

International & National News

Rupee collapses to a low of 69.10 against US dollar in early trade

Agency
New Delhi, June 28,

The Indian rupee collapsed to a lifetime low of 69.10 against the US dollar by plunging 49 paise in early trade on Thursday, following a spike in oil prices and concerns of higher inflation and widening fiscal deficit, PTI reported. Rupee was trading at 68.52 against US dollar at 10.30 am. Consistent dollar demand from banks and importers, mainly oil refiners, following higher crude oil prices kept the rupee under pressure, PTI reported. The rupee closed at its lowest in nearly 19 months on Wednesday at 68.61 to a US dollar. Global oil prices have climbed after the United States asked its allies, including India, to end all imports of crude oil from Iran by November 4. Concerns over supply disruptions in Libya and Canada pushed prices higher. The BSE Sensex and National Stock Exchange's Nifty 50 declined for a second day on Thursday as escalating trade war concerns continued to pressure global stocks. Sensex traded lower by 27.10

Oil prices have risen after the United States asked its allies to end all imports of crude oil from Iran by November 4.

points to 35,244.21, while Nifty fell 8.75 points to 10,662.65. Mahindra and Mahindra and Infosys were the top gainers on both the indices. Axis Bank, HDFC and Sun Pharma were the other major gainers on Sensex. On Nifty 50, stocks of HDFC, Zee Entertainment and Dr Reddy Labs were performing well. Coal India, NTPC, ICICI Bank,

Larsen & Toubro, and Hero Motorcorp were the top losers on Sensex, while stocks of Gail, HPCL, Titan, BPCL, and NTPC performed poorly on Nifty 50. Asian stocks slumped to nine-month lows on growing worries the US administration's approach to trade is harming global economic growth, agency report said.

US urges fellow UN Security Council members to impose sanctions on Iran

Agency
United Nation, June 28,
The United States has urged its fellow UN Security Council members to punish and impose

sanctions on Iran for its, what it termed, malign behaviour in West Asia.

At a meeting on the implementation of the 2015 nuclear deal with Tehran, US Deputy Ambassador to the UN, Jonathan Cohen said, if a country continuously violates the Council's resolutions, it is imperative to pursue meaningful consequences. It was the first meeting of the Security Council since US President Donald Trump announced on 8th May that Washington was withdrawing from the nuclear agreement with Tehran.

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All security arrangements made; no cause for worry: JK Governor

Agency
Amarnath Cave (JK), June 28

Jammu and Kashmir Governor N N Vohra today said all arrangements have been made for the security of two-month-long Amarnath pilgrimage and there is no cause for any worry. Vohra's comments came amidst "biggest-ever" security blanket thrown to secure pilgrims undertaking the Amarnath pilgrimage which began today. "I want to give a message and assurance that all security arrangements have been made for Amarnath Yatra. There is no cause for worry for the pilgrims," he told agency after offering prayers at the cave shrine here, located at an altitude of 12,756 feet. Vohra was among the first pilgrims to offer prayers at the

shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva in the Himalayas in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Governor also said that due to the inclement weather, the pilgrimage has been suspended temporarily and it would be resumed once the weather situation improves. Vehicles tagged with electromagnetic chips, bike and bullet-proof SUV police convoys and scores of bullet-proof bunkers have been deployed as part of the "biggest-ever" security blanket thrown to secure pilgrims undertaking the Amarnath pilgrimage, an official said.

Over two lakh pilgrims have registered for the annual pilgrimage to the cave shrine of Amarnath in south Kashmir Himalayas till now. A posse of over 40,000 armed

CRPF and state police personnel have virtually dotted the pilgrimage routes from Jammu—via Pahalgam and Baltal—with their overwhelming presence in armoured vehicles.

Forces have deployed a huge assortment of CCTV cameras and drones, assisted by mounted Army columns, to ensure that the pilgrimage route is not breached by terrorists and in case of a possible attack reinforcements reach as fast as possible. Heavy rainfall today delayed commencement of the annual pilgrimage to the cave shrine from Pahalgam and Baltal base camps.

"The yatra has not commenced yet from either Baltal or Pahalgam base camps due to rain," a spokesman of the Shri

Amarnath Shrine Board (SASB) said. He said the pilgrimage will commence only after weather improves and the tracks are safe for the pilgrims to move on.

Amid tight security, the first batch of nearly 3,000 Amarnath pilgrims from Jammu reached the twin base camps at Baltal and Pahalgam last evening.

Of this group of pilgrims, 1,904 have opted for traditional Pahalgam route while 1,091 choose the Baltal route to reach the Himalayan cave shrine in south Kashmir. The batch comprises of 2,334 men, 520 women, 21 children and 120 Sadhus (monks), an official said.

The oilgrimage will conclude on August 26 on the day of Rakshabandhan.

Two senior Income Tax officers get 5-yr jail in bribery case

Agency
Mumbai, Jun 28,

A special CBI court here convicted an additional commissioner of Income Tax and an assistant I-T commissioner in a Rs 1.7 crore graft case of 2010 and sentenced them to five years' imprisonment.

The additional commissioner's husband was also convicted and awarded four years in jail. Special CBI judge Vivek Khathare yesterday sentenced additional commissioner Sumitra Banerjee, 49, a 1992 batch Indian Revenue Service officer, and assistant commissioner Anjali Bambole, 50, to five years' imprisonment for allegedly demanding Rs 1.7 crore bribe from a Thane-based builder.

Banerjee's husband Subroto, who was nabbed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) while accepting Rs 1.50 crore from the builder, was sentenced to four years' imprisonment. The judge also imposed a fine of Rs 80 lakh on Banerjee, Rs 30 lakh on her husband and Rs 40 lakh on Bambole.

According to the CBI's Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), the officers had sought the money from the builder for not converting a survey action into a search operation, which gives the I-T department powers to seize unaccounted assets.

The builder had approached the CBI's ACB on April 12, 2010 claiming that the two officers, who were posted at the Thane Income Tax office, were demanding bribe to

reduce tax liabilities of his firm Ram Developers.

On March 24, 2010 a survey was conducted at the firm under Banerjee's supervision. Later, the two officers demanded Rs 2 crore from the builder claiming that the firm's tax liability would be Rs 25 crore.

According to the complaint, the officers reduced the bribe amount to Rs 1.70 crore and threatened to convert the survey action into a search if he did not pay the money.

The builder then approached the CBI and lodged a complaint following which a trap was laid to nab the accused.

All the three accused were subsequently arrested. They were currently out on bail.

The prosecution examined 14 witnesses to prove its case.

NITI Aayog's WEP signs SoI with financial institutions & social organisations

Agency
New Delhi, June 28,

NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurs Platform has signed five Statements of Intent (SoIs) with financial institutions and social organisations to provide assistance to women entrepreneurs and address the finance related challenges faced by them.

The SoIs were inked with Shri Mahila Sewa Sahakari Bank Limited, Indiabulls Housing Finance Limited, SREI Infrastructure Finance Limited, Sreemanta Sankar Mission and the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA).

Through its partner organisations, the WEP aims to create opportunities and support women to help them realise their entrepreneurial aspirations, scale up innovative initiatives, and chalk out sustainable and long-term strategies for their businesses.

The WEP was established on the occasion of International Women's Day in March this year to substantially increase the number of women entrepreneurs who will create and empower a dynamic New India.

5 killed as plane crashes in Mumbai suburb

Agency
Mumbai, Jun 28

Five persons were killed when an aircraft on a test flight crashed in a crowded Mumbai suburb this afternoon, police said.

Those killed include two pilots and as many flight engineers on board, besides a pedestrian in the Ghatkopar area where it crashed, police said.

The King Air C90 12-seater

aircraft, which took off from the Juhu airstrip, crashed in the Jagruti Nagar area of Ghatkopar, police said.

A team of officials of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) rushed to the crash site for an investigation, an official said. The police, fire brigade and disaster management teams rushed to the spot. Bodies of those killed were taken to the nearby Rajawadi hospital in

Ghatkopar, an official said.

A fire brigade official said, "Our control room got a call at 1.15 pm informing a plane crash. Our jawans were immediately rushed at the site to launch the rescue operation."

Four fire engines and as many water tankers were rushed to douse the fire that occurred after the plane crashed."

The police cordoned off the area, an official said.

Why your Twitter follower count may drop in coming weeks

Courtesy- TNN

Don't be surprised if your Twitter follower count drops in the coming weeks. Twitter India said on Wednesday, announcing a fresh purge of automated spam accounts on the platform.

"We'll be taking action to challenge a large number of suspected spam accounts globally. Some people may see their follower counts drop. This does not mean

they did anything wrong," Twitter India announced in a tweet on Monday, linking to a blog post on "fighting spam and malicious automation."

"The accounts we're challenging appear to be in violation of our spam rules, as they have automatically or bulk followed high-profile accounts, suggested during our sign-up flow. Our focus is increasingly on proactively identifying problematic accounts and

behavior rather than waiting until we receive a report. As a result of these improvements, people may notice their account metrics change more regularly," Twitter India further said in a series of tweets said.

Last week, Twitter announced its acquisition of Smyte, a security company specialising in handling spam. This February, the company had introduced changes to

its API to contain automated accounts using services like Tweetdeck to tweet or retweets en masse. In a Tuesday blog post, Twitter said that it had "identified and challenged" over 9.9 million potentially spammy or automated accounts per week in May 2018. A "challenge" is an activity an account has to perform to confirm it is human, like entering a phone number, for example.

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