

Agnikul eyes to launch satellites by 2025: Start-up CEO Ravichandran

NEW DELHI, June 2 (PTI)

AFTER the successful test-flight of Agnibaan SOrTeD, Chennai-based space start-up Agnikul Cosmos is hoping to start launching satellites early next year. In an interview with PTI, Agnikul co-founder and Chief Executive Officer Srinath Ravichandran said the 3D-printed semi-cryogenic engines and the rocket will offer quick turnaround for customers who will be able to have customised launch vehicles for their satellites.

“Nine to 12 months I would say. Probably by the end of this financial year or the early part

of the next financial year is what we are targeting,” Ravichandran said when asked about the commercial orbital launch of the Agnibaan rocket. The first test flight of Agnibaan SOrTeD (suborbital technology demonstrator) on May 30, which lasted for 66 seconds, came after four unsuccessful attempts.

“It was a big sense of relief. I think we got a lot of learning in differentiating between building a vehicle and launching a vehicle,” said Ravichandran, whose idea to use 3D printing technology to build engines and rockets led to Agnikul



Cosmos, a space sector start-up incubated at the IIT Madras Research Park in 2017.

The other co-founders were Moin SPM, an operations specialist and Satyanarayanan Chakravarthy, a professor at IIT Madras and Head of the National Centre for Combustion Research and Development.

Zelenskyy accuses China OF PRESSURING OTHER COUNTRIES not to attend UKRAINE PEACE TALKS

SINGAPORE, June 2 (AP)

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelenskyy accused China of helping Russia to disrupt a Swiss-organised peace conference on the war in Ukraine, speaking at Asia's premier security conference on Sunday.

In a news conference at the Shangri-La defence forum in Singapore, Zelenskyy said that China is pressuring other countries and their leaders not to attend the upcoming talks.

"Russia, using Chinese influence in the region, using Chinese diplomats also, does everything to disrupt the peace summit," he said, according to a simultaneous translation of his remarks. "Regrettably this is unfortunate that such a big independent powerful country as China is an instrument in hands of Putin."

In a speech earlier in the day, Zelenskyy urged top defence officials to attend the upcoming summit, saying he was disappointed at the failure of some countries to commit to joining.

Chinese Defence Minister Dong Jun spoke earlier in the day at the Shangri-La conference but he did not appear to be in the room when Zelenskyy made his appeal.

Zelenskyy said that Ukraine had proposals to make at the summit as a basis for peace, addressing nuclear security, food security, the release of prisoners of war and the return

of Ukrainian children abducted by Russia. "Time is running out, and the children are growing up in the Putin-land where they are taught to hate their homeland," he said.

At the same time, Zelenskyy said Ukraine is "ready to hear various proposals and thoughts that lead us ... To an end of the war and a sustainable and just peace." The greater the partic-

Zelenskyy urged top defence officials to attend the upcoming summit, saying he was disappointed at the failure of some countries to commit to joining



ipation, the more likely it will be that Russia will have to listen, he said. "The global majority can ensure with their involvement that what is agreed upon is truly implemented," he said. Zelenskyy said he planned to meet one-on-one with Singapore's Prime Minister and would urge him to participate in person in the Switzerland talks. "The same goes for the countries in the region," Zelenskyy said through an interpreter. "We truly count on you supporting this summit, and that you will be present in Switzerland."

Mexicans vote in historic polls as 2 women vie to lead country

Mexico City: Mexicans voted Sunday in a presidential election dominated by two women — a historic first in a country with a history of gender-based violence and discrimination.

Governing party candidate Claudia Sheinbaum, a former Mexico City mayor and a climate scientist by training, had a 17 percentage point lead over her main rival Xochitl Galvez, a tech entrepreneur on a ticket that includes a collection of opposition parties, on the eve of the vote. The only man running, centrist Jorge Alvarez Maynez, was trailing far behind as a particularly violent campaign season marked by a string of candidate murders drew to an end. It means that, barring a huge surprise, a woman is almost certain to break the highest political glass ceiling in Mexico, where around 10 women or girls are murdered every day.

The contest showcases the immense strides in Mexico's politics made in recent years by women, who weren't even allowed to vote in the country until 1953. Both the top candidates come with considerable experience: Galvez was a senator and Sheinbaum governed the capital, one of the largest cities in the hemisphere.

Reuters



HUGE STEP FORWARD: Front-runner is Claudia Sheinbaum (L), a climate scientist representing the governing party. Her closest competitor is Xochitl Galvez, a tech entrepreneur on a ticket that includes several opposition parties. A woman is almost certain to break the highest political glass ceiling in Mexico, where around 10 women are murdered every day

Yet much of race has focused on a figure who isn't on the ballot, but looms large: the powerful current prez, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador. While broadly popular, Lopez Obrador has been a polarising figure, eliciting adulation from die-hard fans and vitriol from critics. His administration doubled the minimum wage and used cash transfer programs to help bring millions out of poverty, while empowering military and pursuing steps that many warned would weaken democratic institutions.

His dominance upended establishment politics, prompting three parties, from the right, centre and left, to form an uneasy union that is now

backing Galvez. Sheinbaum has appealed to voters mainly by promising to continue his legacy. Galvez has cast herself as an alternative for those unhappy with Lopez Obrador's leadership, vowing to reverse many of his policies.

Whoever wins will face daunting challenges: Persistent cartel violence, along with Mexico's middling economic performance, are the main issues. Nearly 100 million people are registered to vote. Voters will also elect governors in nine of the country's 32 states, and choose candidates for both houses of Congress, thousands of mayorships and other local posts, in the biggest polls the nation has seen. NYT, AFP, AP

India sends 90 tonne of API in aid to Cuba

New Delhi: India is extending humanitarian assistance to Cuba in the form of a consignment of approx 90 tonne of nine Made in India Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) which left Mundra port on Sunday.

These APIs will be used by the Cuban drug manufacturers to produce essential antibiotics in the dosage form of tablets, capsules, syrups and injections, needed for treatment of chronic communicable diseases.

“The assistance reaffirms India’s status as the “Pharmacy of the World” and underlines our commitment to historic friendship with Cuba,” said govt. TNN

India's come a long way since 2012 outage, world's largest. Even 250GW isn't a problem

Sanjay Dutta | TNN

New Delhi: When India's power demand spiked to 250 gigawatts (GW) — a level never seen before — on May 30 against a projection of 235 GW for the month, the cross-country transmission network did not heat up and there was no report of unscheduled outages.

Despatchers manning the national control centre directing the flow of electricity are now gearing up for a peak demand of 258 GW in the coming months. This is a far cry from July 30 and 31, 2012, when India suffered the world's largest outage after the northern and eastern grids collapsed due to overload, plunging 620 million (62 crore) people, or

POWERING AHEAD

Transmission

Length
4,81,326 circuit-Km

Inter-regional transfer capacity



1,16,540 MW

Transformation capacity

12,25,260 MVA

Generation capacity by resource

Coal
In MW **2,10,969**

Renewables, including hydro
1,83,498

Gas
25,038

Nuclear
7,480

Lignite
6,620

Diesel
589



Total generation capacity

4,34,194 MW

Source: Power ministry

9% of the world's population at the time, into darkness for over 13 hours. The peak demand recorded during that month was around 130 GW but additional power could not be imported from surplus re-

gions as the work on integration with other grids was still under way and completed in December 2013, giving India 'One Nation, One Grid'.

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Landslides Hit Arunachal Pradesh & Sikkim

It will be BJP in Itanagar for 2nd time in a row, with 46 of 60 seats

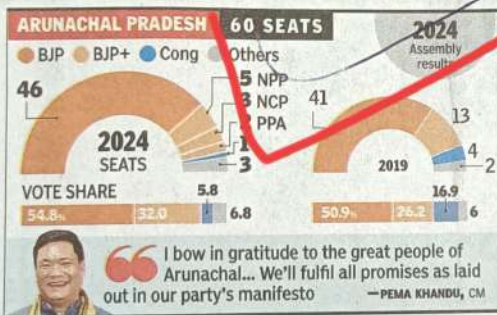
SKM bags 31 of 32, wins Gangtok on the trot; BJP, Cong draw a blank

Prabin.Kalita@timesgroup.com

BJP scripted its second consecutive electoral landslide in the frontier state of Arunachal Pradesh on Sunday, winning 46 of 60 assembly constituencies—10 of them unopposed—to build on its 2019 tally of 41 and leave Congress clinging to a solitary seat in its erstwhile stronghold of over three decades.

BJP's dominance was reflected in the party wresting 16 seats, not only making up for the 11 it couldn't retain but also widening its footprint in this strategically important state bordering China. The saffron party improved its vote share from 50.9% in 2019 to over 54%.

Led by Pema Khandu, who won uncontested and is tipped to retain the chief ministership despite BJP not officially naming its CM face, most of the saffron party's gains came at the expense of JD (U) and Congress. NDA ally NPP won five seats, the same



10 of 11 turncoats win on BJP tickets

Ten of the 11 MLAs who had won the 2019 polls on tickets from Congress and other parties, including JD(U), but later joined BJP, registered big wins this time. **P 11**

as in 2019, while NCP made a comeback, garnering three.

It was a big blow for Congress, which had formed govts in

Cong struggled to find candidates

Congress, which had won four seats in 2019, contested only 19 this time after failing to field candidates in 41 seats as many netas defied AICC's decision to nominate them. **P 11**

Arunachal's see-saw politics 8 times between 1960 and 2016.

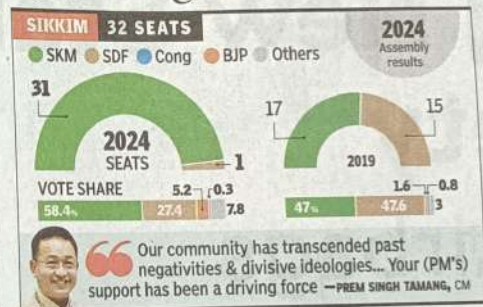
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TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Landslides usually evoke harrowing memories in Sikkim, but this term aptly describes the assembly election results in the Himalayan state. CM Prem Singh Tamang's Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) returned to office for a second consecutive term, winning 31 of 32 seats on Sunday, reducing opposition Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF), which had governed the state for 25 years until 2019, to a single seat.

Tamang (56) won both Rhenock and Soreng-Chakung constituencies, contributing to the party's 58.38% of votes. SKM's resounding success starkly contrasts with its performance in the 2019 elections, when it won 17 seats and SDF took 15.

PM Modi congratulated Tamang and SKM, expressing his eagerness to collaborate with the state govt to advance Sikkim's progress. BJP con-



Ex-CM Chamling of SDF loses both seats

SDF chief and eight-time MLA Pawan Chamling, who holds the record for being India's longest serving CM—from 1994 to 2019—lost both his seats to SKM candidates. **P 11**

tested 31 seats but did not win any, securing 5.18% of total votes. BJP decided to contest solo after seat-sharing talks with

Bhaichung's 6th defeat in 10 yrs

Football icon and SDF vice-president Bhaichung Bhutia lost in Barfung, his sixth electoral defeat in past 10 years. He had lost twice in Bengal and thrice in Sikkim. **P 11**

NDA ally SKM broke down. Congress drew a blank.

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Israel attacks Hezbollah military base in Lebanon

BEIRUT, June 2 (IANS)

ISRAELI warplanes attacked on Sunday a military base used by Hezbollah to launch assault drones against Israeli army targets, Lebanese military sources told Xinhua. Israeli warplanes fired three air-to-surface missiles at a Hezbollah military base located in the west of the city of Baalbek in eastern Lebanon, about 80 km from the borderline separating Lebanon and Israel, the sources said on condition of anonymity. The sources said that the missiles destroyed the base and wounded two people, who were transported to a hospital in the city of Baalbek.

Also on Sunday morning, Israeli warplanes launched three raids on the southeast villages of Kfarhamam, Rachaya al Foukhar, and Halta, injuring 18 civilians, including nine children, the sources added. Meanwhile, Hezbollah said its fighters on Sunday morning attacked the Yarden military base in Golan Heights, targeting the Iron Dome radar and stationing areas of officers and soldiers. Tensions along the Lebanon-Israel border escalated on October 8, 2023, following a barrage of rockets launched by Hezbollah toward Israel in solidarity with Hamas' attack on Israel the day before. Israel then retaliated by firing heavy artillery toward southeastern Lebanon.