

# FALAKNUMA NEWS

## ENGLISH DAILY

www.falaknumanews.in

Email:falaknumanews@gmail.com

VOL: 1

Issue No: 25

MONDAY, 8 JUNE 2026

PUBLISHED FROM HYDERABAD

PAGES: 4

RS.1/-

## Defence production in India growing steadily; most equipment manufactured locally: Rajnath

LUCKNOW, Jun 7 (GNS): Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday highlighted India's self-reliance in the defence sector and said most of the equipment are now being manufactured indigenously. He was speaking at a 'Prabuddhjan and Varishthajan Samvaad Kaaryakram' in Lucknow on Sunday, the city unit of the BJP said in a statement.

"India remains in a strong position despite global challenges and international crises. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country is moving forward with confidence, and India's head will not be allowed to bow down under any circumstances," he said. The minister said the country's global stature has risen under Modi, and the benefits of public welfare schemes are "reaching the last person in society".



On the self-reliance achieved in the defence

sector, he said country's defence production is steadily increasing, and most defence equipment is now being manufactured indigenously. Singh, who represents Lucknow in the Lok Sabha, also said that the city is emerging as a key hub for defence pro-

duction and research. "Several defence-related units, including the BrahMos missile project, have been promoted. The expansion of DRDO laboratories is providing opportunities for research and innovation to the youth," he said.

He recalled that after becoming an MP in 2014, traffic congestion was a major issue in Lucknow. To address this, priority was given to the Ring Road project, the benefits of which are now being enjoyed by the city's residents, according to him. Singh further underscored the "marked improvement" in the law and order situation of Ut-

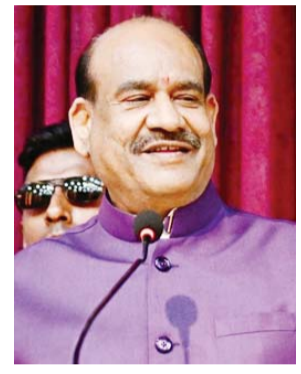
tar Pradesh. "Five international airports have been constructed in the state, and key projects like the Lucknow-Kanpur Expressway are set to be launched soon," he said, according to the statement.

Referring to the start-up sector, Singh said there are currently around 2 lakh start-ups operating in the country, and unicorn companies symbolise India's "new economic strength". At the programme, members of the Sikh community requested that a direct flight service or a Vande Bharat train connecting Lucknow to Amritsar be introduced, according to the statement.

## Speaker Birla calls for collective efforts for a developed India

NEW DELHI, Jun 7 (GNS): Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Sunday outlined a collaborative blueprint for making India into a developed country by 2047, emphasising that economic development needs to be inclusive. Addressing an event of the Maheshwari community here, Birla emphasised that entrepreneurship and nation-building must progress hand in hand to ensure that economic growth is both inclusive and sustainable.

According to the Lok Sabha Secretariat, the speaker



asserted that development is meaningful only when its benefits reach the last person in society and every citizen becomes an active participant in progress.

He said the national re-

solve for an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant India) is infusing new energy into small, medium, and innovation-driven industries, which are vital for equitable growth. The speaker observed that educated, skilled, and tech-empowered youth constitute the greatest strength of a developed India. He reminded the gathering that the ambitious goal of a 'Viksit Bharat 2047' can be achieved only through active public participation, cutting-edge innovation, and a shared collective resolve.

## Dhillon meets Amit Shah



CHANDIGARH, June 7 (GNS): Punjab BJP president Kewal Singh Dhillon on Sunday called on Union Home Minister Amit Shah at his New Delhi residence and held a discussion on the "pressing law and order challenges facing Punjab". Among the issues discussed during the meeting were the "alarming spread" of drugs in the state, the "deteriorating" internal security environment under the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government, cross-border smuggling of narcotics and weapons, and the overall ground situation in the border state, according to a party statement.

Dhillon presented Shah with a book on Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Sikh emperor who unified Punjab, along with a portrait of the

Maharaja, he said. Speaking after the meeting, Dhillon said he was grateful to Shah for his time and his deep concerns for Punjab.

"Punjab is a border state with immense strategic importance, and the AAP government has utterly failed its people. Drug trafficking is destroying our youth, gangsterism is flourishing, and law and order has collapsed. "I apprised home minister ji of the ground realities and urged for the central government's continued support in ensuring the safety and security of every Punjabi. I also had the honour of presenting him a book and portrait of Sher-e-Punjab Maharaja Ranjit Singh ji - a reminder of the greatness Punjab is capable of, and the greatness we must restore," he said.

## NTA Releases NEET-UG 2026 Re-Exam City Intimation Slip; Test On June 21

NEW DELHI, June 7 (GNS): The National Testing Agency (NTA) on Sunday released the exam city intimation slip for the NEET-UG 2026 re-examination, scheduled to be held on June 21.

Candidates can now check their allotted examination city for NEET-UG 2026. Log in with your application number and password to view and download your slip, the NTA said in a post on X. According to a public notice issued by the agency, the re-examination will be conducted in pen-and-paper mode from 2 pm to 5:15 pm across 551 cities in India and 14 cities



abroad. The NTA clarified that the exam city intimation slip is not the admit card and is being issued solely to inform candidates about the city where their examination centre will be located.

"This is NOT the Admit Card. It shows only your exam city. The Admit Card

will be issued later," the agency said. It said that all efforts are made by the NTA to give 1st choice city to all students. The agency further urged candidates to stay updated through its official websites for the latest announcements regarding the examination and admit card release.

## Zojila Tunnel achieves final breakthrough, bringing all-weather Kashmir-Ladakh connectivity Closer

New Delhi, June 7 (GNS): One of India's most ambitious mountain infrastructure projects, the 'Zojila Tunnel', is set to achieve a historic milestone with its final breakthrough scheduled on June 9, marking the completion of the most critical excavation phase of the project. The breakthrough ceremony will be attended by union Minister for Road

Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari. The project is being executed by Hyderabad based Megha Engineering & Infrastructure Ltd. (MEIL) on behalf of the National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (NHIDCL).

At 13.153 kilometres, the Zojila Tunnel is described as the world's longest single-tube bi-directional road

tunnel being constructed at such a high altitude, according to Hyderabad based company. The tunnel stretches from Baltal near Sonamarg to Meenamarg in the Drass-Kargil region and is being built at an elevation of approximately 11,578 feet above sea level.

The project is expected to provide a permanent solution to the long-standing

connectivity challenges posed by the Zojila Pass, which remains inaccessible for several months every year due to heavy snowfall, avalanches and extreme weather conditions.

Constructed using the New Austrian Tunnelling Method (NATM), the tunnel is regarded as one of India's most significant engineering achievements in the

Himalayan region. Besides the main tunnel, the project includes approach roads, bridges, cut-and-cover structures, snow protection galleries and the Nilgrat twin tunnels.

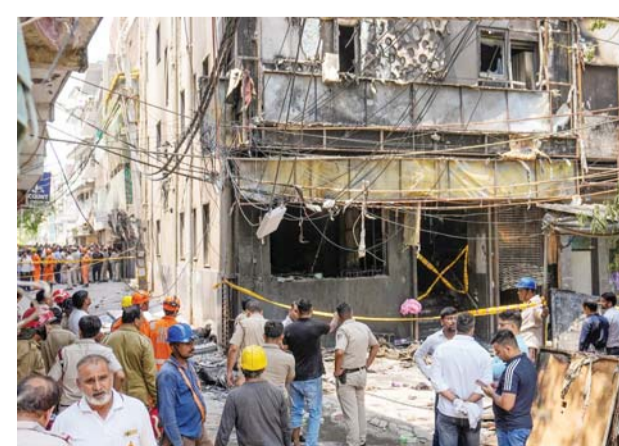
Once completed, it will provide uninterrupted connectivity between Srinagar and Ladakh, significantly improving access to Drass, Kargil and Leh while en-

hancing civilian mobility, logistics and strategic military movement in the sensitive border region. The tunnel is also expected to boost tourism, trade and economic development in the region. Work on the project commenced on October 1, 2020, under some of the most challenging geographical and climatic conditions in the Himalayas.

## Hotel fire aftermath: 3 properties razed, 12 sealed in Delhi in crackdown against illegal, non-compliant structures

NEW DELHI, June 7 (GNS): The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) razed three properties and sealed 12 others in a citywide crackdown against illegal structures on Sunday, officials said. In addition, the government's Revenue Department inspected 134 establishments across the city.

According to officials, civic authorities have intensified a crackdown against fire safety violations and misuse of premises following certain tragic incidents in the capital, including the fire at a B&B facility in Hauz Rani that killed 21 people, many



of them foreigners.

With the latest action, the number of properties demolished by the MCD since June 1 has risen to 97, and the number of structures

sealed to 126, officials said.

MCD has also issued 84 show cause notices to unauthorised constructions, 41 sealing notices and 33 demolition orders so far, they

said. An enforcement drive was carried out in South Delhi's Khanpur and Sainik Farm areas on, following directions from the government to act against unauthorised constructions and violations of building plans. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said the government was working with the residents' safety as its highest priority.

"The government is not only acting against illegal constructions but is also working towards developing a system that can effectively curb such dangerous and unauthorised constructions in the future.

### CONVOCATION DAY 2026

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## SYEDA KHUNZA FATIMA (MUSKAAN)

Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and Information Systems

NATIONAL LOUIS UNIVERSITY  
Chicago, Illinois, USA

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# MOHD ATHER RAHEEM

Editor-in-Chief

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# “Shot Down 13 Pakistani Aircrafts, Destroyed 11 Airfields”, Air Marshal Bharti On 1 Year Of Operation Sindoor

Jaipur, June 7 (GNS): Air Marshal Awadhesh Kumar Bharti, who served as the Director General of Air Operations during last year's military operation against Pakistan, on Thursday said that Indian forces had shot down 13 aircrafts and 11 airfields of the rogue nation under the Operation Sindoor.

Addressing a press conference in Jaipur on the anniversary of Operation Sindoor, the Deputy Chief of Air Staff claimed that the operation successfully destroyed nine terrorist hideouts inside Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), shot down 13 Pakistani aircrafts, damaged

their 11 airfields while ensuring that no damage occurred to Indian civilian or military infrastructure.

He emphasised that the armed forces were given complete operational freedom during Operation Sindoor and that every strategic decision was taken jointly by the Army, Navy, and Air Force leadership.

“When our desire for peace is mistaken for weakness, we have no choice but to act. And when we act, there is no room for leniency. It is decisive, lethal and translates into Operation Sindoor,” he said. Responding to the crucial question that why India agreed to

cease hostilities, he said: “I fully understand the anger and emotions of our people, especially the younger generation, given our past experiences with Pakistan.”

Clarifying India's position, the Air Marshal stated that the operation was aimed specifically at terrorists and their support infrastructure. “We targeted only those elements while ensuring there was no collateral damage. We achieved our objectives and our mission was complete,” he said.

He further added that the situation escalated when the Pakistani establishment decided to “side with ter-



ror” and make it their own fight. “At that point, it was no longer merely a counter-terrorism operation; it became an act of self-defense. Our response was lethal and ruthless,” he said.

According to the Air Mar-

shal, following significant losses, Pakistan sought cessation of hostilities.

He said: “We paused when the request came, we stepped back, but we didn't blink. We had delivered the clear message that misad-

venture will not go unanswered. Acts of terror will carry consequences.”

He underlined that nations which are “forced” into conflicts must always have conflict termination criteria and strategy insight, “otherwise one can go astray and not realise how to terminate the fight”.

Emphasising on the lessons of the operation, Air Marshal Bharti said: “Operation Sindoor reaffirmed the primacy of air power, which includes everything and not only the Air Force.”

He asserted that the terrorists hiding in Pakistan is now able to see through

its adversary.

“We now have first hand confirmation of the capabilities, capacities and tactics,” he added.

Air Marshal Bharti said Operation Sindoor showcased the growing coordination among the three armed forces and highlighted India's preparedness to respond swiftly to any external threat. He noted that the operation was carried out with precision planning, advanced surveillance systems and real-time intelligence inputs. He stated that the Indian Air Force successfully neutralised multiple high-value targets without

causing civilian casualties, demonstrating the country's commitment to responsible military conduct even during intense conflict situations. According to him, the operation sent a strong signal against cross-border terrorism and its supporters. The Deputy Chief of Air Staff also praised the role of indigenous defence technologies and modern warfare systems used during the operation. He said the armed forces effectively utilised air defence mechanisms, precision-guided weapons and electronic warfare capabilities to achieve operational success.

## Labour Reforms: Centre Launches Free Annual Health Check-Ups For Workers Aged 40 And Above

New Delhi, June 7 (GNS) Labour Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya on Thursday launched a nationwide annual health check-up initiative for all workers aged 40 and above under new Labour Codes, marking a major milestone in strengthening occupational healthcare and social security coverage for India's workforce.

The free health check-ups for all workers above 40 years of age will now be conducted across the country every year. Mandaviya said the implementation of the four Labour Codes reflects Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guarantee of ensuring dignity, welfare and social security for work-



ers across the country. The minister highlighted that under the leadership of PM Modi, the government has worked over the last 12 years to empower “Shram Shakti” and “Yuva Shakti” through employment generation and welfare measures.

Social security coverage

in the country has expanded significantly from nearly 30 crore people a decade ago to around 94 crore beneficiaries today, increasing from 19 per cent to 64 per cent, he highlighted. The minister further stated that ESIC coverage has increased from around 7 crore beneficiaries

a decade ago to nearly 15 crore beneficiaries today.

Early detection through health screenings can help prevent serious diseases, and treatment and medicines identified during the camps will be provided through ESIC facilities.

Highlighting key labour reforms, the minister said provisions for equal wages for men and women workers have been ensured, maternity leave has been increased from 12 weeks to 26 weeks, and work-from-home provisions for women have also been incorporated.

Dr Mandaviya said workers engaged in hazardous occupations and employees working even in estab-

lishments with fewer than 10 workers are now being brought under ESIC coverage. While workers earlier remained neglected and unheard, the present government has ensured that their concerns are being addressed with commitment and sensitivity.

He added that the nationwide health check-up initiative is another important endeavour aimed at ensuring dignity, protection and better healthcare outcomes for the country's workforce.

The launch event was simultaneously observed across 11 other locations of the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) hospitals nationwide.

## INDIA Bloc Meeting To Convene Tomorrow With 23 Parties; Congress Says “Janbandhan United” As DMK Opts Out

New Delhi, Jun 7 (GNS): Ahead of the INDIA bloc meeting on June 8, senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Saturday asserted that the opposition alliance stays united despite some parties choosing to opt out of attendance due to their “respective reasons”.

In an ‘X’ post, Ramesh announced that twenty-three political parties will be in attendance at the meeting, which will take place at the Constitution Club in the national capital.

Ramesh emphasised that despite not being in attendance, the parties have conveyed their opposition to the “policies and actions” of the Central government. “...They have strongly opposed those policies and actions of the Modi government that are stripping millions of Indians of their right to vote, attacking the Constitution daily, targeting opposition leaders through investigative agencies, causing serious harm to the livelihoods of crores of Indians, continuously disrupting household budgets through relentless inflation, betraying the hopes and aspirations of lakhs of youth, weakening the investment climate, and compromising national interests through their foreign policy. Like India, INDIA Janbandhan stands united with its diversity,” said Ramesh on ‘X’.

The meeting is crucial for the opposition grouping not only due to the chal-



lenge posed by the growing political dominance of the BJP but also due to the differences within.

Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), which has been a staunch pillar of the INDIA Bloc, has decided not to participate in the meeting over “betrayal” by Congress in Tamil Nadu, which decided to back the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) after the elections.

The meeting is crucial for the opposition grouping not only due to the challenge posed by the growing political dominance of the BJP but also due to the differences within.

DMK, which has been a staunch pillar of the INDIA Bloc, has decided not to participate in the meeting over “betrayal” by Congress in Tamil Nadu, which decided to back the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) after the elections.

Congress contested the polls as part of the DMK-led alliance and won five seats. Congress's decision turned the relationship between the two parties sour.

In the letter announcing their decision to not attend the meeting, DMK said it will continue, “as always, to raise its voice on issues affecting the welfare of the nation that may be brought forward by the other parties participating in the meeting”. Meanwhile, Trinamool Congress (TMC) chief Mamata Banerjee on Sunday left for Delhi to take part in the INDIA bloc meeting. TMC leaders Dola Sen and Kalyan Banerjee were also present at the Kolkata airport. This is the first meeting of the INDIA bloc after the Trinamool Congress lost the West Bengal assembly polls.

After the BJP's sweeping victory in West Bengal, the Trinamool Congress has also faced internal dissent following the rebellion of 58 MLAs supporting expelled leader Ritabraga Banerjee. Reports suggest up to 20 Lok Sabha MPs may also break away from the party. In response, TMC has announced a leadership shuffle, with Derek O'Brien and Dola Sen appointed.

## ECI Lifts Model Code Of Conduct After Assembly Polls, Except In Bengal's Falta Seat

New Delhi, June 7 (GNS) The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Thursday issued an order lifting the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) that had been in force following the 2026 Assembly elections in Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, and the Union Territory of Puducherry. However, the MCC will continue to remain in force in West Bengal's 144-Falta Assembly constituency, where the Commission has ordered a fresh poll.

The order stated that the provisions of the Model Code of Conduct come into effect from the date of announcement of the election schedule by the ECI and remain operational until



the completion of the election process. The Commission noted that the results of the General Elections to the Legislative Assemblies of Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, and Puducherry have now been declared

by the respective Returning Officers. Additionally, the results of bye-elections held in Assembly constituencies across Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Nagaland, and Tripura have also been declared. Following the dec-

laration of results, the ECI said that the Model Code of Conduct has ceased to be in operation with immediate effect in all concerned states and constituencies, except the 144-Falta Assembly constituency in West Bengal.

The Commission clarified that the MCC would continue in Falta because a fresh poll has been ordered there.

Earlier on May 3, the ECI had taken the extraordinary step of cancelling the entire voting process in the Falta Assembly constituency of the South 24 Parganas district, West Bengal. Fresh polling will be held on the 21st of this month across all 285 polling stations, including auxiliary booths. The counting of votes will be held on May 24. In its statement, the Commission had explained that the decision followed reports of severe electoral offences and large-scale subversion of the democratic process during the voting.

## Elected Govt Out Of Security Loop Hampers Information Flow On Terror Modules: Omar

SRINAGAR, June 7 (GNS): Warning against “working in silos”, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has highlighted disconnect between the security apparatus and the people's representatives and asserted that the region's security challenges cannot be resolved only through a purely military lens.

Talking to news agency here about the after effects of last year's Pahalgam massacre of 26 people by terrorists, Abdullah spoke about the complexities of counter terrorism and revival of tourism and argued that keeping the elected government “totally disconnected” from the law-and-order machinery hampers the cross-flow of vital information.

“The problem is that you're trying to deal with a security situation purely as a security situation. That is never going to be the case. The causes of terror and the effects of terror both have linkages to the wider community.

“And therefore, when you operate in silos, when the elected government and the elected representatives are kept totally disconnected from the security and the law and order apparatus, then you will end up with this situation,” the chief minister said while referring to busting of terror modules recently by the Srinagar police that remained elusive for many months. In a sharp observation on the disconnect between the law and order machinery and the

people's representatives, Abdullah said that the existing gap is so wide that even basic professional courtesies, like a police officer saluting an elected official, have become a source of professional anxiety.

“Today, a police officer thinks twice before saluting an MLA, a minister, or a chief minister... First, the poor guy is worried whether he should salute. Then, if he gathers the courage to do so, he looks to his right and left and thinks: ‘Did anyone see me? Will my job be in danger?’ This is the situation you're dealing with,” he said, laughing at the paradox. He added that when the police don't even know whether they should be part of a civil function of the elected government, the



cross-flow of information also becomes a bit problematic. “And again, I make the point, you cannot deal with terror or law and order purely from the security prism. Take, for example, what the LG (Manoj Sinha) these days is doing with the Nasha Muk

Abhiyan. Drug (trafficking) is primarily a security problem. It is primarily an enforcement problem of stopping drugs from entering Jammu and Kashmir. “But why is he doing foot marches? Why is he involving the general population? Because it's not

just a law and order problem, right? It's a societal problem with law and order aspects. Same is true for terror. It is a law and order, it is a security problem. But it is not exclusively a security problem,” he said. On the rise of terror modules and intelligence gathering, Abdullah shared a stark reality regarding his own access to sensitive data and said, “I get my intelligence from Twitter (X),” while highlighting the exclusion of the elected government from the security loop.

He said that treating terror purely as a security issue, without involving the wider community via their representatives, is a flawed strategy. The chief minister also touched upon the delicate task of reviving tourism, which

faced a setback after the “unfortunate” incident at Baisaran, Pahalgam, on April 22 last year. While domestic arrivals have increased, he noted that the sector remains a “victim of the geopolitical situation” and added that the conflict in Iran had a “dampening effect” on bookings with many potential travellers fearing Covid-style lockdown.

Refusing to focus solely on “numbers and arrivals”, Abdullah said he wants to avoid the “hype” that contributed to the volatile situation last year. “Confidence (of tourists) takes time...you can't bring it back in a week or a month. While people are more confident than they were last year, we realise that more needs to be done.” The chief minister said that his

government remains aware of the “limitations” it operates under but is committed to chipping away at the atmosphere of fear to ensure that both trekkers and domestic tourists return to the valley in healthy numbers. (Agencies) Regional Travel Guide Omar Abdullah said sustained peace and public participation are essential for long-term stability in Jammu and Kashmir. He stressed that the administration must build stronger trust between security agencies, civil institutions and local communities to effectively counter radicalisation and violence in the region. The Chief Minister also underlined the importance of restoring normalcy and economic confidence.

# India's engineering excellence powering world's most advanced sectors: Goyal

New Delhi, June 7 (GNS) India's engineering excellence is powering some of the world's most advanced sectors, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal has said, adding that the government's aim is to make India a globally trusted partner in supply chains. According to the minister, while a great deal of design and innovation is already happening through various Global Capability Centres (GCCs) in India, "our goal now is to not only design and innovate, but also to patent and produce here, making India a globally trusted partner in supply chains".

He visited the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) Aerospace Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Devanahalli, and appreciated French major Safran Aircraft Engines and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)'s joint initiatives in the country.

"Also interacted with the



leadership of several units operating from the SEZ and took their valuable feedback and suggestions to help strengthen the policy formulation process," said Goyal in a post on X.

Last month, at the 55th edition of the Paris Air Show, Safran Aircraft Engines, the world's leading French en-

gine manufacturer in the design, development and production of aircraft engines, signed an agreement with HAL, India's leading aerospace and defense company, for the industrialisation and production of rotating parts for LEAP engines.

This agreement supports the government's "Make in

India" policy and follows the memorandum of understanding signed by Safran Aircraft Engines and HAL in October 2023 to develop industrial cooperation in LEAP engine parts manufacturing, as well as the contract signed last February by both partners to produce forged parts. Safran Aircraft Engines is thus continuing to expand its footprint in India and is extending the scope of its cooperation with HAL through the production of Inconel parts.

"We are really proud to expand this long-standing partnership with Safran and to develop our industrial expertise in forging processes for Inconel parts for the LEAP programme", Dr DK Sunil, Chairman and Managing Director of HAL, had said. Safran Aircraft Engines is thus boosting its capabilities and presence in India, where it already operates five production sites in Hyderabad, Bengaluru, and

# 1 Lakh Cr fund to boost private R&D in AI, robotics & drones: DST Secretary

New Delhi, June 7 (GNS) Gold prices surged Rs 1,135 and silver prices soared over Rs 2,000 this week amid uncertainties around the US tariff deal deadline (July 9) and a decline in the US dollar index. On June 30, the 24-carat gold rate was at Rs 95,886 per 10 grams, while it closed at Rs 97,021 on Friday, IBA data showed. Similarly, the 22-carat gold price surged Rs 1,039 to Rs 88,871 against Monday's price of Rs 87,832 per 10 grams.

Meanwhile, the silver price settled at Rs 107,580 per kg against the June evening closing price of Rs 105,510 per kg, a rise of Rs 2,070 per kg. Notably, silver hit an all-time high at Rs 1,09,550 per kg on June 18. Both the precious metals have given a recommendable return in the first half of the calendar year, with gold outperformed silver, surging 26 per cent. Silver zoomed 22 per cent during the said period. On the



contrary, in June itself, silver outperformed gold by a huge margin amid a fall in the gold-silver ratio. "Silver outperformed gold in June (Silver gained by 9.41 per cent in the international markets while gold gained marginally by 0.4 per cent because of the fall in gold-silver ratio from over 100 to around 92-93 (fall in the ratio leads investors to move towards silver) combined

with the critical \$35/ounce mark that triggered momentum and technical buying on breakout," explained Prathamesh Mallya, DVP-Research, Non-Agri Commodities and Currencies, Angel One Ltd.

Moreover, Silver supply has been in deficit for 5 years in a row, and depleting inventories and record ETF inflows of over \$1.6 billion in June boosted market senti-

ment for the metal, he added. Considering silver's use case in various industries including automobiles, clean energy trends, and tightness in supply, the analyst sees potential in silver ahead.

"Going ahead, silver has the potential to outperform gold, because gold is just an asset which is a haven, while silver, being a precious metal, is also an industrial metal," Mallya said.

# India has never seen shortage of fuels: Hardeep Puri

New Delhi, June 7 (GNS) Highlighting the government's achievements in the oil and gas sector, Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Sunday said that "whether it was the period of the global Covid pandemic or global conflict, there has never been a shortage of petroleum products in India". "This has been possible due to the foresight of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he remarked.

He was referring to the geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, which peaked during the Israeli attack on Iran, during which shipping was disrupted and there were threats of closure of the Strait of Hormuz through which 20 per cent of the world's oil and gas exports are shipped out from the Gulf region.

"Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we have diversified our supplies in the past few years, and a large vol-



ume of our supplies do not come through the Strait of Hormuz now," the minister had stated earlier.

India imports around 85 per cent of its crude oil requirement, and a surge in oil prices leads to an increase in its oil import bill and pushes up the rate of inflation, which hurts economic growth. However, it has diversified its oil sources by increasing imports from Russia as well as the US and building resilience through strategic reserves.

Highlighting the infrastructure milestones in the oil and gas sector, Puri said that the country now has 23 modern operational re-

fineries with a total capacity of 257 million metric tonnes per annum to produce petroleum products.

The minister also highlighted the ministry's initiative in setting up storage facilities for strategic petroleum reserves, on which the country can fall back in times of emergency and which assume importance during times of geopolitical uncertainty.

The storage capacity includes 2.25 million metric tonnes (MMT) at Pudur, the Visakhapatnam facility has the capacity to store 1.33 MMT of crude oil, while Mangalore has a storage capacity of 1.5 MMT.

# EV charging operators in TN face higher power bills after tariff hike

Chennai, June 7 (GNS) Electric vehicle (EV) charging operators across Tamil Nadu are bracing for a steep rise in operational costs following a significant revision in power tariffs by the Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission (TNERC), effective July 1. The revised tariff structure has increased both energy charges and fixed monthly charges for EV charging stations, raising concerns among operators about the economic viability of public charging infrastructure in the state.

While TNERC has retained its time-of-day (ToD) tariff model -- first introduced in 2023 to incentivise off-peak charging -- it has hiked electricity rates across all time slots. Under the new structure, charging during solar hours (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.) will cost Rs 6.50 per kWh; during peak hours (6 a.m. - 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. - 10 p.m.), the rate rises to Rs 9.75 per kWh, up from Rs 9.45. Night charging (10 p.m. - 6 a.m.) will cost



Rs 8.10 per kWh, compared to Rs 7.85 earlier. The more significant burden, however, comes from the sharp increase in fixed charges for high-tension (HT) connections the type typically used by fast-charging stations. These monthly fixed charges have more than doubled, rising from Rs 145 to Rs 304 per kVA. These are levied based on sanctioned load and apply regardless of actual usage. For example, a 50 kW fast-charging station, which previously paid around Rs 1,300 in fixed charges, will now pay Rs 2,750 per month -- excluding electricity taxes.

This is expected to strain the finances of operators

already struggling with low utilisation levels. K.P. Karthikeyan, Director of the Indian Charge Point Operators Association, described the hike as a major setback. "Our average cost of electricity used to be around Rs 9 to Rs 9.50 per unit. With the new tariffs, it has increased by approximately Rs 2.50 per unit -- that's a 20 per cent jump in power cost," he said.

According to him, while higher utilisation might offset some of the impact over time, most public charging stations currently operate at just 5 - 6 per cent capacity, and even well-performing sites rarely exceed 15 - 16 per cent utilisation.

# India's economy has tripled in size over last decade

New Delhi, June 7 (GNS) India's growth story continues to draw global attention, backed by strong fundamentals and consistent performance. Over the past decade, India's economic size has tripled from Rs 106.57 lakh crore in to Rs 331.03 lakh crore in 2024-25, with the GDP growth at a robust 6.5 per cent for the year, according to official figures released on Sunday. The Reserve Bank of India expects this pace to continue into 2025-26. Other projections echo this optimism, with the United Nations forecasting growth of 6.3 per cent this year and 6.4 per cent next year, while the Confederation of Indian Industry places its estimate slightly higher at 6.4 to 6.7 per cent. This sustained performance is being driven by strong domestic demand. Rural consumption has picked up, city spending is rising, and private investment is on the upswing. Businesses are expanding capacity,

with many operating near their maximum output levels. At the same time, public investment remains high, especially in infrastructure, while stable borrowing conditions are helping firms and consumers make forward-looking decisions, the statement said.

Global conditions, by contrast, remain fragile. The United Nations has described the world economy as being in a "precarious moment", citing trade tensions, policy uncertainties, and declining cross-border investments. Amid this, India continues to stand out as a bright spot, with global institutions and industry bodies expressing confidence in its growth prospects. As part of India's strong macroeconomic fundamentals, inflation in the country has eased sharply, offering relief to both households and businesses. In May 2025, the year-on-year inflation rate based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) stood at 2.82 per cent.

# IPO-bound Smartworks' losses swell 21 pc to over Rs 63 crore in FY25

Mumbai, June 7 (GNS) Smartworks Coworking Spaces' losses widened to Rs 63.17 crore in FY25, a rise of Rs 13.22 crore against FY24 losses, the company said in its red herring documents on Monday ahead of its initial public offering (IPO). The co-working space provider's net loss stood at Rs 49.95 crore in the preceding 2023-24 financial year. The IPO opens for public subscription on July 10 and concludes on July 14. The price band has been fixed at Rs 387-407, and investors had to place a lot of 36 shares to the red herring prospectus.

The shares allocation to anchor investors will take place on July 9. The IPO is a combination of fresh shares worth Rs 445 crore and an offer for sale of 3,379,740 equity shares. Earlier, Smartworks had planned to raise over Rs 550 crore through selling fresh shares, but they reduced it to Rs 445 crore. Simi-

larly, the offer-for-sale (OFS) portion has been cut to 33.79 shares from 67.59 shares.

NS Niketan LLP, SNS Infra-realty LLP and Space Solutions India Pte. Ltd are likely to offload their stake through OFS. Of the total funds raised, about Rs 226 crore will go toward capital expenditures for security deposits and fit-outs in new centres, Rs 114 crore will go toward loan repayments, and the remaining sum will be used for general business needs. Meanwhile, according to the company's RHP, operating revenue increased to Rs 1,374.05 crore in the last financial year as compared to Rs 1,039.36 crore in FY24. The Gurugram-based company presently operates in 48 locations with a combined seating capacity of over 1.9 lakh. JM Financial, BOB Capital Markets Limited, IIFL Capital Services, and Kotak Mahindra Capital Company Limited are the running lead managers for the Smartworks.

# India's vehicle sales accelerate 4.84 pc in June to cross 20 lakh units

New Delhi, June 7 (GNS) Total automobile retail sales across segments in India grew 4.84 per cent year-on-year in June to cross 20.03 lakh units, driven by festival and marriage-season demand, Federation of Automotive Dealers Associations (FADA) said on Monday. "Segment-wise, every category closed in the green with two-wheelers at 4.73 per cent, three-wheelers at 6.68 per cent, passenger vehicles at 2.45 per cent, commercial vehicles at 6.6 per cent, tractors at 8.68 per cent and construction equipment at 54.95 per cent," said FADA president C.S. Vigneshwar.

"While festival and marriage-season demand provided a boost, financing constraints and intermittent variant shortages moderated sales. Early monsoon rains and rising EV penetration also shaped buying patterns," he said. "Overall, June demonstrat-



ed a resilient two-wheeler performance amid mixed market signals," Vigneshwar added.

Passenger vehicle retails slipped 1.49 per cent month-on-month yet delivered a 2.45 per cent year-on-year uplift. "Heavy rains and tight market liquidity weighed on footfall and conversion, even as elevated incentive schemes and fresh bookings lent selective support. Some dealers indicated that certain PV manufacturers have introduced compulsory billing procedures -- such as auto-

matic wholesale debits -- to meet volume targets; inventory consequently stands at around 55 days. June thus painted a picture of modest but steadfast PV performance amid varied market cues," said Vigneshwar.

CV retails declined 2.97 per cent month-on-month while achieving a robust 6.6 per cent year-on-year expansion. Vigneshwar noted that early-month deliveries buoyed volumes before monsoon-induced slow-downs and constrained liquidity dampened enquiries and conversions.

# UltraTech denies reports of CCI probe in cement cartelisation case

Mumbai, June 7 (GNS) UltraTech Cement Ltd. on Saturday denied being investigated by the antitrust regulator Competition Commission of India (CCI) for alleged contravention of competition norms. In a stock exchange filing, the Aditya Birla Group company called such media reports "false and misleading" and clarified that it is not under investigation in a case from 2020. "The company has neither received any order from the CCI in this case nor have the company's financials been sought by the CCI," a stock exchange filing read.

"It is clarified that the Company is not under investigation in this Case No. 35 of 2020 before the Competition Commission of India," according to the filing. The filing further stated that the India Cements Limited, a subsidiary of the Company, "is party to Case No. 35 of 2020 and is separately



making appropriate disclosures in this regard, while exploring legal options". In a separate exchange filing, India Cements Limited (ICEM) said it is yet to receive a full version of the CCI investigation report under the Competition Act, 2002.

"ICEM is yet to receive a full version of the investigation report of the Director General, under the Competition Act, 2002. ICEM is currently assessing its legal options. There is no finding by the CCI at this stage against ICEM and no fi-

nancial penalty has been levied," it said in the stock exchange filing. Meanwhile, UltraTech Cement Limited has announced the resignation of its Chief Legal Officer, Anoop Khatri, effective from the close of business on July 3, 2025, due to personal reasons. "We hereby inform you that Mr. Anoop Khatri, Chief Legal Officer has tendered his resignation from the services of the Company with effect from close of business hours on 3rd July, 2025 due to personal reasons," according to the company's exchange

## Govt committed to providing houses, clear land rights to poor: Ponguleti

Hyderabad, June 7 (GNS) Telangana Revenue, Housing and Information & Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy on Thursday said the state government was working to provide every poor family with a house and ensure clear ownership rights over land. Reviewing housing and revenue matters with public representatives and officials from the erstwhile Nalgonda and Mahabubnagar districts, the minister said the government under Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy was implementing the "Indiramma Indlu" scheme to bring lasting change in the lives of the poor.

He said financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh was being provided to eligible poor families for house construction on their own land and added that nearly four lakh houses had already been sanctioned across the state.



Ponguleti directed district collectors to ensure transparency in the implementation of housing schemes and the timely release of installment payments to beneficiaries. He also instructed officials to complete the selection of beneficiaries for double-bedroom houses by May 20 and ensure that only eligible poor families were selected. The minister

further announced that new buildings for revenue and registration offices would be constructed across the state and that additional Tahsildars would be appointed in mandals with populations exceeding one lakh. He also stressed the need for joint surveys by the revenue and forest departments to resolve pending land disputes permanently.

## 90-yr-old farmer moves HC over HYDRAA demolition claim

Hyderabad, June 7 (GNS) There seems to be no respite for HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath from courts. On Wednesday, May 4, the Telangana High Court issued a contempt notice to the officer over violations of its demolition orders allegedly carried out on April 14 at Ailapur village in Sangareddy district.

The 90-year-old agriculturist petitioner, MA Shareef, told the court the Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency claimed ownership of his 36.37 acres of land and demolished several structures, including cattle sheds, a farmhouse and servant quarters, in the presence of police.

The High Court had earlier instructed HYDRAA not to interfere with existing structures and act in matters involving Full Tank Level encroachments. The



petitioner alleged that even after displaying pattadar passbooks and sale deed dating back to 1959, HYDRAA went ahead with the demolition on April 11. He further stated that CCTV cameras were broken and his caretakers were allegedly subjected to intimidation by HYDRAA officials.

Taking note of the submissions, the Telangana High Court ordered notices to be issued to Ran-

ganathan, the Sangareddy District Collector and Joint Collector, revenue officials of Ameenpur mandal, officials of the GHMC and local panchayat bodies, and the Station House Officer of Ameenpur Police Station, seeking their response to the alleged violation of the court's order. The petitioner alleged violation of High Court stay orders despite valid land documents dating back to 1959.

## SC order protects 600 acre forest land in TG from illegal claimants



Hyderabad, June 7 (GNS) In a landmark judgement in a case spanning more than 75 years, the Supreme Court of India has dismissed an appeal by two individuals, who were staking claim to ownership of 600 acres of forest land in Survey No 81 of Kalvalanagaram village in Karakagudem mandal of Bhadrachalam district. The judgement was delivered by a bench comprising Justice SVN Bhatti and Justice Pankaj Mittal on Wednesday, May 6, in a civil appeal filed by Vadiyala Prabhakar Rao and others, against the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

The appellants had been claiming that in 1931-32, the Seventh Nizam of Hyderabad Mir Osman Ali Khan had granted pattas in their favour, or in favour of their predecessors. They had been claiming that in 1920 (1330 Fasli), rights were created in favour of Sivai jamandars, and the same were mutated in favour of persons in possession in or about 1931, when pattas, i.e., a grant or allotment, were made in their favour. On February 6, 1950, a proposal was initiated for notifying an extent of 787 acre in Survey No 81, which included the land presently in question, as forest land.

The claimants had been contending that the state government/forest department's action to treat the 600 acre land out of the total 785 acre land as forest land, was illegal. Their first proprietary claim was rejected by the Joint Collector of the erstwhile Khammam district in AP on May 19, 2003, had held that the claimants had failed to produce original documentary evidence, such as patta certificates, to support their claim of assignment, noting that mere entries in the revenue records were insufficient to confer title. It was also established that the

claimants were never in physical possession of the land for 70 years, as the property remained uncultivated and was covered by forest growth. Additionally, the claimants had failed to provide evidence explaining how the land's mutation transitioned from the twelve original persons down to only two claimants.

Ultimately, the Joint Collector concluded that he was not the appropriate forum to adjudicate matters of land title. The document of title, i.e., the patta certificate, was never produced in support of the claimants' case. The revenue record for the year 1954-55, i.e., the Khasra Pahani, had recorded the land in question as UFTADA and covered in thick forest growth, and the claimants were never in possession of that land. A single-bench of the AP High Court in Hyderabad, on March 27, 2012, had allowed the writ petition filed by the claimants, had established that they had been given pattas in 1933 AD (1343 Fasli).

The single-bench had also cited the Mandal Revenue Officer's (MRO) report showed the original 12 pattadars were granted the land after paying forest growth valuation and consulting forest authorities. The single bench had supported the claimants' stance that although records for the mutation of the full 600 acre land to the two primary claimants was unavailable; it was "admittedly destroyed" during the Police Action (Operation Polo) launched by the Indian Union against the Nizam's Government in 1948.

The single judge had also found that the 1950 notification, and the Joint Collector's order was ultra vires and non est in the eyes of the law, because it was issued under the repealed 1326 Fasli Act rather than the 1355 Fasli Act.

## Rising Intolerance Turns Everyday Disputes Into Flashpoints

Hyderabad, June 7 (GNS) UNSOCIAL sociability: this phrase best describes the condition of our contemporary life, particularly in urban spaces. We live in close proximity to other people in overcrowded cities with blocks of high-rise apartments standing next to each other. Unlike many American suburbs, where most houses stand apart, some distance away from others, our suburbs and extended urban cities have clusters of housing, where people are inevitably thrown together. If aliens were hovering in the skies above, they would be struck by the extraordinary social-ness of these spaces. The paradox is that this social existence is marked by unsocial behaviour. Although we routinely assume that sharing a space would generate common concerns and engender friendships, conviviality and the sentiment of care, the reality is quite different. Impatience, anger, offensive behaviour, violent outbursts and, at times, physical assault, abound in this social world.

Seemingly minor issues, such as parking one's car in the available vacant space by the side of the road, asking someone with a pet to take the next lift and slight delay in opening the front



gate by the guard, provoke extremely hostile reactions, with friends and family joining in and taking the quarrel forward. These occurrences have become the staple diet in local news. Most of us, even those who are not actively in service or working, don't seek out remote, isolated places to live in, except for very brief intervals; yet, being with other people proves a strain. Jean Paul Sartre's words, "Hell is the other people", has taken a new reality where a minor difference of opinion can quickly escalate and be seen as a personal affront. What often ensues is a game of one-upmanship aimed at reasserting one's superiority. This is the disturbing but unavoidable state of our present-day existence and there seems to be no escape from it. This routinisation of violence is commonly associated with stress that

accompanies the dream of realising high aspirations in an extremely unpredictable market system. Undoubtedly, the environment in which most of us work and live is stressful, but this element does not adequately explain or capture the present reality.

The friction and antagonism that surface with such regularity in daily life point to the emergence of a self that is simultaneously riddled with anxiety and self-certitude. It strongly desires affirmation and recognition (which must necessarily come from others) but acts with the belief that it possesses the truth. If the former pushes towards sociability, the latter renders the other, particularly those who differ, dispensable. In this relationship, it is only the self (me and those standing alongside me) that has value and merits consideration.

## Hyderabad MP's Initiative for Public Welfare: Representation Submitted for Salar Park, Al Saboor colony Restoration

Hyderabad, June 7 (GNS) Under the guidance of Hyderabad MP, Asaduddin Owaisi, a representation was submitted to the South Zone GHMC Zonal Commissioner seeking immediate maintenance and restoration of Salar Park, Al Saboor Colony, Rein Bazar Division. The representation was submitted by Mohd Jamal, Structural Engineer and AIMIM Active Worker, along with Shahid, AIMIM Active Worker. Key issues raised included lack of regular maintenance, overgrown tree branches affecting electric wires, dried grass, rusted play equipment, and the need for a dedicated watchman. The delegation requested GHMC to take necessary action to restore the park and ensure proper upkeep for the benefit of local residents.



## Rural Digital Empowerment: From Access to Competitive Edge - A Fact-Driven Exploration

Rural digital empowerment is a quiet revolution of social and economic design built on participation, transparency, self-reliance and sufficiency. The hard numbers of mid-2025 tell a striking tale: India has begun to break the age-old chains of geographic isolation, information gaps, and administrative leakage. The real question now is not whether progress is happening. The real question is whether rural India can turn this digital foundation into last-

ing economic muscle that outpaces urban hubs and global rivals. BharatNet: The Grand Highway, Yet Missing Village Lanes\* :-

BharatNet stands as one of the world's most ambitious rural broadband ventures. 215,000 Gram Panchayats are now stitched together by 680,000 kilometers of gleaming optical fiber. This backbone powers e-governance, telemedicine, online classrooms, and digital banking right to the village doorstep. The World Bank reminds us that

a 10% rise in broadband reach can lift a developing nation's GDP growth by 1.38%. That multiplier is too precious for India to ignore. Yet a clear gap remains. 95% of Panchayats are connected, but in remote corners like the Northeast and island territories, household connectivity languishes below 40%. For perspective, China's village-level fiber coverage is above 98%. Universal access demands more. By 2026, India needs roughly 45,000 crore of fresh investment.

## The emergence of Indian Knowledge Systems

Indian Knowledge System is just not about merely knowing about some ancestral knowledge. It must be our endeavour to protect received wisdom, economic security, and national pride. There is a need for documenting traditional knowledge and to provide evidence of prior knowledge to the world. The traditional knowledge stems from spiritual expressions, agricultural, medicinal and environmental knowledge. Traditional knowledge is obtained through recognition of prior skills in music, handicrafts, dance, stories and poetry. This traditional knowledge is always evolving and most of the time,

as were transferred from generations sometimes through oral renditions to the next generation, we tend to lose the essence of it. Sometimes when the next generation pursues different avocation, the very element of the traditional knowledge is lost.

The four Vedas, Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, Atharva Veda has given us great lessons, and each Veda is divided into four parts viz., Mantras, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, and Upanishads. Aranyakas and Upanishads are the philosophical portions of the Vedas. Veda is derived from the root word vid which means "to know". Aranya

means "forest" and Aranyaka means "forest writing". Upanishad is a combination of three Sanskrit words: upa, ni, shad whose translation approximates: "near", "below" and "sit". Documentation becomes important which many of our generations missed. Infact, a US company was awarded a patent for neem as a pesticide which we have been using for generations. However, CSIR successfully forced the USPTO to revoke a patent it granted on use of powdered turmeric (Curcuma longa) for wound healing.

IKS can be further divided into literary and non-literary. In the case of literary,

it encompasses Sanatan Dharma, other Dharmic traditions and Wealth of religious and other literature in all major Indian Languages. In the case of non-literary, it is oral traditions. India was the first to introduce Zinc to the rest of the world between 600 and 200 BCE. Further all the golden ornaments worn by the kings and queens are the testament to the early presence of Gold, Silver etc., Geometry is an ancient Science in India. Mathematics was at the high just with a pole anchored on the ground and a thread attached to it, Indians were able to generate complex geometrical shapes.

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