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Arunachal declares 2025-35 as 'decade of hydropower'

Move aimed at harnessing the State's potential to generate 58,000 MW of electricity, creating stable and supportive regulatory framework for overall development of industrial ecosystem: CMO

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

The Cabinet headed by Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu has declared 2025-2035 as the 'Decade of Hydropower' to harness the State's potential to generate 58,000 megawatts (MW) of electricity.

The special Cabinet meeting held on Friday termed the thrust on hydropower as a "strategic management of revenues generated through free power from the hydroelectric projects (HEPs).

Strategic measures

"During the Decade of Hydropower, the government aims to undertake strategic policy and governance measures not just to harness the hydropower potential through a judicious mix of mega, large, and small hydroelectric projects, but also to create a stable and supportive policy and regulatory framework for the overall development of the industrial ecosystem in the State," a statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office said.

According to the agreement with power developers, Arunachal Pradesh will receive 12% free power from each HEP, and an additional 1% for a local area development fund.

Arunachal Pradesh expects ₹4,525 crore in annual revenue from 2035 onwards from projects in



Watt formula: According to the agreement with power developers, the State will receive 12% free power from each HEP. FILE PHOTO

Arunachal Pradesh expects ₹4,525 crore in annual revenue 2035 onwards from projects in various stages of completion

various stages of completion. These projects, riding cumulative investments of more than ₹2 lakh crore in the next 10 years, have a combined capacity of generating 19 gigawatts (GW) of electricity.

Escrow account

The State Cabinet approved the creation of an escrow account for "strategic management and effective utilisation of the revenue generated from the proceeds of free power" from these HEPs.

"By effective management of these benefits, the State can make strategic and financial decisions about investing in the over-

all development of the State. This initiative will not only streamline financial processes but also ensure that the benefits of free power are maximised for the State's long-term sustainable growth and prosperity," the CMO said in the statement.

Plans for Siang project

The Cabinet underscored the need to allay fears and build consensus among the people likely to be affected by the controversial Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP) that anti-dam activists said is targeted to generate 11,000 MW of electricity.

The Centre declared the SUMP as a national project in 2008, given its significance from the national security point of view.

The project is being pursued as a counter to China's proposed 60,000 MW project on the Yarlung Tsangpo River in Tibet

upstream.

The Cabinet sought regular and detailed interactions with the likely project-affected families (PAFs) regarding the urgent need to conduct the pre-feasibility survey for the SUMP. Villagers in three districts – Siang, East Siang and Upper Siang – have been resisting this survey. The Cabinet emphasised the need for continuous engagement with the PAFs to ensure fair, just, and equitable compensation and solatium, in case the SUMP is found to be feasible.

Alternate towns

The Cabinet directed the State's Department of Urban Development to constitute a New Yingkiong Development Authority and a New Geku Development Authority to pursue "future-ready alternate towns".

It accordingly approved the constitution of a committee to examine land and property compensation rates and suggest the mechanisms to be adopted for designing and implementing a robust rehabilitation and resettlement plan for the PAFs. Geku and Yingkiong are towns in the Upper Siang district.

The Cabinet further directed the Public Works Department to initiate a survey for a necklace road along the Siang River, above the likely submergence area.

How should sexual abuse survivors be treated?

Why was timely medical care denied to a minor rape survivor? What were the guidelines issued by Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma to hospitals about treating sexual assault survivors? Can a sexual assault survivor seek the termination of a pregnancy beyond 24 weeks?

Aaratrika Bhaumik

The story so far:

The Delhi High Court recently issued a series of guidelines to streamline procedures in hospitals handling Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) cases involving sexual assault survivors, after finding that miscommunication, and administrative lapses had resulted in the denial of timely medical care to a minor rape survivor.

What was the case?

Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma issued the guidelines while adjudicating upon the plea of a 17-year-old rape survivor who had been taken to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi, for medical examination and termination of pregnancy. Although accompanied by a police officer following the registration of an FIR, hospital authorities initially refused to conduct an ultrasound, citing the absence of identity documents. The matter was then referred to the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), which directed the hospital to proceed with the termination and submit a status report. However, the hospital continued to insist on identity proof and age verification through an ossification test.

In all cases where a rape or sexual assault survivor is found to be pregnant, a medical examination must be conducted without delay

The ultrasound was eventually carried out after a CWC member personally intervened. By that time, the minor was found to be approximately 25 weeks and 4 days pregnant. The hospital then declined to convene a medical board, contending that a court order was required as the pregnancy appeared to exceed the 24-week statutory limit prescribed under the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971. Following the court's intervention, a seven-member medical board was finally constituted at AIIMS to assess the feasibility of terminating the pregnancy. After conducting an ultrasound, the board determined that the gestational age of the foetus was 23 weeks and 4 days, and that the survivor was physically and mentally fit to undergo the procedure. This contradicted the hospital's earlier record, which had put the gestational age at 25 weeks and 4 days. The court noted with anguish that no explanation was provided for this discrepancy.

What directions were issued to hospitals?

The court observed that when an investigating officer presents a sexual assault survivor for medical examination, along with the official case file and FIR details, separate identity verification may be dispensed with. It further stressed that in cases involving minors, procedural safeguards applicable to routine diagnostic cases should not be applied rigidly or mechanically.

Justice Sharma directed that in all cases where a rape or sexual assault survivor is found to be pregnant, a comprehensive medical examination must be conducted without delay. In instances where the gestational age appears to exceed 24 weeks, hospital administrations were instructed to immediately constitute a medical board to conduct the necessary examination and submit a status report to the appropriate authorities without awaiting specific court orders. Hospitals were also directed to ensure that updated Standard Operating Procedures and relevant legal guidelines are readily accessible in both Emergency and Gynaecology Departments, and that duty doctors are regularly briefed and sensitised on their obligations under the MTP Act, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences

(POCSO) Act, and other binding directives issued by the Supreme Court and High Courts.

The court further mandated that quarterly training programmes be organised for doctors and medical staff in coordination with legal aid bodies such as the Delhi State Legal Services Authority and the Delhi High Court Legal Services Committee (DHCLSC). Each government hospital was also directed to designate a nodal officer to oversee MTP cases and related medico-legal processes, serving as a single point of contact for the CWC, investigating officers, and the courts. Additionally, consent for MTP procedures was to be obtained from the survivor or her guardian, in a language they fully comprehend, such as Hindi or English.

What was the Delhi police instructed to do?

The court directed the Delhi Police to ensure that investigating officers handling POCSO and sexual assault cases undergo mandatory training every six months, with a focus on MTP procedures, court orders, and coordination with medical and welfare authorities. Certificates of completion are to be duly recorded in the officers' service files. Police officers were also instructed to ensure that sexual assault survivors are presented before the concerned doctor, hospital, or medical board at the earliest opportunity, along with all requisite case files.

What were the guidelines issued earlier?

On April 17, Justice Sharma issued guidelines for CWCs and the DHCLSC to prevent delays in such cases, while hearing a plea involving a minor sexual assault survivor seeking termination of a pregnancy beyond 27 weeks. She directed that whenever a minor survivor with a gestational age exceeding 24 weeks is referred by the CWC to a hospital for examination or termination, the CWC must immediately notify the DHCLSC. Upon receiving such information, the DHCLSC shall promptly assess the need for legal intervention, including approaching the competent court for permission to terminate the pregnancy, so as to avoid further delay.

Earlier, in January 2023, the judge mandated that during the medical examination of a sexual assault survivor, a urine pregnancy test must be conducted. If the survivor is found pregnant and is an adult seeking termination, the investigating officer must ensure that she is presented before the medical board on the same day. State governments were also ordered to ensure that medical boards are constituted in the hospitals.



Timely care: Duty doctors should be briefed on their obligations under the MTP Act and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act. ANI



Who takes responsibility when a ship sinks?

What were the two recent shipping-related accidents which have happened across the coast of Kerala? What is a bill of lading? What role does the International Maritime Organization play when it comes to global merchant shipping? What is the SOLAS Convention?

Kalyanaraman. M

The story so far:

In June 9, MV Wan Hai 503, a Singapore-flagged vessel, caught fire nearly 88 nautical miles off Kerala's Bepore coast. The vessel was carrying more than 2,000 tonnes of fuel and hundreds of containers, the burning of which has caused concerns about the potential ecological impact. Search operations for the hazardous containers are still on. Earlier on May 25, the Liberian container ship *MSC ELSA 3* sank off the coast of Kochi, Kerala.

Who regulates global shipping?

Global merchant shipping is primarily regulated by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The IMO is among the most powerful UN agencies as many of its prescriptions and guidelines apply across shipping, given the multinational nature of the industry. Countries that are members of the IMO, India included, sign various conventions that lay down norms regarding pollution, safety, accidents, liabilities and responsibilities, after which member states pass appropriate domestic legislation or lay down rules that sync with convention prescriptions. In India, it is the Directorate General (DG) of Shipping which issues notices for such purposes. In some cases, Parliament sanction may also be needed.

In general, India is a signatory to many conventions, barring a few such as the 2004 Ballast Water Convention and the 2010 Hazardous and Noxious Substances (HNS) Convention. The HNS Convention deals with liability and compensation for damage related to

Countries that are members of the IMO sign various conventions that lay down norms regarding pollution, safety, accidents, and liabilities

the carriage of hazardous and noxious substances on ships. Given the increasing accidents on its coast, India may be served by ratifying this convention. In the case of the *ELSA 3*, in which many containers carrying noxious substances such as calcium carbide sank, India will seek remedies under its own merchant shipping laws.

Ships are owned by companies across the world. Greece and China lead in being homes to many of these companies. But the ships are often registered in various other nations for convenience and ease of operations. Though members of the IMO and governed by IMO norms, such nations offer less intrusive scrutiny and are therefore called Flags of Convenience (FOC). Liberia is one such country, Marshall Islands is another.

Who is liable for the loss of cargo and any damage to the environment?

The ship owner is liable for both. The trade of goods is governed by a contract called the bill of lading, which covers the transport of goods from one port to another, and is issued by the ship owner to the exporter during the loading of cargo. The owner of the bill of lading is the owner of the cargo. The bill of lading is a contract that lays down that the owner undertakes to ship the cargo from one port to another among other things. The bill of lading is transferred to the importer or the consignee, as per various shipment forms, after payment to the exporter. Typically, the importer opens a letter of credit to the exporter, and the bank then extends the credit and acquires the bill of lading from the exporter. When the receiver receives the cargo and makes the payment, he gets the bill of lading from the bank.

In case of damage or loss of cargo, the ship owner has to pay whoever owns the bill of lading. But that payment is covered by the Protection and Indemnity (P&I) Club, which is a cluster of several insurance companies who share the risk. Damage to the body of the ship and machinery, that is a business loss for the owner, is usually covered by indemnity. But in P&I, the insurer protects the owner against any claims on the owner too, such as in the case of damage to environment or loss of cargo or loss of life onboard the ship and elsewhere as a consequence of an accident involving the ship.

International conventions have capped the liability of the ship owner on loss of cargo, but there is no limit on claims against environment damage such as in the case of oil pollution or hazardous substances. The last could apply to the sunken containers of *ELSA 3* or *Wan Hai 503* that caught fire. Oil pollution damages itself

cover a vast range – impacting fish catch, affecting tourism, loss to other businesses, transportation and so on. The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships upholds the polluter pays principle. Sometimes, however, national laws do protect against extended and potentially endless claims.

Who should salvage a ship that has sank?

This responsibility also rests with the ship owner. The Nairobi Convention on the Removal of Wrecks, 2007 governs this situation, and India is a signatory. Under this, the ship owner whose ship has sunk within the sovereign waters of India – up to 200 nautical miles from a reference line on the coast – has to salvage the ship. In case the ship cannot be refloated, especially if the waters are too deep, then the ship owner is liable for any claims of damage.

Why do ships still sink?

While advanced materials, knowledge, expertise and skill go into building ships, they are exposed to the vagaries of the sea and its multi-layered impact cannot always be predicted in a pinpointed way. For instance, in *ELSA 3*, as the ship started tilting to one side – listing, in shipping parlance – containers that were stowed on top fell into the sea that was already rough. This led to the list increasing on the heavier side which could have led to the ship sinking.

Quite often, a series of errors, mistakes and small incidents sync to create a major accident. By themselves, each of these mistakes and incidents are not a cause of much concern. Too often, such mistakes are manmade and often, egregious. Today merchant ships tend to sail close to the coast in search of mobile phone signals so that seafarers with roaming facilities can stay in touch with their friends or family. *Wakashio*, a bulk carrier, ran aground off Mauritius in 2020, leading to an oil spill, because it went too close to the shore in search of mobile phone signals. This was during the COVID-19 pandemic when seafarers were spending extended periods out at sea amidst concerns about their health and that of their families'.

The unsinkable Titanic was sunk because of human error. But after the sinking, a convention called Safety of Life At Sea (SOLAS) came into being. SOLAS is one of the key conventions that governs shipping and is often revised. A key lesson from the Titanic, that has now been implemented as a SOLAS norm, is that lifeboats on either side of the ship should have enough capacity to carry the number of people the ship is designed to carry. This means that if the ship tilts to one side and the lifeboats on only one side are accessible, even then they should be able to carry all those people on board to safety.

The shipping industry learns from each accident. The IMO revises and supplements its guidelines periodically regarding ship design and construction that are then adopted by the industry.



Heavy fumes: Smoke billows from the Singapore-flagged container ship *MV Wan Hai 503* that caught fire off the coast of Bepore in Kerala on June 10. AFP

Why has the Axiom-4 mission been delayed?

Why was the mission postponed four times? Has a new date for the launch been announced?

Vasudevan Mukunth

The story so far:

In June 10, Axiom Space announced that the launch of its Axiom-4 mission to the International Space Station (ISS) would be postponed indefinitely. The mission crew included India's astronaut-designate Shubhanshu Shukla, who – if the rocket had lifted off as planned – would have become the first Indian in earth orbit after 40 years and the first Indian onboard the ISS.

What is the Axiom-4 mission?

The Axiom-4 mission is the fourth mission planned by U.S.-based spaceflight company Axiom Space to the ISS. It consists of a crew of four people – Peggy Whitson, Shubhanshu Shukla, Sławosz Uzarski-Winiński, and Tibor Kapu – plus cargo. To facilitate the mission, NASA had contracted Axiom, which in turn had contracted the Falcon 9 rocket and the Dragon crew capsule for the mission from SpaceX. The mission is commercial in nature and isn't part of the regular

Ahead of Thursday's flight, SpaceX had tested one of the rocket's engines as a matter of procedure and discovered it was leaking liquid oxygen

resupply missions NASA undertakes to the ISS. Following an announcement to strengthen India-U.S. ties in 2023, the Indian Space Research

Organisation (ISRO) spent more than ₹500 crore for Mr. Shukla to fly on the mission. Mr. Shukla is one of the four astronaut-designates for ISRO's forthcoming Gaganyaan human spaceflight mission. His compatriot Prasanth Nair is part of the Axiom-4 backup crew.

Why was the launch called off?

Ahead of Thursday's flight, SpaceX had tested one of the rocket's engines as a matter of procedure and discovered it was leaking liquid oxygen (LOX). LOX is cryogenic, meaning it needs to be stored at an extremely low temperature. If it is exposed to warmer conditions, the oxygen will turn into gas and not be usable as fuel.

Falcon 9 engines combust a mix of rocket-grade kerosene and LOX to generate thrust, so a LOX leak is a serious issue. The Axiom-4 mission had first been scheduled for lift-off on May 29 but had to be postponed four times. The delays were a result of a combination of unfavourable conditions related to the weather and the launch vehicle.

Then on June 12, NASA also said it and Russia's Roscosmos were tracking an anomalous pressure reading on an ISS service module after recent maintenance. "The postponement of Axiom Mission 4 provides additional time for NASA and Roscosmos to evaluate the situation and determine whether any additional troubleshooting is necessary," NASA had said in a statement.

Why was a new date not given immediately?

Since a LOX leak is a serious issue, SpaceX needed to find the precise source of the leak and why the underlying component(s) failed. How much time this would have taken was unclear. There are also particular launch 'windows' when a launch can deliver the crew to the ISS with minimal fuel and energy use, including the amount of time the crew capsule will be exposed to sunlight.

But because the ISS is so close to the earth, launch windows appear more frequently than those for the moon or Mars. NASA has already indicated there are more opportunities through June and July. Other factors that affect the suitability of a launch window include time on the launch pad for lift-off and access to free docking ports on the ISS. The U.S.'s NASA, Russia's Roscosmos, and (less often) some other space agencies also send missions to the ISS and need to plan when and for how long their capsules are docked.

At noon on June 14, it was announced that Axiom would reattempt the launch on June 19.

How hard is it to fix a LOX leak?

When it leaks, LOX flashes to an invisible vapour almost instantly and can be blown away by winds or fans nearby. Detecting it often entails time-consuming and labour-intensive work.

Many joints in the components associated with storing and pumping LOX are insulated with foam or are located in nooks, meaning many regular leak-detecting methods can't physically reach them. Materials contract at cryogenic temperatures (around 90 K), so a hole may appear closed at ambient temperature but open at cryogenic temperatures. So once a hole has been fixed, engineers may need to repeat tests at both warm and cold conditions or test with liquid nitrogen to mimic operating conditions. Testing with LOX itself can be hazardous.

Fortunately, experts have been working with cryogenic engines for long enough to know which tools to use and which processes to follow once the leak has been identified. These include visual inspections, bubble tests, helium signature tests, flow-metre tests, ultrasonic microphones, and thermal imaging.



'Countries will react based on their interests'

In a preliminary analysis of Operation Sindoor, former National Security Adviser says the military did well, but lessons need to be learnt on strategic communication; Indian diplomatic efforts did not fail but China and Türkiye used the opportunity to consolidate their ties with Pakistan, he says

INTERVIEW

Shiv Shankar Menon

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

In a preliminary analysis of India's response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, former National Security Adviser (NSA) and Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon, who has also served as India's Ambassador to China, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Israel, told *The Hindu* that Indian diplomacy has not failed to convey the country's position on terrorism, as some argue, but countries will respond to fears of conflict with Pakistan according to their own interests.

From 2008 to 2025, do you see India's responses to terror attacks as a gradual evolution, and what should one expect if there is another terror

attack in India?

Right now, I think nobody knows, which is why even the Government of India describes it as a 'pause'. It's not resolved. Israelis have a phrase – 'mowing the grass'. Force is useful to mow the grass, but the grass grows again. And given Pakistan's situation and the nature of the Pakistani polity, and the role of the Pakistan Army and its use of the jihadi *tanzeems* (organisations) against India... this problem of having to mow the grass regularly is going to be with us for some time.

Given China's role in supporting Pakistan, do you think, India's strategic challenges have shifted from disparate challenges to a two-front war?

Militarily, I don't think we know enough, but we clearly have seen the Pakistan Army itself shift in terms of doctrine, in terms of tactics, and in terms of reliance on Chinese equip-



FILE PHOTO

ment, Chinese theories, Chinese ways of war.

And both the Pakistanis and the Chinese have made much of this in their narrative and their projection and their propaganda. There have been very strong Chinese statements of support for Pakistan in 1971 and 1965, and so on. But they never did anything.

Question is, what did they actually do to help Pakistan? There's a level of military fusion there, which is much closer than it's ever been before, and that is something worth watching.

Do you think more information should be put out?

You can't have a conflict without losses. There are lessons to be drawn about strategic signalling here and about narrative control here, because I think we could have been quicker off the block with responses during Operation Sindoor. I was outside India at that time, and I could see that Pakistan's responses were at least six to 12 hours ahead of India's. They were the ones out first with their version. Militarily, India did well, judg-

ing by whatever we know in terms of air defence, in terms of our own equipment, and in terms of tactics and strategy as well. Unfortunately, Indian media made us seem less credible by a lot of the stories that they were putting out, which didn't stand the test of reason.

Just watching what they were saying [reports of the bombardment of Karachi, Pakistan PM's residence, military coup, etc.] were patently untrue, and that didn't help at all. The [government's] silence didn't help either. There are lessons to be drawn from any conflict, and in this case, I think the communication is certainly one of them.

Did Indian diplomacy fail, as is being portrayed, given that India did not seem to receive clear messages of support for Operation Sindoor, as Pakistan did from China and Türkiye, and given Mr. Trump's comments?

Not at all. Countries will

choose to react to an attack or a situation based on their interests, on what they can get out of it. For Türkiye, for China and so on, here was an opportunity to consolidate their ties with Pakistan, which is important to them for various reasons. And they chose to do it. India got the world's support on the terrorist attack.

When it came to a conflict, however, they've seen this conflict for 80 years. You don't expect them to send you letters of support in a conflict. India didn't ask for it, and shouldn't expect it either. India maintains that it will settle its issues bilaterally. So why would we ask other countries for support or their opinion about what we do? People will use your conflicts, for their interests, to suit their own purposes, and in this case, it serves Mr. Trump's political purposes to claim the credit to say that something's working, that he's important, that he matters.

(Full interview is at newsth.live/shivmenon)



Canada ties, trade, Iran-Israel clash in focus as PM leaves for 3-nation tour

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

In his first visit abroad since the strikes on Pakistan during Operation Sindoor, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will leave on Sunday for a three-nation tour to Cyprus, Canada and Croatia. He will be attending the G-7 summit of Western-allied developed economies during the tour, which will conclude on June 19. Mr. Modi's aircraft will make refuelling stopovers in Cyprus and Croatia. He will be the first Indian Prime Minister to visit Cyprus since 2002, and the first to visit Croatia since the country was founded in 1991.

However, it is the visit to Canada, 10 years after he visited last, as well as his meetings on the sidelines of the G-7 summit, where India is one of five special invitees, which will be watched most closely. Mr.



Narendra Modi

Modi is expected to speak about India's fight against terrorism at every stop, including holding Pakistan accountable at the United Nations, Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and other multilateral institutions.

"This would be the Prime Minister's sixth consecutive participation in the G-7 summit. At the summit, PM (Modi) will exchange views with leaders of G-7 countries, other invited outreach countries and Heads of International Organisations on crucial global issues, including

energy security, technology and innovation, particularly the AI-energy nexus and Quantum-related issues," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement on Saturday.

Mr. Modi will meet with Canadian PM Mark Carney, which the Ministry referred to as a chance to explore a "reset" in acrimonious ties, and to restore diplomats in each other's capitals.

While the Ministry has yet to confirm Mr. Modi's other bilateral meetings, this would be the first time Mr. Modi will see U.S. President Donald Trump since Mr. Trump claimed credit for mediating the India-Pakistan truce, which India has denied.

The ongoing Israel-Iran conflict, Israel's bombardment of Gaza, the Russia-Ukraine war and the economic disruptions caused by U.S. tariffs are all expected to dominate what is

expected to be a fractious discourse at the G-7 summit on June 16, given the divide between the U.S., and other members on these issues.

On Sunday, Mr. Modi will depart for Nicosia, Cyprus, for talks with President Nikos Christodoulides, where he is expected to address business leaders and discuss plans for the India-Middle East Economic Corridor (IMEC) that have been stalled due to the situation in Israel since 2023.

Mr. Modi's visit to Cyprus, which has a decades-old territorial tussle with neighbour Türkiye, is also seen as a sharp message from New Delhi to Ankara over Türkiye's support to Pakistan during Operation Sindoor. Mr. Modi will travel to Zagreb on the final part of the tour, for talks with Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenković, on June 18.



Jaishankar urges Iran, Israel to avoid any escalatory steps

External Affairs Minister speaks to his counterparts seeking return to diplomacy after attacks; both the countries are strategic partners of India, and in close contact with Indian officials

Kallol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

Against the backdrop of intensification of Israel-Iran conflict on Friday, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar held a round of conversations with his Iranian and Israeli counterparts – Abbas Araghchi and Gideon Sa'ar. Israel and Iran are both strategic partners of India and the Foreign Ministers of both the conflicting sides have been in close contact with Indian officials over the recent past.

The Minister-level phone conversation was held shortly after Prime Minister Narendra Modi received a phone call from his Israeli counterpart, Benjamin Netanyahu. Mr. Modi had called for “early restoration of peace”, and called for stability in the Gulf region that is vital for



Dialling down: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar in a meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi. FILE PHOTO

India's economy and security architecture.

In the phone call with Mr. Araghchi, Mr. Jaishankar expressed “deep concern of the international community at the turn of events”. “He urged avoidance of any escalatory steps and an early return to diplomacy,” said the Indian Embassy in Tehran in the statement. In response, the Iranian Foreign

Minister “shared Iran’s perspective on the situation”, said the Embassy of India.

The conversation came hours after Israel hit targets, including nuclear energy research centres, inside Iran. Soon thereafter, Iran unleashed three waves of missiles and drones.

Mr. Araghchi had visited India on May 7 and 8 to co-chair the 20th India-Iran

Helplines for Indian nationals

NEW DELHI

The Indian Embassy in Israel has said that Indian nationals can contact its helpline at +972 54-7520711 or +972 54-3278392 or cons1.telaviv@mea.gov.in in case of emergency. The helplines for the Indian Embassy in Iran are +98 9128109115, +98 9128109109.

Joint Commission Meeting. It was his first visit to New Delhi since assuming the office as Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran in August 2024.

Israel hosts around 30,000 Indian nationals in various industries and academic institutions and Iran is a regional power in the Gulf region which hosts around 10 million Indian expat workers.



Millet meets nutribar as CSIR lab develops nutrient-rich snack



A millet-based nutribar developed by the CSIR-National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Tiki Rajwi

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Millet, often dubbed superfoods, have been having their time under the spotlight for a while now. Nutribars have their own following. The National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology (NIIST), a Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) laboratory in Thiruvananthapuram, has combined the two to develop a nutribar that packs a punch, nutritionally.

This millet-based nutrition bar delivers 228.66 kcal of energy per serving and is rich in natural protein content, according to the NIIST, which has transferred the technology to a Thiruvalla-based private company for the purpose of commercial production.

A wholesome functional food option, the nutribars are designed to appeal to health-conscious consumers on the lookout for healthy, nutrient-packed snacks, says NIIST Director C. Anandharamakrishnan.

What sets NIIST nutri-

bar apart is that it does not contain synthetic additives, preservatives and refined sugars, says Tripti Mishra, scientist with the Agro Processing and Food Technology Division of NIIST. "For this particular product, we have used sorghum. But any millet can be used in it," she says.

The clean-label product contains natural sweeteners and features, apart from millets, nutrient-rich traditional ingredients such as nuts and seeds, creating a bar that is rich in dietary fibre and micronutrients.

NIIST formally transferred the nutribar technology to Sabari Agro Food Products, Thiruvalla, during a conclave on 'Next-Generation Food Technologies: Processing for a Sustainable Tomorrow' held as part of the institute's golden jubilee celebrations on Friday.

NIIST pursues a strong research programme in millets, given the potential these small-grained cereal crops hold for food security and nutrition.



Wan Hai 503 'stable', being towed away from the coast

The containers that fell from the ship could reach Kerala coast between Monday and Wednesday, says State disaster management body; there is a tilt to the port side; smoke is still rising from it

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Indian Navy on Saturday said that *MV Wan Hai 503*, the Singapore-flagged container ship that had caught fire off the Kerala coast on June 9 following an explosion, is currently beyond the 1,000-metre sounding line (depth) at a distance of about 45 nautical miles from the coast.

According to the Navy, the ship is being towed to deeper waters. The ship is stable, but with a tilt to port side and smoke still rising from it. The tug, *Offshore Warrior*, is towing the vessel with the Indian Coast Guard ship *Saksham* fuelling the tug, the Navy said.



Mitigation efforts: Smoke billows out from *MV Wan Hai 503* during a salvage operation being carried out by Indian Coast Guard. ANI

The Coast Guard said it is closely working with the Directorate General of Shipping to ensure that the container vessel remains at least 50 nautical miles away from the coast.

Meanwhile, containers that fell overboard from

the ship are likely to wash ashore on the Ernakulam, Alappuzha and Kollam coasts between Monday and Wednesday. The Kerala State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA) issued the update citing the Coast Guard and the In-

ternational Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Limited (ITOPF).

The public have been advised to stay away from any suspicious object found on the coast. A distance of at least 200 metres should be maintained from them, the KSDMA said.

The authority urged the people to alert the authorities about their presence on the emergency number 112. It may be recalled that a similar advisory had been issued in the case of the *MSC Elsa* shipwreck in May.

Salvage operations had moved forward after the vessel's towline was successfully transferred from Coast Guard ships to the *Offshore Warrior*.



New species of jumping spider discovered

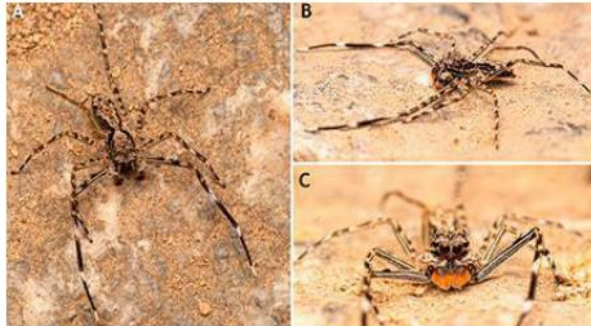
It is possibly the first time that the genera *Spartaeus* and *Sonoita* groups of the *Spartaeinae* subfamily have been found in India; they are known for hunting skills and web-invasion tactics

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A team of researchers has identified a new species of jumping spiders of the *Spartaeinae* subfamily in southern India, known for their intelligent hunting skills and web-invasion tactics.

According to researchers, this discovery possibly marks the first time that the genera *Spartaeus* and *Sonoita* (specific groups within the subfamily), previously known only from Southeast Asia and Africa, have been found in India.

The research, led by John Caleb T.D. from Saveetha Medical College in Chennai, has introduced a new species named *Spartaeus karigiri*, after Karigiri, or Elephant Hill, in Devarayanadurga, Karnataka, where the



The newly discovered *Spartaeus karigiri*. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

spiders were first observed.

The male of this species was spotted hiding in crevices and rocky outcrops, while the female was found guarding an egg clutch in the wild.

More specimens were also discovered in Tamil Nadu's Villupuram district.

The study, published in the *European Journal of Taxonomy* on June 11, involved researchers from across India. Puthoor Pattammal Sudhin and

Souvik Sen from the Zoological Survey of India documented the specimens through detailed drawings and imaging, while fieldwork was supported by B.G. Nisha from the Wildlife Aware Nature Club in Tumakuru, Gautam Kadam from Sacred Heart College in Kochi, Rajesh Sanap, a naturalist and wildlife researcher, and Chinmay Maliye, a wildlife enthusiast.

According to Mr. Caleb,

the discovery holds particular significance because *Spartaeus* and *Sonoita* have never before been recorded in India. These spiders, part of the *Salticidae* family, are known for their keen eyesight and unique hunting methods, often deceiving other spiders by mimicking prey.

In addition, *Sonoita cf. lightfooti*, a species previously thought to be confined to Africa, was also identified in Karnataka. This raises questions about whether it is a natural range extension or an introduced population, said Mr. Caleb.

Further, the species *Marpissa gangasagarensis*, described in 2005 from Gangasagar, West Bengal, was confirmed to be the same as *Phaeacius fimbriatus*, a species first described in 1900.

