for Thursday, May 28, as they coincide with Eid al-Adha.

In a post on X on Sunday, May 17, Owaisi urged Telangana Chief Minister Anumula Revanth Reddy and chief secretary Shanti Kumari to announce alternative dates for the examinations. He said students observing the festival could face difficulties if the examinations are conducted on Eid day.

The examinations listed in his appeal include



BCom fourth semester Business Statistics, BCom sixth semester Accounting Standards and Corporate Governance, BSc Honours fourth semester Computer Science (Big Data), BSc Honours sixth semester Optimization Techniques, BSc Biomedical Science fourth semester, BA (CBCS) sixth semester Mathematics and BSW (CBCS) fourth semester Social Work Methodology III.

TG EAPCET 2026 results declared; 1.44 lakh qualify in engineering stream

Hyderabad, May 17 (GNS) The results of the TG EAPCET-2026 examination, conducted for admissions into Engineering, Agriculture and Pharmacy courses in Telangana, were released on Sunday. The results were announced by Government Advisor K. Keshava Rao, Higher Education Council Chairman V Bala Kishan Reddy, Education Department Secretary Yogita Rana and Commissioner of Technical Education Sridevaseena. In the Engineering stream, 1,97,241 candidates appeared for the examination, of whom 1,44,704 qualified. In the Agriculture and Pharmacy stream, 84,954 candidates appeared and 73,294 qualified.

M Rushi from Uppal secured the first rank in the Engineering stream,



followed by Anshul from Moosapet and M. Vamsidhar Reddy from Pulivendula in second and third places, respectively. In the Agriculture stream, Mukaram Ahmed from Asif Nagar secured the top rank, while Taduri Nivrut Sai Venkat from Erramanzil and Sahithi Geethika Gunithi from Almasguda secured the second and

third ranks, respectively. Other top rankers in the Engineering stream included J. Roshan Manideep (Guntur), A. Sai Nikith (Mahabubnagar), M. Asna Mukaram Ahmed from (Medchal), V. Sharad Maheshwari (Banjara Hills), T. Shreyash Reddy (Kondapur), Bommireddy Samiraj Reddy (LB Nagar) and Rapolu Jayanth Shekhar Reddy (Suchitra).

Petbasheerabad police seize Bandi Sai Bageerath's iPhone in POCSO case

Hyderabad, May 17 (GNS) The Petbasheerabad police have seized the iPhone of Bandi Sai Bageerath, who was arrested on Saturday in the POCSO case registered following a complaint filed by a minor girl's mother on May 8. Sai Bageerath, who had been absconding since the case was registered against him, was arrested on Saturday night by the Special Operations Team of the Cyberabad police at APPA Junction near Narsingi. However, contradictory claims were made about him having surrendered before the police.

After taking him into custody, Sai Bageerath was shifted to the Petbasheerabad police station, where the police questioned him for about two hours and recorded his statement. His mobile phone was seized. Ritiraj, DCP (Kukatpally), who is supervising



the investigation, was present at the police station. After the questioning, at around 11.30 pm, he was taken to a primary health centre at Medchal for medical examination and was later produced before a magistrate, who sent him to 14-day judicial custody. He was later shifted to the Central Prison, Cherlapally.

The police will send the mobile phone seized from him for forensic analysis of the data stored on the device, which could play a crucial role in linking Sai Bageerath to the crime.

The police are now exploring the possibility of invoking Section 21 (Punishment for failure to report or record a case) of the POCSO Act, which punishes a person who fails to report a case or files a false complaint, though it explicitly exempts the child victim from any such liability. The police learnt during the investigation that some persons known to Sai Bageerath were aware of the alleged sexual assault on the minor girl but failed to inform the police through any of the available channels.

Heatwave warning for Telangana for next seven days

Hyderabad, May 17 (GNS) The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a heatwave warning for the next seven days in parts of Telangana. The Hyderabad Meteorological Centre has forecast a gradual rise in the maximum temperature by 2-3 degrees Celsius during the next three days in Telangana. Some districts are likely to see maximum temperatures crossing 45 degrees Celsius between May 19 and May 24.

Heatwave conditions are very likely to prevail at isolated pockets in Adilabad, Komuram Bheem Asifabad, Mancheril, Nirmal, Nizamabad, Jagtial, and Rajanna Sircilla districts on May 18. The maximum temperature in these districts may cross 45 degrees Celsius. Parts of Telangana experienced heatwave



conditions on Sunday, too. According to the Telangana Development Planning Society, the highest temperature of 45.7 degrees Celsius was recorded in Bheemgal mandal in Nizamabad district. Mosramandal in the same district recorded 45.5 degrees Celsius. Heatwave conditions also prevailed in a couple of mandals of Nirmal district. Dasturabad recorded a maximum temperature of 45.3 while Tanur experienced 45.1 degrees Celsius.

Telangana BJP mocks Revanth's 2034 ambitions

Hyderabad, May 17 (GNS) The Telangana unit of the BJP on Saturday took a swipe at Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy over his reported political ambitions of remaining in power till 2034 and later moving to national politics.

In a statement, BJP State Chief Spokesperson and Media In-charge N. V. Subash described the claims as "daydreaming detached from political reality" and compared them to the popular television serial "Mungerilal Ke Haseen

Sapne." "There is nothing wrong in dreaming, but dreams should at least have some connection with public mood and electoral arithmetic," Subash said.

"Politics is not a sequel to Mungerilal Ke Haseen Sapne. One cannot simply close eyes, imagine Delhi durbars, Cabinet berths and decade-long rule while people on the ground are still waiting for poll promises to be fulfilled," he remarked. The BJP leader said Telangana had previously witnessed similar po-



litical overconfidence from leaders such as N. T. Rama Rao and K. Chandrashekar Rao. "Both leaders once believed they were politically invincible. History, however, has a cruel habit of

humbling arrogance. The people of Telangana have repeatedly shown that no leader is bigger than public sentiment," he said, adding that the same applied even to former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Subash also criticised the Congress party's national ambitions, alleging that the party was struggling for political survival across the country. "Before dreaming of 2034 and Delhi ministries, Revanth Reddy should first ensure that Congress survives

politically till then. At the current pace, the Congress may well become a case study in political archaeology," he quipped.

In an apparent reference to Congress ally Indian union Muslim League, he claimed that even allies of the Congress had begun issuing subtle warnings to the Gandhi family after electoral setbacks in traditional strongholds. "Why talk about 2034? Let Mr Revanth first guarantee a Congress victory in the 2028 Assembly elections.

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