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HCs should set up special courts for cases pending for over 5 years: Union Minister Amit Shah

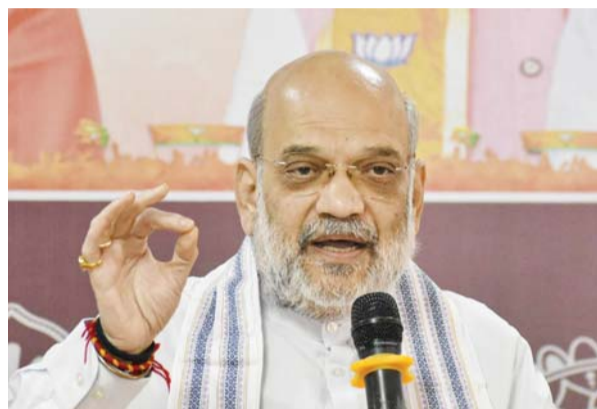
JAGDALPUR, May 19 (GNS): Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday said High Courts should set up special courts for the speedy disposal of cases pending for more than five years.

Chairing the 26th meeting of the Central Zonal Council (CZC) in Jagdalpur, headquarters of Chhattisgarh's Bastar district, Shah also said timely DNA testing in cases registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and rape cases could raise conviction rates in these offences to "100 per cent". The meeting was attended by Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, Ut-

tar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Uttararakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami along with senior officials, said an official release. Shah said it was a matter of "great joy" that the meeting was being held in Bastar after achieving the "historic milestone" of a Naxal-free India.

The entire credit for making India Naxal-free goes to the hard work and bravery of the jawans of our security forces, he said, adding that coordinated efforts by intelligence agencies, state police and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) ensured timely and decisive action against Naxalites.

He said development initiatives were simultaneous-



ly carried out in areas freed from Naxalism under the "Whole of Government Approach", with state governments and central departments working together.

"Our fight is not over yet because Naxal-affected areas have been lagging behind in the race for development for nearly five

decades. The effort would continue until these regions matched the rest of the country in terms of development," the release quoted Shah as saying.

After resolving all contentious issues between the states (in the central zonal council) as well as those between the states and the

Centre, the meeting was being held in a very positive and cordial atmosphere, he said. The meeting focused mainly on monitoring development works, including Jal Jeevan Mission-2, nutrition, health, education, financial inclusion and power sector reforms. Union Home Minister said that if timely DNA testing is conducted in POCSO and rape cases, the conviction rate in these cases can increase to 100 per cent.

The High Courts should establish special courts for the speedy disposal of cases pending in courts for more than five years, Shah said, adding that the administration must demonstrate seriousness in dealing with se-

rious crimes. He also called upon all the chief ministers and chief secretaries to join hands and move forward shoulder to shoulder with the Government of India in the fight against malnutrition. The Union minister also stressed the need to reduce school dropout rates and improve the quality of education. Ensuring banking facilities within a five-kilometre radius was a major achievement as most welfare schemes are linked to Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), he said. Shah also urged states to implement their 1930 cybercrime helplines in line with the Union Home Ministry's model format, and modernise their call centres.

India, Nordic Nations Boost Green Tech Partnership



Oslo, May 19 (GNS): Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced on Tuesday that India and Nordic countries have decided to elevate ties to Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership. Addressing a joint press meet with leaders of the Nordic countries following their third India-Nordic Summit in Oslo on Tuesday, PM Modi said, "Today, we decided to give India-Nordic relations the form of Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership. With this Green Technology Partnership, we will connect Iceland's expertise in geothermal and fisheries, Norway's expertise in blue economy and Arctic, and all Nordic countries' expertise in maritime and sustainability to India's skills to ensure a better future for the entire world."

"With the formation of this unique Strategic Partnership between us, we will connect Sweden's advance manufacturing and defence, Finland's telecom and digital technology and Denmark's cyber

security and health tech with India's talent to develop trusted solutions for the entire world," he added.

He termed extensive research and innovation ties an "important pillar" of India-Nordic partnership. He announced India and Nordic countries will increase linkages between universities, labs and startup ecosystems. He announced that both sides will deepen cooperation in Arctic and polar research. PM Modi stated that investment funds from Nordic countries are becoming key partners in India's rapid growth. He said that the recently concluded India-European Free Trade Agreement will usher in a new "golden era" in ties between India and Nordic countries. "In 10 years, our bilateral trade has increased almost four-times. Investment funds from Nordic countries are also becoming key partners in India's rapid growth. In the last decade, investment from Nordic countries into India has increased by almost 200 percent.

SP-Congress alliance to continue, focus on victory: Akhilesh Yadav

LUCKNOW, May 19 (GNS): Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Tuesday said the alliance with its partners would continue in future elections, asserting that the formula will be "victory not seats."

At an event organised by Amar Ujala newspaper, when asked whether Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and he would be seen campaigning together in the coming elections, Yadav said his party had vast experience in running alliances and always ensured



that its allies benefited from the arrangement. "We have entered into many alliances. We have experience of alliances and the Samajwadi Party has always ensured gains for its allies. We have never be-

trayed anyone. The alliance that exists today will continue ahead," Yadav said. He said that future alliance discussions would not revolve around bargaining for seats but around ensuring electoral success.

"There will not be a question of seats in the alliance. Even during the Lok Sabha elections, I had said that the issue was not about seats, the issue was about victory. The same formula will work again. The question will not be of seats, the question will be of victory," he said.

Tough times ahead; youth, small traders to be worst hit: Rahul

RAEBARELI (UP), May 19 (GNS): Congress Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday claimed that an "economic shock" is coming and it will not hit "Adani, Ambani, or Modi," but the youth, labourers, and small traders.

"Very, very tough times are coming," the leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha told reporters here.

Gandhi said a major economic "storm" not seen for many years is on the way.

He also accused the prime minister of not following his own call for au-



terity. "Instead of taking action, Narendra Modi is telling the country not to go on foreign trips, and Narendra Modi is making rounds across the world. This is the state," he said. Gandhi also alleged that "Ambani-Adani

structure" will not last long. "The structure, which he (Modi) has made — the one of Adani and Ambani, it will not remain intact, and will crumble. And, sadly, the loss will be felt by the common people. In other words, they will remain in their palaces, and the entire shock will be experienced by the youth and people of UP," he said. On Tuesday, Gandhi, the Lok Sabha MP from Raebareli, landed at the Lucknow airport and left for his constituency straight from there.

FM Sitharaman urges top US Nuclear firms to invest in India



New Delhi, May 19 (GNS): Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman met a high-level delegation of the US nuclear industry, comprising representatives of the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI), leading US companies, and the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum here on Tuesday.

During the meeting, the Finance Minister emphasised that technology collaborations and strategic partnerships can serve as critical drivers of innovation and resilience in India's nuclear ecosystem, and encouraged the participants to actively explore opportunities for engagement and long-term collaboration in this domain.

Referring to recent policy initiatives aimed at encouraging global participation in India's nuclear sector, she informed the delegation that

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) of up to 49 per cent is now permitted in nuclear power projects.

Sitharaman also highlighted the country's landmark Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Act, outlining the reforms introduced under this framework. These reforms are expected to accelerate India's clean energy transition, deepen technology partnerships, and enhance investment flows into the country's nuclear ecosystem. Meanwhile, India is poised to become the second country in the world, after Russia, to operate a commercial-level fast breeder reactor as the indigenously designed 500 MWe Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) at Kalpakkam in Tamil Nadu achieved.

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May this Eid bring peace, joy, prosperity and countless blessings to you and your family.

DEMAND POSTPONEMENT OF OU EXAMS SCHEDULED ON EID AL-ADHA

MIR QURRAM ALI
BRSV BRS STUDENT WING
GHMC COORDINATOR | ADVOCATE

BRSV BRS Student Wing GHMC Coordinator and Advocate, Mir Qurram Ali, has appealed to Revanth Reddy to postpone the degree examinations scheduled by Osmania University on May 28, as the date coincides with the festival of Eid al-Adha (Bakrid).

EXAMINATIONS SCHEDULED ON MAY 28 INCLUDE:

- ✓ BCom 4th Semester - Business Statistics
- ✓ BCom 6th Semester - Accounting Standards & Corporate Governance
- ✓ BSc Honours 4th Semester - Computer Science (Big Data)
- ✓ BSc Honours 6th Semester - Optimization Techniques
- ✓ BSc Biomedical Science 4th Semester
- ✓ BA (CBCS) 6th Semester - Mathematics
- ✓ BSW (CBCS) 4th Semester - Social Work Methodology III

"I request Revanth Reddy, the Chief Minister of Telangana, to kindly postpone the BA, BCom, and BSc degree examinations conducted by Osmania University on May 28, as the date coincides with Eid al-Adha (Bakrid). Holding exams on Eid day would put students at a disadvantage. I hope these examinations can be rescheduled to a suitable date."

Let's show understanding, compassion and support our students by rescheduling the exams.

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WE APPEAL TO THE TELANGANA GOVERNMENT AND OSMANIA UNIVERSITY AUTHORITIES TO TAKE A HUMANITARIAN AND STUDENT-FRIENDLY DECISION.

Eastern states to draft joint agriculture roadmap at bhubaneswar conference

Bhubaneswar, May 19 (GNS): An integrated roadmap for agricultural development and farmers' welfare in five eastern states Odisha, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and West Bengal will be prepared following deliberations at the Eastern Regional Agriculture Conference-2026 held in Bhubaneswar on Tuesday.

The conference focused on strengthening agriculture in eastern India through sustainable farming practices, infrastructure development, market linkages and inter-state cooperation. Addressing the gathering, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi outlined a comprehensive vision for the socio-economic



upliftment of farmers and highlighted several flagship initiatives of the state government.

Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan praised Odisha's agricultural performance, particularly its record paddy procure-

ment during the current year. Describing farmers as the "Annadata" of the nation, Chouhan said the fertile land, abundant water resources and favourable climate of eastern India would become a major driving force for agricultural growth in the coming years.

Emphasising sustainable agriculture amid evolving global challenges, the Union Minister called for prioritising natural farming and urged farmers to practice it on at least 20 per cent of their land holdings. He said reducing dependence on chemical fertilisers would



help preserve soil fertility.

Chouhan also warned of strict action against those involved in the trade of spurious fertilisers and pesticides and announced that a new Pesticide Act would be introduced to safeguard farmers' interests. Chief Minister Majhi echoed the

call for natural farming, stating that excessive use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides was gradually making soil toxic. He announced that organic rice from Odisha is now being used for preparing Mahaprasad of Jagannath, describing it as a matter of pride for the state.

He also urged agricultural scientists to intensify research on promoting organic farming in eastern India.

Majhi said the state government has initiated special efforts at the block level for reviving traditional and forgotten food crops facing extinction. Highlighting

measures taken for farmers' welfare, the Chief Minister said paddy was being procured at Rs 3,100 per quintal under the Samruddha Krushak Yojana, benefiting around 19 lakh farmers during the last Kharif season.

He said over 51 lakh farmers were receiving Rs 4,000 annually under the CM Kisan scheme, which, along with assistance under the PM Kisan scheme, ensured yearly support of Rs 10,000 to farmers. Majhi further said the state government was implementing the Krushi Vidyanidhi Yojana to support higher education for farmers' children and was bearing the entire premium share of farmers under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana.

Centre to blame west asia Conflict for failures: Mann

CHANDIGARH, May 19 (GNS): Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Tuesday attacked the Centre, saying the Union Government would now pin the blame for all its "failures" on the West Asia conflict.

He alleged that the Centre was pushing the country into an "undeclared lockdown" while "hiding" the true state of the economy from people. "They will increase it many times. In reality, (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi ji will now blame the war for everything. They will say the war is going on," Mann said while replying to a question on another increase in fuel rates.

The Chief Minister was

speaking to reporters after launching a pilot project on underground electricity wires in Satoj village in Sangrur. He said the Centre should disclose the stock of fuel and LPG to the people of the country.

He also flagged many Union ministers' claim earlier that there would be no increase in fuel prices.

"Now immediately after the conclusion of the assembly elections in several states, they have now started speaking about saving the country. But before the elections, the country was doing fine," Mann said, as he ascribed the hike in fuel prices to failed economic and foreign policies.

Naveen Patnaik slams BJP govt over deteriorating law and order in odisha

Bhubaneswar, May 19 (GNS): Leader of Opposition (LoP) and Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Supremo Naveen Patnaik on Tuesday launched a sharp attack on the BJP government, accusing it of failing to maintain law and order in the state and allowing 'goondaraj' to prevail. Reacting strongly to the brutal daylight assault on a young couple on Giri Road in Berhampur, Naveen Patnaik said the incident has shaken the conscience of the people of Odisha.

In a strongly worded statement, Patnaik said, "Odisha is witnessing the terrifying spectacle of anarchy. It does not feel like BJP rule, but rather that goonda-



raj is rampant. The sight of a young man and woman being brutally beaten to near death in broad daylight on Berhampur's Giri Road is utterly inhuman." He further alleged that criminals have become emboldened under the present dispensation. "The BJP government has handed Odisha over to criminals. Where is the police administration? Where

is the rule of law?" he asked.

Patnaik expressed serious concern over public safety and questioned the government's priorities. "How much longer will the BJP government jeopardize the safety of ordinary people? How much more shame will Odisha have to endure? People need security, not empty bombast," he said. The former Chief Minister warned that due to the complete breakdown of law and order, Odisha is being condemned across the country. He demanded that the BJP government immediately stop 'shielding criminals' and take the strictest possible action against the guilty to restore the safety and confidence of the people.

SC declines spiceJet relief but allows airline to move delhi HC again

New Delhi, May 19 (GNS): The Supreme Court on Tuesday allowed beleaguered low-cost airline SpiceJet and its Chairman Ajay Singh to approach the Delhi High Court for modification of a direction requiring a cash deposit of Rs. 144.51 crore in its long-running arbitration dispute with Kalanithi Maran and Kal Airways Private Limited.

A bench of Justices P.S. Narasimha and Alok Aradhe disposed of the special leave petition (SLP) filed by SpiceJet and Ajay Singh, permitting them to approach the Delhi High Court afresh in light of recent developments arising from the West Asia crisis and the Centre's



Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) 5.0. The apex court clarified that it was not expressing any opinion on the merits of the dispute pending before the Delhi High Court under Section 34 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for SpiceJet, submitted before

the Justice Narasimha-led Bench that the airline sector had been severely impacted by the ongoing West Asia crisis, including rising fuel prices and operational disruptions. He argued that SpiceJet, being the smallest player in the aviation sector, was facing acute financial distress and sought time to clear the dues. Rohatgi further submitted that the Centre had introduced a bailout and emergency credit line scheme for airlines, under which funds were expected to be released by November. The senior counsel stated that the airline had offered immovable property as security and was taking steps to sell it.

Army Chief dwivedi calls for expanding 'Smart Power' in volatile world

New Delhi, May 19 (GNS): Pointing to the turmoil in the Strait of Hormuz, Indian Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi on Tuesday led discussions on how the country can integrate military, diplomatic, economic and technological instruments to expand its "Smart Power" to navigate an increasingly volatile global environment. Speaking at a National Seminar on "Security to Prosperity: Smart Power for Sustained National Growth," General Dwivedi shed light on forces of trade becoming tools of strategic leverage.

"Semiconductors and their selective availability have become tools of strategic leverage. The Strait of Hormuz has



become a zone of active contestation," he said. Highlighting that the boundary between security and prosperity is no longer a boundary at all, he said the vision of collective progress has been overshadowed by other matters of national interest and stressed on expanding the nation's "Smart Power" in the fractured, fast-moving and unforgiving world. Elaborating

on the possible architecture of India's "Smart Power" in today's world, he quoted experts who have described it as the strategic intelligence to know which instrument to deploy at what intensity and towards what end.

"For India, it means using national strength with strategic wisdom to secure peace, accelerate growth and shape the global environment in our favour," said the Army Chief. General Dwivedi said there is a need for the traditional strategic framework of DIME - Diplomatic, Informational, Military and Economic elements - to be supplemented with new elements like technology and a "whole of nation" approach.

Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan chairs review meet on NEET re-exam preparations

New Delhi, May 19 (GNS): Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan conducted a high-level review meeting on Tuesday to take stock of the preparations for the conduct of NEET (UG) re-examinations.

The NEET re-examinations are slated for June 21 and will see more than 23 lakh candidates appearing again for the competitive test, as the May 3 examinations were cancelled after nationwide uproar over paper leaks. The high-level meeting by the Education Minister comes in the backdrop of the cancellation of NEET examinations, followed by angry outbursts by several medi-



cal aspirants who called out the administration's apathy as well as incompetence in conducting a seamless and leak-proof exam. Minister Pradhan stressed the need for complete integrity and transparency in the conduct of the examination and instructed the officials to ensure that all gaps are identified in the previous

examination process and subsequently addressed and eliminated in the re-exams. "The Re-NEET examination must be conducted in a secure, seamless and foolproof manner under stringent security protocols," the Education Minister emphasised at the high-level meet. According

to officials, directions have also been issued to hold coordination meetings with District Magistrates (DM) and Superintendents of Police (SP) across States to ensure robust monitoring and effective implementation of examination arrangements. Underscoring that vigilance and security at examination centres must

remain uncompromised, Dharmendra Pradhan also directed officials to ensure adequate arrangements for students, including transportation, drinking water and other essential facilities. Several technical and administrative measures were also discussed at the meeting for making the examination process more transparent and reliable.

Notably, the NEET examinations were cancelled earlier this month, after investigators found ample evidence of several question papers similar to those of examinations, circulation in the public domain, including on WhatsApp and other digital mediums.

Decided to revive scholarship for economically weak students, stop religious allowances: Bengal CM

KOLKATA, May 19 (GNS): West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari on Monday said his government has decided to revive the Vivekananda Merit Scholarship Yojana to support economically weaker students irrespective of their caste and faith, while discontinuing religion-based assistance to imams and others. Addressing a felicitation programme for 221 meritorious students who excelled in Madhyamik, Higher Secondary, madrasa and central board examinations, he said financial constraints should never become a barrier to higher education.

"The Cabinet decided to stop all religious allowances and introduce the



Vivekananda Merit Scholarship Yojana today itself," Adhikari said. Stating that deserving students from economically weaker sections would receive support under the revived scholarship programme irrespective of their caste, creed, religion or political affiliation, the chief minister said. "The Vivekananda Merit Schol-

arship Yojana, which had been shut down, was restarted from today," he said. The announcement came hours after Minister Agnimitra Paul declared that assistance schemes under the Information and Cultural Affairs Department and the Minority Affairs and Madrasah Education Department based on religious classification

would be discontinued.

Invoking social reformer Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar's vision, Adhikari said his government would accord "special priority" to women's education. He said special encouragement would be given to girls' schools, women's colleges and universities. The chief minister also said his government would make "maximum effort" to improve infrastructure in state-run educational institutions, observing that nearly 90 per cent of the state's population depended on government educational facilities, which lagged behind private institutions in terms of infrastructure and competition.

India must convert global uncertainties into Opportunities for faster reforms: Piyush Goyal

New Delhi, May 19 (GNS): Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal on Tuesday called for deeper collaboration between industry and government to advance ease of doing business, enhance India's competitiveness and accelerate the country's journey towards Viksit Bharat 2047. Addressing ASSOCHAM India Business Reform Summit 2026 here, the minister said the present global situation and geopolitical uncertainties should be viewed as an opportunity for India to strengthen business processes, undertake faster reforms, build greater resilience and strengthen



supply chains. "India and Prime Minister Narendra Modi have never allowed a crisis to go to waste and expressed confidence that the country would convert current global risks into opportunities for growth and reform," Goyal noted.

Speaking on the evolving global situation and the

West Asia crisis, Goyal said businesses should remain alert to both opportunities and risks without panicking. "India had successfully overcome unpredictable challenges such as COVID-19," he said while emphasising the need for smarter and more efficient business practices, including reducing waste, improving productivity and adopting energy efficiency measures.

"Lessons learnt during the COVID period had demonstrated the effectiveness of digital engagement and remote working models," he said. Referring to the rapid growth of Global Capability Centres (GCCs) in India, Goyal said around

1,800 GCCs are operating in the country and generating nearly 2 million direct jobs and around 10 million indirect jobs. "International companies increasingly recognised India as a trusted partner with youthful and talented manpower capable of supporting global operations," Goyal noted.

The minister expressed confidence in India's services sector and said emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and cyber security would create new opportunities. "India should look at emerging technologies, business reforms and global developments as opportunities," Goyal emphasised.

IPL 2026: Sooryavanshi's stunning 93 takes RR closer to IPL playoffs

Jaipur, May 19 (GNS) No Riyan Parag? No Ravindra Jadeja? No fast start for Vaibhav Sooryavanshi? No problem for Rajasthan Royals (RR) as they hunted down 221 against Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) and moved up to No.4 on the points table. If RR also win their final league game against Mumbai Indians on Sunday, they will firm up their playoffs spot, irrespective of other results. In RR's chase of 221, Sooryavanshi got off to an unusually slow start - he was on 11 off 12 balls at one point. After watching his opening partner and RR stand-in captain Yashasvi Jaiswal dominate the powerplay, Sooryavan-

shi cranked up to top gear when he lined up left-arm seamer Akash Singh for two sixes and three fours in the ninth over. He then went on a more familiar six-hitting spree and by the time he was dismissed for 93 off 38 balls in the 14th over, he extended his sixes tally in IPL 2026 to 53. Only Chris Gayle has smashed more sixes in an IPL season, back in 2012 when Sooryavanshi was a year old. Dhruv Jurel sealed the chase for RR with a calm fifty in the company of Donnovan Ferreira.

Jofra Archer ran in hard and hit the Jaipur deck harder, but even his extreme pace and bounce wasn't going to bother

Mitchell Marsh and Josh Inglis, the Western Australia boys. In the first over, Marsh advanced down the track, manufactured swinging room and flayed Archer for a four and a six over the covers.

Inglis was more fluent square of the wicket or behind square. He scooped Archer over short fine leg for four in the third over and by the end of the powerplay, LSG racked up 83 for 0. Four of LSG's top-five powerplay scores in the IPL have come in this season. RR's attack, meanwhile, went wicketless in the powerplay for a fourth successive game.

Wristspinner Yash Raj



Punja bowled the first boundary-less over in the first innings. In the 13th over, he conceded only seven runs to go with the wicket of Nicholas Pooran (16). That over triggered a passage of play where LSG went 22 without a boundary. Earlier, he had stopped LSG's opening stand at 109 in the ninth over when he tossed up a wrong'un on an in-between length and bowled Inglis for 60 off 29 balls. Punja returned figures of 4-0-35-2, demonstrating why RR trusted him and promoted him into their main squad after he was a net bowler with the side in the previous season. Marsh brought up his

fifty off 25 balls, but could manage only 43 off his last 32 balls on the day. The lack of pace from Punja, Sandeep Sharma and Dasun Shanaka slowed him down. "To be honest, felt like torture out there," Marsh summed up the back-end of his innings. He suggested that he may have left a few boundaries out there.

Marsh, Rishabh Pant and Ayush Badoni all departed in the final over of the innings, bowled by Archer, which cost RR only five runs. RR came out swinging in the powerplay in the chase, but it was Jaiswal, and not Sooryavanshi, who was doing most of the swinging during that phase.

He was responsible for 39 of the 71 runs RR scored in the powerplay. Jaiswal latched onto anything that was remotely wide of off. His four fours off Akash in a 23-run first over, bowled by Akash, set the tone for the chase.

By the end of the powerplay, Sooryavanshi was on 25 off 16 balls, which was measured by his standards. All of 15, he had the maturity that he could catch up on a pitch where the ball came onto the bat nicely. He reached his half-century off 23 balls with a reverse-sweep and threatened to convert it into a century until Mohsin Khan stopped him. He finished with a strike rate of almost 245.

If i can play for a larger purpose, i can perform beyond my abilities: Kohli

Bengaluru, May 19 (GNS) Virat Kohli discussed leadership, pressure, and the mindset needed to excel at the highest level during one of the most anticipated sessions at the third RCB Innovation Lab Indian Sports Summit Powered by Leaders, as he said that he can perform beyond his strengths if he's playing for a larger cause. In the candid discussion called 'Mind Over Everything: Virat Kohli on Peak Performance', Kohli openly discussed the pursuit of excellence that has shaped his nearly two-decade journey in international cricket.



wired in a way that I always want more responsibility and more load. That's where I seem to be at my absolute best." Kohli also discussed

the importance of finding purpose beyond just personal performance and explained how leadership has enabled him to challenge himself.

"You have no time to think about yourself. That's such a beautiful place to be in. If I can play for a larger cause, a larger purpose, then I can perform beyond the abilities I think I have," he said. He also reminisced about his time working with Rahul Dravid and Vikram Rathore on the Indian cricket team. "I had a great phase, and whenever I meet them, I thank them from the bottom of my heart because they took care of me in a way that made me feel like I wanted to play for them. They understood what I was feeling and genuinely took care of me mentally. That put me in a space where I could enjoy my cricket again," Kohli said.

Want Pant to become the best test player that he has always been, says Agarkar

Miami, May 18 (GNS): Lionel Messi continued his excellent form in Major League Soccer, scoring once and providing an assist to lead Inter Miami CF to a 2-0 victory over the Portland Timbers on Sunday. This win marked the club's first at its new home stadium. Messi netted his 12th goal of the season and recorded his sixth assist, while German Berterame scored Miami's second goal during a dominant performance at Nu Stadium. This victory ended Miami's frustrating 0-3-1 start at the venue, which officially opened in April.

Dayne St. Clair made four saves to help Miami achieve their third clean sheet of



the season, the first since a 2-0 win over Real Salt Lake in April. For Portland, the away game was tough again as they suffered their fourth 2-0 road defeat this season and their third loss in their last five away matches. Despite taking 16 shots, the

Timbers were outshot 22-16 and trailed 9-4 in shots on target. Messi continues to get closer to the league's scoring lead. The 38-year-old is now tied with Petar Musa and just one goal behind Hugo Cuypers in the MLS Golden Boot race. The

Argentine superstar has also contributed five goals and all six of his assists in his last four games as he builds momentum ahead of what is expected to be his final FIFA World Cup campaign later this year.

The eight-time Ballon d'Or winner looked dangerous from the start, forcing James Pantemis into an early save in the fourth minute before scoring in the 31st minute. Messi began the play from outside the penalty area, passing to Luis Suárez before charging into the box. Suárez combined well with Telasco Segovia, whose backheel pass set up Messi for a calm finish past Pantemis.

India projected to have 123 million EVs on roads by 2032



New Delhi, April 6 (UNI) India is set to see a notable surge in electric vehicles (EVs), with an estimated 123 million EVs projected to be on the roads by 2032, a report showed on Tuesday. In a significant move towards sustainable development and to achieve net zero emissions by 2070, there is a need to adopt EVs which can bolster India's economy while supporting the ambitious target set for 2030 — EV penetration of 30 per cent, according to the report by the India Energy Storage Alliance (IESA) and Customised Energy Solutions (CES).

The report estimates that India's cumulative on-road lithium-ion electric vehicle (EV) population increased nearly twelvefold, rising from 0.35 million in 2019 to 4.4 million in 2024. This rapid growth has been fuelled by supportive government policies, such as the FAME-II scheme, which offers demand incentives for electric two-wheelers, three-wheelers, and four-wheelers, along with capital subsidies for public charging infrastructure. It further highlighted that electric two and three-wheelers together

accounted for over 93 per cent of India's on-road EV stock in 2024. In contrast, electric four-wheelers represented around 6 per cent, while electric buses and trucks comprised less than 1 per cent. Notably, the personal electric four-wheeler (E4W) segment has emerged as a key driver of the country's expanding private and home charging ecosystem.

"To support the projected EV growth, we can anticipate that India's cumulative installed EV charging points — public and captive — will need to grow nearly 12 to 28 times, from around 76,000 in 2024 to between 0.9 million and 2.1 million by 2032," said Debmalya Sen, President of IESA. Installed charging capacity must also scale more than 17 times, rising from 1.3?GW to 23?GW, depending on EV adoption and infrastructure utilisation levels, Sen added.

Vinayak Walimbe, Managing Director of CES, added that by 2032, IESA and CES projects that India's on-road EV stock could reach approximately 49 million (Worst Case), 60 million (Business-as-Usual), or 123 million (NEV scenario).

Paytm posts strong PAT gains in Q4 FY25, achieves EBITDA before ESOP profits

Mumbai, April 6 (IANS) UPI QR codes have recorded the fastest growth in digital payments infrastructure in the financial year 2024-25, with a 91.5 per cent jump over the previous financial year to 657.9 million, according to the latest RBI data.

The surge in UPI QR codes was accompanied by a slowdown in the growth rate of credit card transactions to 7.94 per cent year-on-year, while debit card additions registered a mere 2.7 per cent growth to 991 million. The growth in the number of UPI QR codes has been accelerating with the increasing deployment by platforms like Google Pay, Paytm, and PhonePe.

The number of banks going live on UPI continues



to increase, and the total touched 668 in April, which is expected to increase the value of such transactions, according to bank officials.

March saw a record Rs 24.77 lakh crore in UPI transactions, marking a 25 per cent increase in value and a 36 per cent increase in volume compared to the previ-

ous year. UPI has become the dominant method for digital transactions in India. Nearly four out of five digital payments in the country were conducted on the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) in the financial year 2024 (FY24), according to the Reserve Bank of India's annual report.

Kajaria Ceramics' net profit falls 59 pc in Q4 due to weak demand, plywood losses

Mumbai, April 6 (UNI) Kajaria Ceramics Limited on Tuesday reported a sharp 59 per cent drop in its consolidated net profit for the January-March quarter (Q4 FY25), as sluggish domestic demand and losses from discontinued plywood operations weighed on its performance. India's largest tile manufacturer posted a net profit of Rs 43 crore for the fourth quarter, down from Rs 104 crore in the same period last fiscal, according to its stock exchange filing. The company attributed the decline mainly to Rs 30.79 crore loss from its now discontinued plywood business.

While overall revenue from operations grew slightly by 1.1 per cent year-on-



year (YoY) to Rs 1,222 crore, the company said domestic tile demand remained muted due to a slowdown in the real estate sector. The earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and Amortisation (EBITDA) also fell by 20 per cent to Rs 138.4 crore, with operating margins narrowing to 11.3 per cent, compared to 14.3 per cent a year earlier. Despite

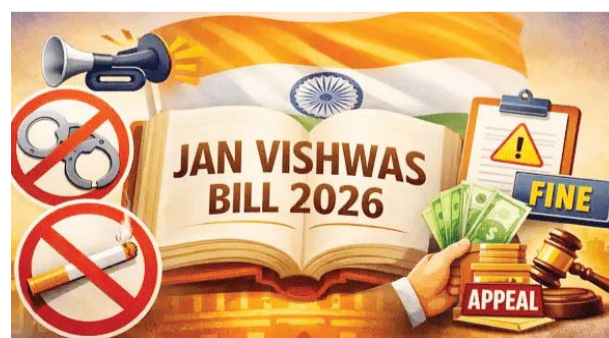
the weak demand, Kajaria saw tile volumes increase by 2 per cent in the quarter and 6 per cent over the financial year, reaching 114.7 million square metres in annual sales. The company's chairman noted that both export and domestic markets were soft during the quarter. The company has exited its joint venture operations in the UK due to high costs.

Jan Vishwas Bill 2026: Booster dose for businesses

Sant Kumar Sharma
The Jan Vishwas 2026 Bill is a part of the ongoing reform process initiated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government over a decade ago. Harassment of businessmen and common citizens due to regulatory provisions was fairly common in an era of 'License Raj' that earlier Congress-led governments fostered. Deregulation or lesser regulatory laws has always helped market sentiment and proved to be beneficial. The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), which provide employment to a large number of people, have been major beneficiaries of the government loosening its grip. Entrepreneurs now face far less challenges in scal-

ing up as they don't have to face too many ifs and buts, hallmark of earlier regulatory regimes. Small businesses are often the hardest hit by complex compliance as they often do not have lawyers working for them who will see them through the complex maze of regulatory laws. This Bill will help them as it removes the sword of "Inspector Raj" and spending time in jails for procedural errors. We have often heard about long pendency in our courts and by moving minor cases to administrative adjudication, the Bill helps reduce this backlog.

Officials will have adjudicating powers to conduct inquiries and impose penalties. Since there will be appellate mechanisms too, the structured mechanism will



help unclog the courts. By some estimates, it is believed that as much as one-third of court cases may just vanish over time, unburdening the courts. We have seen in the past how decriminalising minor infractions helped improved the ecosystem, encouraging investors and entrepreneurs. The new Bill is a clear indication that as a nation, we are shifting gears and moving towards a trust-

based governance model. The focus is now on corrective measures rather than punishing people with criminal charges. Ever since its inception, this government has led by example by putting in place a basic philosophy of "Minimum Government, Maximum Governance" that rewards honesty.

The new amendments seek to remove lacunae observed over the last three years and

complex regulations that led to corruption and fixers (middlemen in offices) will become a thing of the past. Simplifying laws and removal of control-based system, like doing away with the 2012 retrospective tax amendment, which hit Vodafone and Cairn Energy, have helped improve India's image globally as a reliable investment destination. The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions), Bill, 2023, was also aimed at amending certain enactments for decriminalising and rationalising offences to boost trust-based governance for ease of living and doing business.

The replacement of criminal penalties with civil penalties in many areas will lead to twin benefits of making governance trust-based

and business-friendly. The Bill has a very wide sweep as it changes 784 provisions across 80 Central laws, introducing uniform enforcement. Its goal is to improve regulatory efficiency, ease of living and ease of doing business. At one time, when Modi headed Gujarat government as CM, he used to organise 'Vibrant Gujarat' summits aimed at attracting investments. Little bureaucratic interference, and hastening up various processes, including land allotment and acquisition, processing subsidy components faster, and such other measures were the hallmarks that he established. Most of those experiences and insights which he gained then are now being replicated at the national scale.

Telangana CM orders fast-tracking land acquisition for irrigation projects

Hyderabad, May 19 (GNS) Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Tuesday directed that the land acquisition process for the Palamuru-Rangareddy Lift Irrigation project be completed on a war footing.

The Chief Minister also directed officials to expedite the land acquisition for other projects in the erstwhile Mahabubnagar district. Giving the direction during a meeting with the ministers and MLAs from the erstwhile Mahabubnagar district at the MCRHRD

here, he also assured that he would ensure the immediate release of the funds required for this land acquisition. The Chief Minister directed the district ministers to conduct reviews regarding the irrigation projects in coordination with the concerned district officials and to continuously monitor their progress. According to the Chief Minister's Office (CMO), he stated that measures will be taken to ensure immediate payments are made regarding land acquisition funds for projects in the district, with-



out any delays. He informed that the government is ready to settle pending bills. Min-

isters Jupally Krishna Rao and Vakiti Srihari, govern-

ment whip Yennam Srinivas Reddy, MLAs Kasireddy Na-

rayana Reddy, G. Madhusudhan Reddy, Tudi Megha Reddy, Dr Kuchukulla Rajesh Reddy, Dr Chikkudu Vamshi Krishna, Veerlapalli Shan-

karaiiah, Bandla Krishna Mohan Reddy, and Chief Secretary K. Ramakrishna Rao participated in the meeting. Minister for Irrigation and Civil Supplies N. Uttam Kumar Reddy said early this month that the Palamuru-Rangareddy Lift Irrigation Scheme would be completed by December 2027. He also announced that all pending irrigation projects in the erstwhile Mahabubnagar district would be completed on a fast-track basis. Meanwhile, the Council of Ministers' meeting will be held on May

21 at the Dr B. R. Ambedkar Telangana Secretariat. The Chief Secretary informed all the Special Chief Secretaries, Principal Secretaries, and Secretaries on Tuesday that the 33rd meeting of the Council of Ministers will be held at 3 p.m. on May 21 in the Cabinet Meeting Hall at the Secretariat. He requested them to send items duly approved in circulation for consideration of the Council of Ministers. They have also been requested to be available at headquarters during the meeting.

Telangana ACB finds Rs 5.88 crore assets during searches at official's premises

Hyderabad, May 19 (GNS) Telangana's Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) registered a case of disproportionate assets against a top official of Hyderabad Metro Water Supply and Sewerage Board here on Tuesday after assets of over Rs 5.88 crore were found during searches at premises linked to him.



The ACB said a case of disproportionate assets was registered against Sagam Anantha Laxmi Kumar, General Manager (Engg.), Project Division-VIII, Red Hills, HMWS&SB, as he acquired assets disproportionate to his known sources of income by indulging in corrupt practices and the dubious means during his service.

al land in Nizamabad and Sangareddy, six open plots, three flats and one house in Hyderabad were found.

Further, during the searches, net cash of Rs 1.10 crore, gold ornaments weighing 2.1 kg and silver articles weighing 9.2 kg were also found in the accused officer's house, the ACB said. Further, one Maruthi Ritz car, one Bajaj motor bike, all assets worth Rs 5,88,55,490 were found.

"The market value of movable and immovable property may be many times higher than the document value," said the release. Further verification of additional assets is underway. The case is under investigation, it added.

ACB officials conducted simultaneous searches at eight locations since early morning. One of the teams

conducted searches at his residence at Mallapur. The officials were seen counting cash and sealing gold ornaments, silver items and other valuables. They were also checking documents relating to properties at various places in Hyderabad and other districts.

In a similar case in December last year, the ACB had uncovered assets of over Rs 100 crore allegedly amassed by an official of the Telangana transport department.

A case of disproportionate assets was registered against Mood Kishan, Deputy Transport Commissioner, Mahabubnagar district. Though the document value of his properties was pegged at Rs 12.72 crore, their actual market value is estimated to be over Rs 100 crore.

Telangana gears up for grand State Formation Day celebrations

Hyderabad, May 19 (GNS) The Telangana government is making elaborate arrangements for the State Formation Day celebrations on June 2. The main official ceremony to mark Telangana Formation Day celebrations will be held on a grand scale at the Parade Grounds in Secunderabad.

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy will first visit Gun Park to pay homage to the Telangana martyrs at the Martyrs' Memorial, following which he will participate in the celebrations at the Parade Grounds. Vikas Raj, Special Chief Secretary to the State Government, on Tuesday directed senior officials to make appropriate arrangements for the grand celebrations on June 2.

According to an official release, he held a review meeting with concerned officials regarding these arrangements at the Dr B.R. Ambed-



kar State Secretariat.

On the occasion, he issued directives to officials regarding the specific arrangements to be made at both the Parade Grounds and Gun Park. He suggested that a nodal officer be designated from each department to oversee the arrangements for the celebrations and ensure effective coordination among departments.

He directed the Police Department to provide necessary security cover along the

routes travelled by dignitaries. He specifically instructed officials to make proper parking arrangements to ensure that vehicles arriving at the Parade Grounds face no inconvenience, prepare a traffic route map, and take all necessary precautions to prevent any disruption to traffic flow.

He also directed the Roads and Buildings Department to set up waterproof shamiyas and barricades. He instructed the concerned officials

to ensure proper sanitation on the venue premises and in the surrounding areas, as well as adequate arrangements for drinking water.

The Special Chief Secretary also directed the Department of Culture to organise cultural performances featuring various artists to create a festive atmosphere befitting the occasion.

He instructed officials from the Electricity Department to ensure an uninterrupted power supply, including backup generator facilities, and illuminate prominent city landmarks such as the Assembly, the State Secretariat, Charminar, Praja Bhavan, and other government offices with decorative lighting. He directed the Special Commissioner of the Information Department to make arrangements for a live telecast to ensure widespread publicity for the State Formation Day celebrations.

He advised officials from all departments to work in close coordination to ensure the event's grand success.

Furthermore, he issued orders for all departments to conduct joint rehearsals at the Parade Grounds starting on May 25.

Special Chief Secretary Naveen Mittal, Principal Secretary (Home) Shikha Goel, Secretary Raghunandan Rao, Director General of Police (Law and Order) Mahesh Bhagwat, Additional Director General (Intelligence) Vijay Kumar, Telangana Power Generation Corporation Limited Chairman and Managing Director Harish, Special Commissioner of Information and Public Relations Mukunda Reddy, Water Board Managing Director Ashok Reddy, along with other senior police officials and representatives from various departments, participated in the meeting.

DCA Assures Medicine Supply During Bandh

Hyderabad, May 19 (GNS) The Drugs Control Administration, Telangana, on Tuesday issued a public advisory assuring uninterrupted access to essential and life-saving medicines during the one-day nationwide bandh called by the All India Organisation of Chemists and Druggists (AIOCD) on May 20.

In a press note, the DCA stated that a meeting was held with the Telangana chapter of the AIOCD, during which it was decided that pharmacy stores attached to hospitals would remain open to avoid inconvenience to patients and the public.

The administration also said district chapters of the AIOCD would remain in close coordination with Drug Inspectors to ensure emergency medicines are made available from local medical stores whenever required. Corporate pharmacy chains, including Apollo Pharmacy and MedPlus, have also been advised to keep their outlets operational during the bandh. The DCA said members of the public facing difficulties in obtaining essential or emergency medicines can immediately contact local Drug Inspectors or Assistant Directors of the department for assistance.

Officials stated that the department is closely monitoring the situation across Telangana to ensure an uninterrupted supply of medicines. All field officers have been instructed to remain vigilant and respond promptly to any public grievances related to medicine availability.

Bhatti pitches Telangana waste-to-wealth model at Swachh Bharat review in Delhi



Hyderabad, May 19 (GNS) Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka on Tuesday, May 19, outlined the state's plans to deploy nearly 9,600 electric waste collection vehicles, remediate legacy dump sites and build decentralised waste processing infrastructure, addressing a two-day national review meeting on Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 in New Delhi. The meeting, inaugurated by Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal Khattar at Vigyan Bhawan, brought together ministers and senior officials from across the country to

review urban sanitation and solid waste management progress.

Bhatti told the gathering that Telangana was introducing 9,596 electric Swachh Auto Tipplers fitted with separate compartments for four-way waste segregation and QR code-based monitoring. On waste processing, he said the state was prioritising decentralised systems to treat wet waste closer to the point of generation.

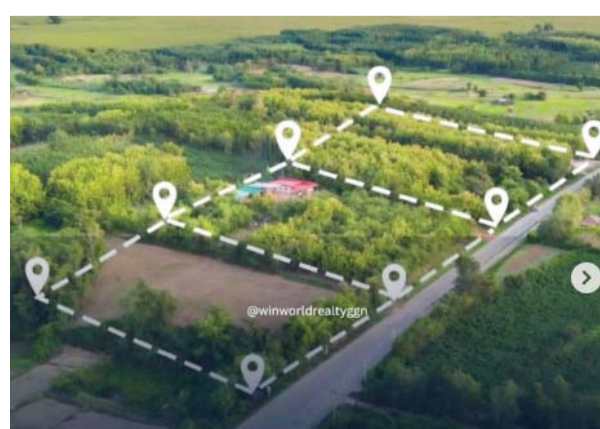
He said remediation of legacy dump yards was a top priority. At Hyderabad's Jawaharnagar dump yard, IIT Bombay was provid-

ing technical guidance for a long-term environmental monitoring system. At the Autonagar site, biominning had cleared nearly 30 per cent of around 22 lakh metric tonnes of waste spread across 40 acre, with reclaimed land to be developed into parks and public facilities. Bhatti also referenced a proposed Eco-Town project modelled on Japan's Kitakyushu circular economy initiative and called for a "War on Waste — Waste to Wealth" approach, arguing that waste management must evolve into an economic value creation movement.

Thorrur, Kurmalguda, Bahadurpally open plot auctions fetch Rs 83 cr

Hyderabad, May 19 (GNS) Telangana Rajiv Swagruha Corporation generated nearly Rs 83 crore through the open auction of 85 residential plots in Thorrur, Kurmalguda and Bahadurpally on Monday, May 18.

The plots, located in fast-developing areas near Hyderabad's outskirts, received a strong response from bidders during the auction conducted at a private function hall in Pedda Amberpet. Bidders offered prices significantly higher than the upset



price fixed by the corporation. The highest demand was recorded for plots in Thorrur, located close to

the Outer Ring Road (ORR) and the IT corridor in Adibatla. A total of 66 plots measuring between 200

and 700 square yards were auctioned in Thorrur. The minimum price was fixed at Rs 25,000 per square yard, while the average bid touched around Rs 32,500 per square yard.

The highest bid in the layout reached Rs 45,500 per square yard, the corporation said. In Kurmalguda, located near the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) and the Research Centre Imarat, 11 plots measuring between 200 and 400 square yards were put up for auction.

The minimum price for Kurmalguda plots was fixed at Rs 20,000 per square yard, while the highest successful bid touched Rs 27,500 per square yard.

Meanwhile, eight plots in Bahadurpally, situated along the Outer Ring Road, also attracted competitive bidding. The Bahadurpally plots measured between 200 and 1,000 square yards. While the minimum price was fixed at Rs 27,000 per square yard, the highest bid reached Rs 40,500 per square yard.

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