

# Construction on Rs 119-crore lift irrigation project begins in home district of Chhattisgarh CM

**Raipur, 7 June :** Construction work began on Friday on Rs 119-crore lift irrigation project, which will provide irrigation to more than 4,930 hectares of land across 13 villages in the home district of Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai. Sai inaugurated the construction of the pressurised lift irrigation system at his native village Bagia in Jashpur district, officials said.

The project, being implemented under the Centre's SAMRIDHI-M-CAD (Modernisation of the Command Area Development and Water Management) scheme, will provide irrigation to 4,933 hectares of land across 13 villages – Bagia, Uskuti, Rajoti, Sujibahar, Chongribahar, Bansbahar, Dokda, Sikaria, Patratoli, Gahiradohar, Bihabal, Nariyardand and Dhududand, they said.

Addressing a gathering on the occasion, the CM stressed the initiative is not merely an ir-

rigation project but a strong symbol of the vision of "more crop per drop."

He expressed confidence that Jashpur district would emerge as a model for modern pressurised irrigation systems in the country, opening new avenues of prosperity for farmers.

Under the project, a modern underground pressurised pipeline network will replace the traditional canal system, helping prevent water wastage, improve efficiency and eliminate the need for land acquisition. Farmers, largely dependent on rainfall, will be able to access water for irrigation throughout the year, he said.

Sai maintained that the Bagia Samridhi M-CAD project would not only modernise irrigation, but also steer agriculture towards a technology-driven, sustainable and profitable future, with the potential to establish Jashpur as a

model agri-irrigation district at the national level.

The scheme is being implemented in the Bagia cluster of Kunkuri development block through the Bagia Barrage-cum-



Pressurised Lift Irrigation Scheme on the Maini river.

Sai said the Bagia cluster is among 34 M-CAD projects approved across 23 states. An amount of Rs 95.89 crore has been sanctioned by the Centre,

while the total project cost is estimated at around Rs 119 crore.

State Agriculture Minister Ramvihar Netam and Union Minister Tokhan Sahu, who hails from Chhattisgarh, were



also present on the occasion.

State Nodal Officer for the scheme, Alok Agrawal, said the M-CAD programme was launched in April 2025 by the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti under the guidance of Prime

Minister Narendra Modi.

The Bagia project is expected to be completed within six months, he said. He said operation and maintenance will be handled by the contractor for the first five years, after which it will be taken over by a Water Users' Committee, which will also have women members.

The project will incorporate modern technologies such as solar-powered electricity, SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) and IoT (Internet of Things) to enable controlled and scientific water use. Data-driven management will determine the timing and quantity of water supply to different areas. The scheme aims to enhance water-use efficiency, maximise utilisation of every drop, boost agricultural output and sustainably increase farmers' income, while helping them cope with climate-related risks through advanced agricultural practices, Agrawal added.

# NFR Sets New Milestone in Ticket Checking Revenue

DOI CORRESPONDENT

**Maligaon, 7 June:** The Ticket Checking Section of New Jalpaiguri (NJP) under Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has achieved a historic milestone by recording an unprecedented earning of more than Rs. 2.08 crore during the month of May 2026. This marks the highest ever monthly ticket checking revenue achieved by any section across Northeast Frontier Railway. This remarkable accomplishment reflects the exceptional dedication, professionalism and relentless efforts of the ticket checking staff in ensuring ticket compliance, preventing ticketless travel and safeguarding railway revenue. The achievement stands as a shining example of operational excellence and effective revenue protection initiatives undertaken by NFR.

The record-breaking performance was achieved through sustained ticket checking drives, meticulous enforcement activities and coordinated teamwork by the Ticket Checking Staff of NJP. During the month, the section

maintained an impressive average daily earning of more than Rs. 6.54 lakh (approx.) while the highest single-day earning of more than Rs. 9.65 lakh (approx.) was recorded on 09th May 2026. With a dedicated workforce in the NJP/TTE Lobby, the remarkable achievement reflects the unwavering commitment, exceptional efficiency and sincere efforts of the entire team towards their duties and responsibilities.

The success was further strengthened by several outstanding performances by ticket checking staff, which significantly contributed towards setting this new benchmark for ticket checking earnings in NFR. Shri Chetan Kumar Shrivastava General Manager and senior officials of Northeast Frontier Railway congratulated the entire Ticket Checking team of NJP, for this remarkable achievement, which reflects the continuous effort for NFR's revenue protection initiatives and commitment towards transparency, accountability and proper ticketing awareness.

# From Coal Dust to Clean Comfort: New Madanpur Station Set to Relieve Dumka Citizens with Advanced Goods Facility

DOI CORRESPONDENT

**Kolkata, 7 June:** Under the dynamic leadership of Shri Milind Deouskar, General Manager of Eastern Railway, a major infrastructure transformation is underway near Dumka. Eastern Railway is upgrading the existing New Madanpur halt into a full-fledged, modern block station equipped with comprehensive goods shed facilities. This strategic move is set to completely transform the logistics infrastructure, local landscape for residents and paving the way for smooth, high-capacity economic development.

Currently, all major freight operations—including the intense loading and unloading of general goods and heavy coal—are concentrated right at Dumka station. The existing goods shed handles a massive load every single day, managing an average of 3 to 4 train-loads (rakes) of coal alongside an additional rake filled with stone, sand, and food grains. For the common man, this has meant dealing with constant coal dust, heavy commercial truck congestion on roads leading to the station, and continuous noise.

With coal loading projected to skyrocket to 6 rakes per day, Eastern Railway listened to numerous public representations and stepped in with a permanent solution. By shifting these heavy coal freight operations to New Madanpur station, which is strategically situated at a distance of 4.20 km from Dumka and positioned between the Dumka-Basukinath and Dumka-Barapalshi sections, the daily lives of local citizens will become significantly easier. This relocation means families and daily commuters at Dumka will finally enjoy breathable, cleaner air and a healthier environment free from coal

dust. Furthermore, heavy trucks will bypass the city center and head directly to New Madanpur, freeing up local roads from traffic jams, while the new setup effectively caters to the transit requirements of passengers plying toward both Jasidih (JSME) and Bhalgalpur without any disruption.

Beyond local relief, this new dedicated railhead fulfills a critical, immediate need to establish a suitable rake loading point to support massive upcoming evacuation requirements from local captive coal blocks. This project seamlessly accommodates the projected surge in commercial coal traffic and satisfies the logistics demands of two major power-generation authorities actively seeking to feed power houses in Uttar Pradesh. Specifically, it supports the Saharpur-Jamarpani coal block, which has a capacity of 5.38 MTPA and is operated by Uttar Pradesh Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd. (UPRVUNL) for the Jawahar Power Plant in Uttar Pradesh, as well as the Pachwara South block of the Rajmahal coal field, which has a capacity of 9 MTPA and is operated by Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) for the Ghatampur Power Plant, a joint venture of UPRVUNL and NLC.

Highlighting the importance of this project, Shri Shibrum Majhi, Chief Public Relations Officer of Eastern Railway, stated that Eastern Railway is fully committed to balancing industrial growth with public well-being, and upgrading New Madanpur into a full goods shed station solves two problems at once by providing the essential logistics support required by the power sector while successfully gifting the people of Dumka a cleaner, peaceful, and hassle-free station environment.

# 'Will fuel inflation': Shimla eatery owners decry steep hike in commercial LPG prices

**Shimla, 7 June :** Eatery owners in Shimla have condemned the steep hike of Rs 993 in commercial LPG cylinder prices and cautioned that it would fuel inflation, as food prices would also go up as a consequence. "Our fear that the government may increase the LPG cylinder prices after the assembly elections in the five states has come true. This is the second time since the start of the US-Israel-India war that the rates have been revised. The price of a 19 kg commercial cylinder has touched Rs 3,071 now," said a local shopkeeper.

The price of a 5 kg cylinder has gone up from Rs 549 to Rs 810, registering a 48 per cent increase, which would hit small consumers such as labourers and petty workers, he said.

Talking to PTI Videos on Saturday, Varun, who runs a sweet shop in Shimla, said the commercial gas cylinder price has gone up by around Rs 1,000 in the city, and the cost, including the logistic expenses, would now be around Rs 3,450. "We used to get two cylinders at this price. Not only regular customers but also tourists will feel the pinch, as the price burden would be naturally transferred to customers. High food rates would also affect our business," he said.

Tavesh, who runs an 85-year-old sweet shop in Ram Bazaar that also serves tea and snacks such as samosa and chole bhature, said that LPG rates are rising and considering that it takes at least four days to get the cylinders, their profit margins have gone down.

"Till now, we have not increased the food prices though the rate of raw material has gone up and everything is becoming expensive," he said, won-

dering how long they could hold on.

Indejer Singh, a hotelier and former president of Shimla Veopar Mandal, criticised the Union government, saying that earlier there was a shortage of commercial cylinders and now, after elections in the five states, the rates have been increased as well.

Singh, who is also president of the Shimla Urban District Congress Committee, maintained that hoteliers, dhaba owners and tea sellers are feeling the heat of gas price hike, but the burden would ultimately be transferred to the customer, as food prices would go up. He alleged that the Union government's policies are affecting commoners. "Steep price hikes should have been avoided. In the coming days, the government is likely to increase the domestic cylinder prices as well," he said. CPI(M) leader Vijender Mehra also reiterated that they had expected the prices to go up after the elections.

"We had apprehensions that the government would place the burden on people after the elections," he said.

The Union government is citing the US-Israel-India war as the reason for the gas price hike, he said, accusing it of cheating people after the elections. Taking a jibe at the government's "Make in India" slogan, he questioned what it has done in the last 12 years to make self-reliance possible in the gas and petroleum sector. Earlier, the government increased the price of domestic cylinders by Rs 60, he pointed out. Terminating the steep hike in commercial gas price "anti-people", he demanded its immediate rollback. He warned of protests in the state in the coming days if this is not done.

# The government plans to position the concert economy,

**New Delhi, 7 June :** Teerth Purohiths at Kedarnath temple held a protest on Friday against the alleged decision of the temple committee to restrict their entry through the eastern gate for traditional rituals. Badrinath-Kedarnath Temple Committee (BKTC) member and Kedar Sabha president Rajkumar Tiwari described the incident as a "misunderstanding" caused by security lapses and clarified that the chairman had issued "no such orders".

He added that the matter was discussed with the priests to clear the air. The situation escalated on Friday morning when police personnel allegedly stopped priests from using the eastern gate, which is traditionally used for performing daily religious ceremonies and VIP entries. The priests subsequently staged a demonstration on the temple premises and raised slogans against BKTC chairman Hemant Dwivedi.

Acharya Santosh Trivedi, associated with the Char Dham Teerth Purohit Sangha, said police cited instructions from the temple committee chairman for the sudden restriction at the gate. Following a meeting between the priests and chairman Dwivedi, police personnel claimed the instructions originated from their circle officer (CO). A purported video of the protest was circulated online. Rudraprayag SP Niharika Tomar, however, said police are not aware of any such video. "If anything comes up, we will look into it," she added. The main entrance of the temple remains dedicated to general pilgrims, who stand in queues within barricading to offer prayers.

A local priest, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said the influx of VIP visitors through the eastern gate has increased significantly since the temple's opening this season. Notably, industrialist Gautam Adani and his wife Preeti Adani visited the temple, marking their 40th wedding anniversary on Friday. The priests' protest concluded after temple authorities and police officials expressed regret over the incident and reached a resolution with the priest community. Following the incident, a sub-inspector posted at the gate was removed and shifted to another duty point.

The government plans to position the concert economy, under which live events like music shows, concerts are hosted, as one of the key drivers of national growth and make India a global hub for such events by 2030. The issue was discussed at the 4th meeting of the Live Events Development Cell (LEDC), under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, held on Thursday, an official release said. The meeting was chaired by Chanchal Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB).

# Tech integration into judicial processes dismantles geographical barriers, helps litigants: CJI

**Gangtok, 7 June :** Chief Justice of India Surya Kant on Friday said integrating technology into judicial processes dismantles geographical barriers to help litigants overcome problems of terrain, finance and distance. Addressing the inaugural session of the two-day National Conclave on Technology and Judicial Education here, the CJI also said the Indian legal landscape has moved away from the era of the paper trail, where vital records languished in physical storage, to a vibrant digital ecosystem. He also declared Sikkim to be the first paperless state judiciary in the nation. "When we speak of integrating technology into judicial processes across the country, we are, in effect, addressing the dismantling of geographical constraints, whether they arise from difficult terrain, financial barriers, or sheer distance," he said.

The journey to a courtroom was often measured as a test of endurance, the Chief Justice of India said.

"The mighty Himalayas, magnificent as they are, make movement slow and uncertain. If we look at the scenario just a decade or so ago, for a Sikkimese litigant seeking justice, distance was not measured in kilometres but in days of travel across narrow paths and unpredictable weather," he said.

The CJI said digital reform is not a matter of theory, but a practical necessity for sustaining the rule of law. "We have moved

away from the era of the paper trail, where vital records languished in physical storage, to a vibrant digital ecosystem. The e-Courts project has rewritten the relationship between the litigant and the law," he said. What once required physical presence and toilsome inquiry is now available through a simple digital interface, CJI Kant said, adding that in consonance with this ad-



vancement, the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) stands as the "beating heart" of this endeavour, offering a window into the pulse of our judicial performance.

"Beyond basic data collection, we have witnessed the advent of intelligent assistance within our chambers," he said, mentioning translation tool SUVAS and SUPACE, an AI-driven tool designed to assist judges. "These innovations act as force multipliers, aiding in the swift translation of judgments and providing rapid, comprehensive research to the bench. They

relieve the judge of the mechanical burden of routine inquiry, allowing for a deeper immersion in the complexities of the law," the CJI said. He also discussed another aspect of technological advancements.

"When a litigant in the most distant corner of the country can track the progress of a case or view an order without intermediaries; if he can engage counsel



from across the country and view proceedings in real time through video conferencing and live proceedings, the power dynamics of the courtroom undergo a healthy calibration," he said. Yet, it would be premature to assume that the task is complete, said the Chief Justice of India. He suggested that the large-scale digitisation achieved in trial courts through the National Core Case Information Systems (NC CIS) must now find a clear and consistent reflection in the higher judiciary through stronger standardisation.

"It enables High Courts to

align with a common national standard while still accommodating state-specific requirements, whether in terms of nomenclature, local language needs, or procedural workflows," he said. The CJI said this standardisation exercise must also be accompanied by an expansion of e-Seva Kendras, one-stop digital service centres established in high courts and district courts to help litigants and lawyers access electronic court services such as assistance with case status, e-filing, obtaining certified copies, e-payments, and video conference hearings. "These centres must grow beyond being simple access points and develop into effective hubs of digital support. In a country marked by varying levels of literacy, they serve as the crucial link between the complexity of the law and the immediacy of a citizen's need," he said.

Noting that currently, there are 48 functioning e-Seva Kendras in high courts and 2,283 operational units across district courts, he said that strengthening their technical capacity is essential to ensure that the digital divide does not become a new line of exclusion. CJI Kant also said there is a clear scope for the careful infusion and granular application of Artificial Intelligence at the trial court level. In the context of recovery suits, for instance, predictive and analytical tools can be deployed at the very threshold of litigation, he said. "In-

stead of allowing valuable judicial time to be spent at the execution stage, on tasks such as verification of assets or tracing encumbrances, these systems can undertake such foundational checks with a degree of speed and accuracy that manual processes often cannot match," he said.

Similarly, AI systems can be deployed to identify patterns in sentencing and bail practices, to promote greater consistency and predictability, the CJI said. "This Conclave recognises that the adoption of technology is not only about implementation, but also about a necessary shift in legal education. It is no longer sufficient to be well versed in the statutes of the past. The modern judge must also engage with the logic that underpins emerging technologies," the CJI said. Judicial academics also must move beyond basic digital literacy, encouraging a deeper understanding of how algorithmic systems operate, and how they intersect with longstanding principles such as natural justice, he said.

The CJI congratulated the Chief Justice of the High Court of Sikkim and the state government for achieving the milestone of a paperless high court and for placing Sikkim on the national map of judicial innovation. The programme was attended by Chief Justice of Seychelles Supreme Court Rony James Govinden, Sri Lankan Supreme Court judge Mohammad Dhilip Nawaz and others.