

# Meghalaya and Nagaland CMs call for release of 20 hostages

Conrad Sangma writes to apex social bodies of Nagas and Kukis of Manipur for immediate release of all hostages; Neiphiu Rio seeks Home Minister's intervention for release of 6 Liangmai Nagas

**The Hindu Bureau**  
GUWAHATI

**T**he Chief Ministers of Meghalaya and Nagaland have sought the early release of 20 civilians – 14 Kukis and six Nagas – allegedly held hostage by armed groups in Manipur after three church leaders were killed in an ambush on May 13.

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma said he, as the national president of the National People's Party and “a fellow citizen and Christian”, was deeply pained by the continued captivity of the villagers from Kangpokpi district in Manipur.

“The abduction of civilians, who have no role in any conflict, inflicts unbearable pain and deepens divisions within our society. Mothers, children, and elders are living in fear and uncertainty. Such acts only widen the gap between communities that have lived together for genera-



Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma and, right, his Nagaland counterpart, Neiphiu Rio, have appealed for peace. FILE PHOTO

tions,” he wrote in a letter addressed to the United Naga Council (UNC) and the Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM).

The UNC and KIM are apex social bodies of the Nagas and Kukis of Manipur, respectively. The two communities are involved in the conflict that started with a brawl in February.

Mr. Sangma appealed for the immediate release of all hostages and called for their safety, medical care, food, and communication with families. He urged all parties to pursue

dialogue over violence.

“Let this act of compassion mark the beginning of healing for Manipur. The people of the Northeast are watching, and history will remember those who choose humanity in times of conflict,” he said.

## ‘Deep concern’

In a letter to the UNC, Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio said that he had a telephonic conversation with Union Home Minister Amit Shah to convey the “deep concern” of the Nagas over the abduction of

the six community members in Manipur. The six, allegedly held captives by Kuki groups, are Liangmai Nagas.

“I requested his (Mr. Shah’s) personal intervention and urged that all possible efforts be made by the Government of India to trace the six abducted persons, secure their release and bring the perpetrators to justice,” he wrote.

Mr. Rio said Mr. Shah assured him that all necessary measures would be taken by the agencies concerned to trace the abducted persons, identify those responsible for the abduction, and ensure that the law takes its course.

Mr. Rio further urged the UNC to prevail upon the Nagas who have allegedly kept 14 Kuki civilians in their custody, and facilitate their safe return.

On May 15, the security forces facilitated a hostage-for-hostage exchange to help secure the release of 14 Kukis and 14 Nagas.



A Naga outfit has been holding 14 Kuki civilians hostage following the killing of three church leaders in an ambush in Manipur's Kangpokpi district on May 13. FILE PHOTO

## Release of 14 abducted Kuki civilians put off amid protests by Nagas

**Rahul Karmakar**

GUWAHATI

The scheduled release of 14 Kuki civilians in Manipur was "cancelled" on Monday following protests by a section of Nagas.

An organisation, identified as Naga Village Guard-Northern Command, has been holding the 14 Kukis captive since three church leaders were killed in an ambush in the State's Kangpokpi district on May 13. Three of the abducted men are reportedly minor students.

According to an announcement by the United Naga Council (UNC) on Monday morning, the organisation was expected to release the hostages at 2 p.m. in response to the government's assurance that six abducted Nagas would be traced and action would be taken against their abductors.

The UNC is the apex body of Nagas in Manipur.

However, the UNC stated in the evening that the proposed release "stands cancelled" considering the

"prevailing sentiments of the Naga public".

The release was called off after Naga protesters stormed the UNC office in Senapati, the headquarters of Senapati district. They were against the release of the 14 Kukis unless the six Nagas, allegedly held hostage by the Kuki extremists, were released simultaneously.

The killing of the three church leaders triggered the hostage crisis between the Kukis and Nagas. On May 15, the captors released 14 Kukis and an equal number of Nagas as part of a hostage-for-hostage deal. The UNC's announcement more or less confirmed that the 14 Kuki captives were unharmed. The status of the six Naga hostages remained unknown.

Last week, Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh said the case related to the killing of the church leaders and the abduction of the six Nagas would be handed over to the National Investigation Agency.

# Centre clears five new judges for SC; strength rises to 37

**The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

The Centre on Monday cleared the appointment of five judges to the Supreme Court, taking the court's strength to 37, close to its revised sanctioned strength of 38.

In a post on X, Minister of State for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal said the President had approved the appointments under Article 124(2) of the Constitution.

Those appointed are Justice Sheel Nagu, Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court; Justice Shree Chandrashekar, Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court; Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva, Chief Justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court; Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh; and senior advocate V. Mohana.

Ms. Mohana was one of the leading counsels in a series of cases highlighting structural career inequali-



V. Mohana

ties for women officers in the armed forces. Currently, the Supreme Court has only one woman judge, Justice B.V. Nagarathna, who is also part of the Supreme Court Collegium. Justice Nagarathna was appointed to the Supreme Court in August 2021.

The appointments follow the Collegium's recommendation on May 27, 2026.

The development comes weeks after the Centre, on May 5, increased the sanctioned strength of the Supreme Court from 34 to 38 judges through the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026.

# Delhi HC recognises 'right to be forgotten', lays down rules for de-indexing judicial records

**The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has held that the "right to be forgotten" flows from the constitutional right to privacy under Article 21 and enables individuals to seek removal of personal information from public digital accessibility when it no longer serves a legitimate public purpose.

Justice Sachin Datta, in a 144-page judgment delivered on Friday, laid down a framework governing de-indexing of judicial records from search engines and masking of personal identifiers from publicly accessible court records.

"India presently lacks a comprehensive statutory

**Petitioners sought removal of personal information from digital public domain**

framework explicitly governing the right to be forgotten. However, the absence of specific legislation does not preclude constitutional courts from recognising and enforcing this right," the High Court remarked.

The court's decision came while hearing over 30 petitions filed by a diverse group of individuals, including persons who had been acquitted of criminal charges, parties to matrimonial disputes, persons whose proceedings had

been quashed or settled, and individuals whose names appeared incidentally in judicial records.

**'Harm to reputation'**

The petitioners shared a common grievance that the continued availability and name-based searchability of judicial records bearing their names in the digital public domain causes "disproportionate and continuing harm to their reputations, dignity, and life prospects".

Giving them relief, the court directed search engines, legal database platforms and other intermediaries to de-index specified judgments, orders and related reportage from name-based search results.

# Govt. backtracking on Ladakh draft, alleges Wangchuk

**Peerzada Ashiq**

SRINAGAR

Members of the Ladakh civil society on Monday said the Centre was backtracking from its promise made during the meeting on May 22 on "granting supreme powers to elected representatives over bureaucracy in the Union Territory". They further alleged that the draft shared by the Union Home Ministry recently was "watered down".

"We appeal to the Centre to not allow the atmosphere of positivity to turn negative. There is scope for suspicion that the Centre is backtracking from its agreed position," said climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, who attended the sub-committee meeting in New Delhi on May 22.

Mr. Wangchuk was joined by leaders of the Ladakh Buddhist Association, including its president Cherring Dorjay Lakrook, and leaders of the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA).

"The May 22 meeting of the sub-committee with the Centre was historic. It was hailed by all. Everyone expressed happiness. It suggested a tailored democratic set-up for Ladakh. It

**Cherring Dorjay**

**Lakrook was denied permission to take a picture of the draft, Wangchuk said**

was agreed that the elected representatives of the Legislative Assembly will have executive, financial and legal powers. It was agreed that the elected representatives will have supreme powers over bureaucracy, including the Chief Secretary. However, the draft shared by the Ladakh administration does not reflect what was agreed upon," said Mr. Wangchuk.

Mr. Wangchuk released the recorded minutes of the meeting with the Ministry.

"A few days ago, Mr. Cherring was shown the draft for his signature. However, it was not the same that was deliberated upon on May 22 in New Delhi. In fact, Mr. Cherring was denied permission to take a picture of the draft. It's strange that no official means, such as email, letter etc., was used to forward the final draft to us. These things are sowing seeds of suspicions," said Mr. Wangchuk.

# 'No space for anti-India elements in Myanmar'



**Promising talks:** PM Narendra Modi with Myanmar President Min Aung Hlaing in New Delhi on Monday. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

## Kallol Bhattacharjee

NEW DELHI

Visiting Myanmar President Min Aung Hlaing has assured India that he will not allow use of his country's territory by groups that pose a security threat to Indian interests. The concern was raised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who held broad-spectrum conversations with Mr. Hlaing on Monday, including calls for dialogue between the junta-backed government and the pro-democracy Opposition in Myanmar. Foreign

Secretary Vikram Misri said the discussion included the issue of detention of former leader and Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi.

“The President reiterated Myanmar’s assurance that its territory would not be permitted to be used against India’s security interests. The Prime Minister affirmed that India... remained committed to deepening security cooperation,” a joint statement issued at the end of the official discussion mentioned.

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# 'No space for anti-India elements in Myanmar'

Mr. Misri said later that issue of the presence of insurgents from its northeastern region on Myanmar territory was raised by Mr. Modi in course of formal talks with the visiting dignitary.

The visit of Mr. Hlaing is being viewed as a pragmatic engagement of Myanmar by India despite the conflict situation that has been continuing in that country since the February 2021 coup that deposed the National League for Democracy (NLD) government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Speaking to the media after the discussion, Mr. Misri said detailed discussion was held during the talks to "find a way" out of the civil conflict, saying that India believes in "sustained dialogue" among all the stakeholders to deal with the conflict in Myanmar. He added that India does not believe in "disengagement" when it comes to Myanmar.

"I should underline that our engagement with Myanmar is not intended to be a commentary on the internal political arrangement in that country. The Prime Minister raised the issue that there is a need for an enduring peace as Myanmar finds its way back to democracy," said Mr. Misri explaining that the Indian concerns on continued detention of Ms. Suu Kyi was raised during a "free-wheeling" talk.

He further said that the two sides discussed infrastructure projects like the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project and the trilateral Moreh-Mae Tsot highway that was to connect India's northeast with Myanmar via Thailand - both of which have been "delayed" by the conflict in Myanmar.

"Right now, the obstacle that faces both of these projects is the security situation in Myanmar," said Mr. Misri, adding that there are "active hostilities" currently under way on the Kaladan highway between the Myanmar Army and the ethnic armed organisations of the Rakhine State.

Mr. Misri further said that the two sides discussed defence cooperation on Monday that will cover training of Myanmar troops for United Nations peacekeeping. Mr. Misri also said that the defence cooperation between the two sides included concerns related to security and safety of the India-Myanmar border spanning 1,643 km.

# India and Australia discuss maritime security, agree to advance defence industrial relations

**Saurabh Trivedi**

NEW DELHI

India and Australia on Monday reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening defence and security cooperation across the Indo-Pacific, with a strong focus on maritime security, defence industry collaboration, interoperability, and emerging technologies.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Richard Marles co-chaired the second India-Australia Defence Ministers' Dialogue at the Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi. The two leaders reviewed the significant progress made in defence ties since the inaugural dialogue held in



Australia's Deputy PM Richard Marles with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh at Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi on Monday. ANI

October 2025 and advanced the vision of the Prime Ministers of the two countries for a stronger strategic partnership.

Speaking during an exclusive interaction with a select group of mediapersons, Mr. Marles said the dialogue marked another

significant step in elevating defence ties between the two countries. He highlighted substantial progress in information sharing, joint air-to-air refuelling arrangements, and military exercises, describing the current phase as a high point in Australia-

India defence cooperation.

Mr. Marles said defence cooperation would be a major component of discussions between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese during their upcoming summit. He noted that both sides were making significant progress towards finalising a renewed Joint Declaration on Defence and Security Cooperation.

## Strong pillar

Emphasising the importance of maritime security, Mr. Marles said cooperation at sea, including underwater activities, had become a fundamental pillar of the partnership. He said Australia and India were exploring cooperation in

advanced and innovative technologies aimed at enhancing underwater security and maritime domain awareness.

A key outcome of the meeting was the decision to accelerate cooperation in the maritime domain. Both sides discussed progress towards finalising a Joint Maritime Security Collaboration Road Map and agreed to enhance maritime domain awareness through maritime patrol aircraft operations and undersea initiatives.

They also agreed to begin work on a Memorandum of Understanding on the Provision of Defence Articles and Defence Services, marking a significant step towards expanding defence industrial collaboration.

# BSF, Bangladesh border force to hold Director-General-level talks next week

**Vijaita Singh**

NEW DELHI

The first round of the biannual Director-General-level talks between the border guarding forces of India and Bangladesh is likely to be held in Delhi from June 8 to 11, government sources confirmed.

This will be the first such meeting following the formation of a new government under the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) in the neighbouring country and after the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power in West Bengal for the first time.

The Directors-General of Border Security Force (BSF) and Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB) will meet amid the West Bengal government's ongoing "detect, delete and deport" drive targeting undocumented Bangladeshi migrants.

The meeting, originally scheduled for February, was postponed due to the Assembly election in West Bengal.

Over the past week, Home Minister Amit Shah visited forward areas along



The BSF and BGB will meet amid Bengal government's 'detect, delete and deport' drive targeting undocumented migrants. PTI

the Rajasthan and Gujarat borders and flagged demographic changes and radicalisation as key security challenges. In his next leg of visit to the border areas of Tripura on June 5 and 6, and West Bengal around June 14 and 15, he is likely to review border security and also discuss infiltration-related issues with officials.

The BSF is likely to raise issues related to trans-border crimes, assaults on BSF personnel and Indian civilians by Bangladesh-based miscreants, construction of single-row fencing and action against Indian Insurgent Groups (IIGs) operating in Bangladesh.

In 2023 and 2024, the

number of personnel injured in attacks by miscreants along the Bangladesh border stood at 74 and 72, respectively. The BGB, during the past two Director-General-level talks, had raised concerns over "illegal push-ins" of individuals, including Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN), into Bangladesh by the BSF.

## 'Exfiltration' trends

In 2024, as many as 1,049 undocumented individuals were apprehended while leaving the country through the Bangladesh border. In 2025, more than 4,000 undocumented persons were intercepted by the BSF while attempting

to leave the country through the border, a government official said.

Officially recorded as "exfiltration", the movement of undocumented migrants without passports and visas through the Bangladesh border is not new, the official added.

"We are under instructions not to let any illegal migrant enter the country, but if undocumented people want to leave, we do not stop them. Their biometrics and other details are recorded before they leave. If they have managed to procure identity documents such as Aadhaar or PAN card, we write to the authorities concerned to cancel those documents and blacklist their biometrics," said the official.

The talks are held twice every year, alternately in India and Bangladesh, to facilitate both the border guarding forces to establish robust systems through which cooperation in border guarding and border management is ensured. India and Bangladesh share a 4,096-km-long border.

# IAF chief visits France to hold talks on Rafale acquisition

**Saurabh Trivedi**

NEW DELHI

Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh arrived in France on Monday on a four-day visit amid India's move to acquire 114 Rafale fighter jets in a deal estimated to be worth ₹3.25 lakh crore.

The visit comes days after the Union Ministry of Defence issued a Letter of Request to the French government, formally initiating the acquisition process, sources said, in one of the Indian Air Force's (IAF) largest-ever fighter aircraft procurement programmes.

France is expected to respond within the next two-three months, and negotiations are likely to conclude within a year.

During his visit, the Air Chief Marshal will interact with senior French military officials, and visit Dassault Aviation, manufacturer of the Rafale fighter aircraft. The proposed acquisition is part of the IAF's multi-role fighter aircraft programme to address the declining strength of the fighter squadron.

# India seeks edge over Asian peers in US talks

10% tariffs lapse in July, Trump can use Section 301 to levy higher duties

Ravi Dutta Mishra  
New Delhi, June 1

AS NEGOTIATORS from India and the US begin what seems like the final round of talks before formally signing a bilateral trade agreement, Commerce and Industry Ministry officials Monday said New Delhi is seeking an edge over Asian competitors under the new set of Section 301 tariffs Washington is expected to announce before July-end.

The US had earlier said it would use Section 301, which gives it powers to slap higher import duty on countries hurting its industry, after the President Donald Trump administration lost the case on reciprocal tariffs in the US Supreme Court. Immediately after this loss, the US had imposed 10% global tariffs under Section 122. This lapses on July 24, which creates the urgency for New Delhi to sign a trade deal within the next 5-7 weeks.

The framework for the US-

## Business as Usual

By EP UNNY



India bilateral trade agreement was agreed upon in February when the US said it would bring down tariffs to 18% from an effective tariff of 50% (25% reciprocal and 25% penalty for buying Russian oil).

“Now the fight is about Section 301, which is the only statute available to the administration given by the US Congress. The rates do not matter in this case; preferential market access

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# India seeks edge over Asian peers in US talks

is what matters,” a Commerce and Industry Ministry official said.

“We are not willing to lower duties unless our goods get preferential market access in the US compared with our competitors in Southeast Asian countries. The duty imposed by the US on the European Union or other developed countries does not affect us because our goods are not competing with them,” the official said.

At a media conference on Monday to announce the operationalisation of the FTA with Oman, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said the negotiations are more or less complete and that India and the US have already agreed upon the first tranche of the framework agreement. “Talks will continue for a broader bilateral trade agreement,” he said, adding he expected to meet USTR Jamieson Greer later this month.

However, experts pointed out that Section 301 tariffs could be worse than IEEPA (International Emergency Economic Powers Act) tariffs that the Trump administration used to pressurise trade partners into accepting steep demands under

trade deals. India was on the receiving end of the steepest 50% tariffs last year after trade talks broke down in the face of demands made by the US that were perceived as unreasonable by New Delhi.

## Section 301 tariffs are stricter than IEEPA

After the Trump administration lost the authority to impose tariffs under IEEPA in February following a legal challenge, the administration in Washington DC opened a new Section 301 investigation within a month over excess manufacturing capacity against 16 countries, including India, China, the European Union, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Thailand, Korea, Vietnam, Taiwan, and Bangladesh, among others. Just a day after, the USTR initiated a second investigation on forced labour, probing 60 countries, including India.

According to Singapore based-Hinrich Foundation, Section 301 is far more potent than the overturned use of the IEEPA because it comes with greater legal certainty for the executive branch.

“Under the rules, USTR is

authorised to impose duties or other import restrictions, withdraw or suspend trade agreement concessions, enter into binding agreements with the foreign government to eliminate the conduct or unburden US commerce, or compensate the US with satisfactory trade benefits. Because Section 301 need not apply only to goods, other retaliatory actions are allowed, such as restricting the terms or conditions or denying the issuance of any ‘service sector access authorisation,’” the Foundation said.

While Section 301 cases are meant to terminate automatically in four years, this period can be extended or reinstated by USTR without Congressional oversight, the Foundation said, adding that under Section 301, “the US effectively acts as judge, jury, and executioner”.

## India is worst hit by tariffs

India was one of the worst hit by tariffs that resulted in a flight of foreign investment and resulted in steep depreciation of the domestic currency. The rupee has fallen almost 12% in the last one year. A formal trade

deal remained aloof for months as the US demanded that India wind down imports of Russian oil and accept genetically-modified American agricultural products.

The India-US joint statement of February said India will eliminate or reduce tariffs on all US industrial goods and a wide range of US food and agricultural products, including dried distillers’ grains (DDGs), red sorghum for animal feed, tree nuts, fresh and processed fruit, soybean oil, wine and spirits, and additional products.

Indicating signs of disagreement, the US later revised a factsheet softening its claims about the gains it had secured from New Delhi and entirely dropping a section on digital services taxes. The earlier version of the factsheet said India had “committed to” buying more American products and purchasing “over \$500 billion of US energy, information and communication technology, coal, and other products”. The updated factsheet, as well as the joint statement, tempered the wording from “committed” to “intends”.

# Iran halts U.S. talks over Israel's Lebanon war

'Ceasefire between Iran and the U.S. is unequivocally a ceasefire on all fronts, including in Lebanon; its violation on one front is a violation of truce on all fronts,' says Minister Araghchi; 'there will be no Israeli troops going to Beirut, and any troops on their way, have been turned back,' says Trump

**Stanly Johny**

Iran has suspended exchanges with the U.S. over a preliminary agreement aimed at ending the war, citing Israel's escalating military strikes in Lebanon, the Tasnim news agency reported on Monday.

Hours after Iran's move, U.S. President Donald Trump said he had spoken with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Hezbollah, and that both sides agreed to stop attacking each other. He also said "talks are continuing with Tehran".

"Due to the continuation of the Zionist regime's [Israel] crimes in Lebanon and considering that Lebanon was one of the preconditions for the ceasefire



**Onslaught continues:** Smoke rises following an Israeli airstrike on the outskirts of Tyre in southern Lebanon on Monday. AFP

and now this ceasefire has been violated on all fronts including Lebanon, the Iranian negotiating team will stop "talks and exchange of texts through mediation", the report stated.

Earlier in the day, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and Parliament

Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf had warned of consequences for Israel's strikes on Lebanon.

"The ceasefire between Iran and the U.S. is unequivocally a ceasefire on all fronts, including in Lebanon. Its violation on one front is a violation of the

ceasefire on all fronts. The U.S. and Israel are responsible for the consequences of any violation," Mr. Araghchi wrote in a social media post.

Mr. Ghalibaf, who is also the country's negotiator with the U.S., said the American blockade of Iran's ports and the Lebanon strikes were ceasefire violations. "The naval blockade and escalation of war crimes in Lebanon by the genocidal Zionist regime are clear evidence of U.S. non-compliance with the ceasefire," he wrote in a post.

As the peace process seemed on the verge of collapse, Mr. Trump appeared to step in to salvage the ceasefire. "I had a very productive call with Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu,

and there will be no Troops going to Beirut, and any Troops that are on their way, have already been turned back," he wrote in a social media post. "Likewise, through highly placed Representatives, I had a very good call with Hezbollah, and they agreed that all shooting will stop – That Israel will not attack them, and they will not attack Israel."

In another post, Mr. Trump said talks with Iran are "continuing, at a rapid pace", without offering further details.

## Beirut raid

Earlier on Monday, Mr. Netanyahu said he has ordered the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) to strike Beirut's Dahiyeh neighbourhood, a Hezbollah strong-

hold, "in response to the repeated and ongoing violations of the ceasefire in Lebanon". Mr. Trump, who announced a ceasefire on April 17, had said then that Israel was "prevented" from striking Lebanon. But the IDF continued its military operations and captured more territory in southern Lebanon.

On Sunday, U.S. Central Command said it struck military targets in southern Iran over the weekend after Iran shot down an American drone. Hours later, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said they attacked a U.S. military base in the region.

CENTCOM later claimed it intercepted "two Iranian ballistic missiles targeting American forces based in Kuwait.

# France seized tanker linked to Russia with U.K. support: Macron

**Associated Press**

PARIS

The French Navy, with support from the U.K., has intercepted an oil tanker under international sanctions that was travelling from Russia, the most recent effort by nations that support Ukraine to target Russian oil exports helping to finance President Vladimir Putin's war.

French President Emmanuel Macron announced on Monday the interception in a post on X, saying the *Tagor* was boarded on Sunday in the Atlantic. "It is unacceptable that boats skirt international sanctions, and finance the war that Russia has been waging against Ukraine," he wrote.



French soldiers intercept the oil tanker on the Atlantic Sea. AP

Russia is believed to be using a 'shadow' fleet of hundreds of ships to evade international sanctions imposed over the war.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Monday that Russia "considers such actions illegal."

"They border on piracy," he said.

# Commercial LPG price up; ATF cheaper for international flights

Oil Marketing Companies' under-recoveries on domestic LPG presently stood at about ₹650 per cylinder, says Sujata Sharma of Union Petroleum Ministry, adding under-recoveries were at ₹30/litre on ATF for domestic scheduled carriers

**Saptaparno Ghosh**

NEW DELHI

Indicative of the continuing stress on the supply of liquified petroleum gas (LPG) due to the West Asia crisis, prices of 19-kg commercial LPG has been raised by ₹42 per cylinder effective June 1.

Also, while the price of the 5 kg free trade LPG (FTL) - mostly used by migrant workers - was hiked by ₹11 while the price of 14.2 kg LPG cylinder - for domestic consumers - was kept unaltered.

Meanwhile, in some relief for airlines, the price of aviation turbine fuel (ATF) for international flights and carriers were cut by about \$400/kilo litre while ATF prices for domestic scheduled carriers were kept unchanged.

## Under-recoveries

Speaking to reporters, Sujata Sharma, Joint-Secretary, Union Petroleum Ministry, said State-run oil-marketing companies

## Mounting costs

Commercial LPG prices have risen by ₹1,345.5 per cylinder across four hikes since February 28

| Date              | Increase (₹ per 19-kg cylinder) |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| March 7           | 115                             |
| April 1           | 195.5                           |
| May 1             | 993                             |
| June 1            | 42                              |
| <b>Total rise</b> | <b>1,345.5</b>                  |

(OMCs) were incurring under-recoveries of ₹30/litre on ATF for domestic scheduled carriers.

In response to a question from *The Hindu*, Ms. Sharma informed OMCs under-recoveries on domestic LPG presently stood at about ₹650 per cylinder.

## Commercial LPG up

The 19-kg commercial LPG cylinder in Delhi is now priced at ₹3,113.5/cylinder and 5-kg FTL at ₹821.5.

The 14.2 kg LPG cylinder meant for domestic consumers, however, continues to be sold at ₹913/cy-

linder in Delhi. Prices of commercial LPG have been hiked for the fourth time since the conflict in West Asia commenced on February 28 this year.

They were last hiked by ₹993/cylinder on May 1. This was preceded by ₹195.5/cylinder hike effected April 1. The first installment of the hikes, ₹115 per cylinder, was on March 7.

A similar paradigm holds for the 5-kg free trade LPG. Price of the small cylinder has experienced its third hike since the conflict began.

It was last hiked by a

steeper ₹261/cylinder May 1 preceded by ₹51 hike on April 1.

Increased prices of 5kg FTL LPG also translate to increased pressure, particularly on migrant labourers in urban and semi-urban areas who do not have local address proof and thus rely on these cylinders that do not mandate any such requirement.

As per government data, public-sector OMCs have sold more than 2.72 lakh 5-kg FTL cylinders since April 3 this year.

## ATF prices

Prices of jet fuel for domestic scheduled flights have been kept unchanged for the second consecutive month in June whilst international carriers have seen a course reversal with the approximately \$400/kilo-litre fall in price.

On May 1, the price of ATF for international airlines was pushed up by \$76.55/kilolitre from \$1,435/kilolitre.

ATF price for domestic

carriers last rose on April 1 this year by more than 9%.

Its current price is unchanged at about ₹1.04 lakh/kilolitre in Delhi.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Ravi Gosain, president of the Indian Association of Travel Operators (IATO) welcomed the reduction though taking note of the domestic ATF prices being unaltered.

## Complex pricing

He sought to highlight complexities in pricing mechanisms centred on taxation structures and market dynamics.

"While global crude trends provide some relief, the benefits may not immediately translate into lower costs for domestic carriers," he stated, adding, "Going forward, a more balanced and response pricing mechanism could help strengthen the sector's competitiveness, improve airline margins, and ultimately create room for better connectivity and consumer benefits."

# Industrial output slows to 4.9% in new data series

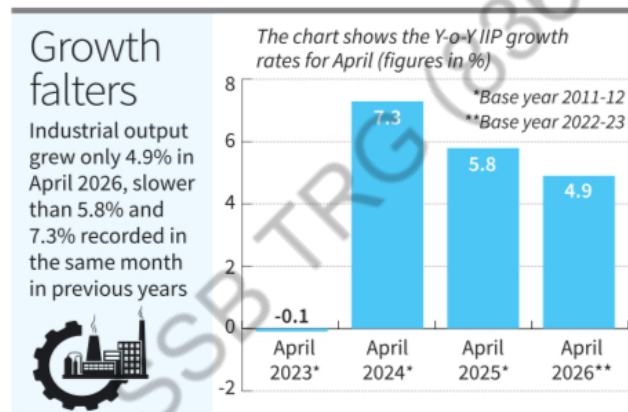
The base year has been revised to 2022-23 from 2011-12; growth rate in April was slower than 5.8% recorded in the corresponding period last year; mining and quarrying output declined by over 5%

**Ashokamithran T.**

MUMBAI

India's industrial output, as measured by the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), grew 4.9% in April 2026 under the revised series with 2022-23 as the base year released on Monday. The growth rate was slower than 5.8% recorded in April last year with 2011-12 as the base year.

The new series has broadened the coverage of the index by incorporating water supply, sewerage and waste management activities and gas supply, while retaining the existing three core sectors – mining, manufacturing, and electricity. Of the four sectoral indices, three grew at a slower pace and one shrunk in the reporting



month on a year-on-year basis. While mining and quarrying output declined by over 5.1%, manufacturing sector output grew at 6.2% in the reporting month, slightly slower than the 6.3% in 2025. The electricity and gas supply sector grew at 4.9% while water supply, sewerage and waste management grew at 6.6%.

The base years of major macroeconomic indicators, which were earlier 2011-12, were revised in 2026 beginning with the GDP. The IIP is the latest in the measures that have been revised to 2022-23 as the base year.

Besides adding new sectoral divisions, the new series also entails "improved granularity". For instance,

mining sector index will now include data classification for fuel minerals, metallic minerals, including rare earth minerals and non-metallic minerals, including minor minerals. Similarly, the electricity index has been classified into renewable and non-renewable sources.

The new basket of goods to calculate IIP consists of 1,042 products mapped to 463 item groups. The older series had just 839 items mapped to 407 item groups. Further, the weights provided to each sector and each industry within the manufacturing sector has been revised in line with the updated Gross Value Added (GVA) 2022-23 series.

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