



### Vani's observation

Actor Vaani Kapoor opens up about the changing landscape for women in Indian cinema

LEISURE | P2



### China against PM's wishes

China protests Modi's greetings to the Dalai Lama on his 90th b'day, urging India to respect Beijing's sensitivities regarding Tibet-related issues

INTERNATIONAL | P10



### Carrier to sue India

Indian unit of US air conditioning giant Carrier to sue India over electronic waste rules

BUSINESS | P11



### Memorable knock

SA's stand-in captain against Zimbabwe was just 33 short of scaling historic 400, but decided to declare the innings at 367

SPORTS | P12

## 93% pleas resolved in 11 hearings: CM

**Bhubaneswar:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has resolved more than 10,000 public grievances during 11 rounds of hearings since assuming office, the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said Monday. According to a statement from the CMO, 10,132 out of 10,894 grievances received so far have been addressed — a resolution rate of 93 per cent. The remaining cases are currently under process, it added. Accompanied by a team of seven ministers and senior officers, Majhi Monday held the 12th session of the Chief Minister's Public Grievance Hearing since assuming office in June last year.

P3

## Trump: 10% additional tariff on BRICS grouping

**New York/Washington:** US President Donald Trump has threatened to impose an additional 10% tariff on countries aligning themselves with the "anti-American" policies of the BRICS grouping. His comments came after the BRICS bloc condemned the increase of tariffs without naming Trump. Leaders of the BRICS met in Brazil for the 17th BRICS Summit July 6-7. "Any Country aligning themselves with the Anti-American policies of BRICS, will be charged an ADDITIONAL 10 per cent Tariff. There will be no exceptions to this policy. Thank you for your attention to this matter!" Trump said in a post on Truth Social Sunday night.

P10

## Five of Bihar family killed over witchcraft

**Purnea:** Five members of a family, including three women, were allegedly killed and their bodies burnt on suspicion of practising witchcraft in this district of Bihar. Two persons were arrested in connection with Sunday night's incident. Prima facie, five members of a family in Tetma village, under Muffasil police station, were first murdered on suspicion of practising witchcraft, DIG (Purnea) Pramod Kumar Mandal said.

P9

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Wow! A couple of years in politics – and the acting's reached a whole new level!!



CRUEL ACT: Miscreants hurl fireballs at a helpless elephant struggling to come out of the swollen Brahmani river at Kamakhyanagar's Palasahi under Dhenkanal forest division Monday

## Ratna Bhandar: 600 stone slabs replaced

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Puri, July 7:** The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has completed the conservation and repair works of Ratna Bhandar (both inner and outer chambers) of Puri Srimandir, said Chief Administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) Arabinda Padhee Monday, adding that 600 stone slabs were replaced with new ones.

The SJTA chief shared the updates on his official account, saying, "Blessed to inform that the conservation and repair works of Ratna Bhandar (both Bhitara and Bahara) of Shree Mandira by ASI concluded today. All Mahaprabhu's blessings!"

The restoration involved replacing around 600 stone slabs with new ones, meticulously replicating the traditional designs while ensuring enhanced structural safety. The ASI began work inside the temple vault in July 2024 when it was reopened after 46 years. The initial focus was on preparing an inventory of valuables and assessing the structure for necessary repairs.

Padhee explained that both the outer and inner sections were preserved with the application of chemical coatings. Fourteen beams have been repaired and over 80 skilled craftsmen contributed their expertise to the restoration efforts.

# Roll revision unites Oppn 25cr workers to join 'Bharat Bandh' July 9

PNN & AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 7:** Alleging that the Union government has abandoned the welfare state status of the country and is working in the interest of foreign and Indian corporate bodies, a forum of 10 central trade unions and their associates have called for a 'Bharat Bandh' July 9. More than 25 crore workers engaged in sectors ranging from banking, insurance, postal, coal mining, highway and construction are expected to take to the streets.

The forum squarely blamed the economic policies of the Centre for rising unemployment, sky-rocketing prices of essential commodities, depression in wages, and cut in social sector spending. It said that all these are leading to more inequalities and miseries for poor, people of lower income group as well as the middle class.

The forum, in a statement said, it will oppose the "anti-worker, anti-farmer and anti-national pro-corporate policies of the government". It has called for making "the nationwide gen-

eral strike a grand success", and said preparations have been taken up in earnest by unions in all sectors of formal and informal/unorganised economy.

"More than 25 crore workers are expected to take part in the strike. Farmers and rural workers will also join the protest across the country," said Amarjeet Kaur from All India Trade Union Congress.

Harbhajan Singh Sidhu from Hind Mazdoor Sabha said banking, postal, coal mining, factories, state transport services will be affected due to the strike. It further said that the government has not been conducting the annual labour conference for the last 10 years and continues to take decisions in contravention to the interest of labour force, attempting to impose four labour codes to weaken collective bargaining, to cripple unions' activities and to favour employers in the name of 'ease of doing business'. "Trade unions have been fighting against privatisation of public sector enterprises and public services, policies of outsourcing and contractorisation of workforce," it said.

*Amid growing chorus against the Election Commission's (EC) conduct of Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in Bihar, the Congress Monday said that the Opposition is united against the contentious move ahead of the Assembly elections in the eastern state. Maintaining that such a provision has no legal basis, nor does it find any mention in the rules, the party said the term doesn't even exist in electoral law. With the EC move being termed by many as 'mass-scale rigging and mischief, aimed at disenfranchising the vast number of voters', all eyes are now set on the Supreme Court, which has agreed to hear a batch of petitions challenging the exercise July 10*

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 7:** Joining nine other parties in challenging the special intensive revision of electoral rolls in Bihar before the Supreme Court, the Congress Monday said the entire Opposition is united on the issue and alleged that the exercise is aimed at disenfranchising the vast number of voters with its "mischievous methodology".



The Opposition party said it has full faith that the apex court will deliver justice, as it claimed that the revision exercise initiated by the Election Commission (EC) just ahead of Assembly elections in Bihar is causing chaos across villages and towns in the state by creating anxiety among crores of voters who fear their right to vote will be stolen.

Congress general secretary (Organisation) KC Venugopal said as a signatory on behalf of the Indian National Congress, along with various Opposition parties, he has approached the Supreme Court against the "blatantly unconstitutional SIR exercise" in Bihar.

"It has wreaked havoc across

villages and towns of Bihar, giving crores of voters anxiety about whether their right to vote will be stolen. This is mass-scale rigging and mischief being carried out by the ECI, under instructions from the ruling regime," Venugopal alleged in a post on X.

"We have faith that the Hon'ble Supreme Court will deliver justice," he said.

The party's in charge of the media and publicity department, Pawan Kherra, said the Congress, said, "Today, the INC, along with nine political parties, came together to file a challenge to the flawed and destructive SIR being carried out by the ECI."

"The entire Opposition stands together to oppose an

exercise that is guaranteed to disenfranchise a vast number of voters due to its malicious and mischievous methodology. The Supreme Court has listed the matter for Thursday, July 10, 2025. Satyamev Jayate," Kherra said in his post on X.

In a post in Hindi on X, Congress general secretary Ran-deep Surjewala said, "Democracy or BJP's vote suppression mechanism? Bihar is asking, the country is asking!"

He said Bihar's voter list was finalised in January 2025, and the EC itself acknowledged this. Revisions were made until June, and then, suddenly, it was discarded, he noted.

"Without any proof, without any discrepancies, 7 crore voters now have to prove their Indian citizenship again. Those whose names were added after 2003 are being viewed with suspicion. Citizens who have been voting for the past 20 years are now being asked for identification, residence, and citizenship documents," Surjewala said.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court Monday agreed to hear July 10 a batch of petitions challenging the decision of the EC to undertake SIR in Bihar.

## Diarrhoea claims 2 in Ganjam; 140 taken ill

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar/Berhampur, July 7:** Two persons have died and over 140 were taken ill following a diarrhoea outbreak in Ganjam district, officials said Monday. The first cases were reported from Ustapalli village in Digapahandi block Saturday, they said.

Two persons died over the past three days, while 10 patients were shifted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur as their conditions worsened, they added.

The deceased were identified as Dash Sabar, 70, from Ustapalli village and Prakash Raita, 37, of Bhismagiri area. At least six seriously ill persons



in the village are undergoing treatment at MKCG Medical College and Hospital here, another officer said. The exact cause of the outbreak is yet to be ascertained, said a medical officer of the block.

"We had sent the water samples from the village for testing on Sunday. The report will come by Tuesday," the doctor said.

## NASA rover explains why Mars is uninhabitable

AGENCIES

**Washington, July 7:** A discovery made by a NASA rover has offered a clue for the mystery as to why Mars is barren and uninhabitable, while life has always thrived here on our relatively similar planet Earth. A new research has revealed recently that while rivers once sporadically flowed on Mars, it was doomed to mostly be a desert planet.

Mars is thought to currently have all the necessary ingredients for life except for perhaps the most important one: liquid water, the research revealed.

However, the red surface is carved out by ancient rivers and lakes, showing that water once flowed on our nearest neighbour. There are currently

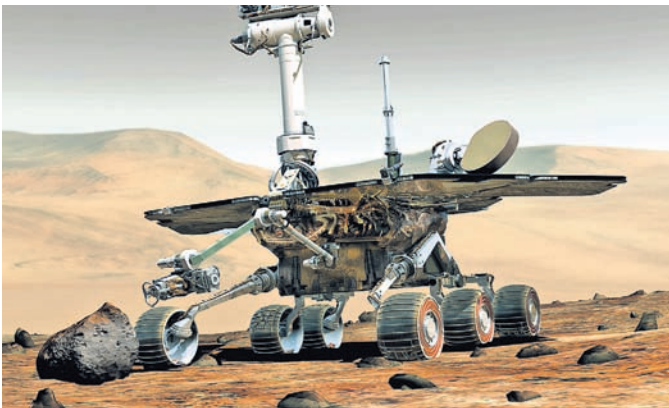
several rovers searching Mars for signs of life that could have existed back in those more habitable times, millions of years ago.

Earlier this year, NASA's Curiosity rover discovered a missing piece in this puzzle: rocks that are rich in carbonate minerals.

These carbonates – such as limestone on Earth – act as a sponge for carbon dioxide, pulling it in from the atmosphere and trapping it in rock.

A new study, published in the journal Nature, modelled exactly how the existence of these rocks could change our understanding of Mars's past.

Lead study author Edwin Kite, a planetary scientist at the University of Chicago and a member of the Curiosity team, told AFP it appeared there were



"blips of habitability in some times and places" on Mars.

But these "oases" were the exception rather than the rule.

On Earth, carbon dioxide in the atmosphere warms the planet. Over long timescales,

the carbon becomes trapped in rocks such as carbonates.

Then volcanic eruptions spew the gas back into the atmosphere, creating a well-balanced climate cycle supportive of consistently running water.

However Mars has a "feeble" rate of volcanic outgassing compared to Earth, Kite said. This throws off the balance, leaving Mars much colder and less hospitable.

According to the modelling research, the brief periods of liquid water on Mars were followed by 100 million years of barren desert – a long time for anything to survive.

It is still possible that there are pockets of liquid water deep underground on Mars we have not yet found, Kite said.

NASA's Perseverance Rover, which landed on an ancient Martian delta in 2021, has also found signs of carbonates at the edge of dried-up lake, he added.

Next, the scientists hope to discover more evidence of carbonates.



# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
You are very sensitive, and some people will disturb your peace of mind today. However, getting irritated will only make matters worse. Reflect in isolation what may be at the root of the problem. Ganesha says it is closer to you than you think.

**TAURUS**  
Today, says Ganesha, you will be likely to encounter someone who is bent upon provoking and getting on your nerves. You are urged not to retaliate and do things unbecoming of your good nature. Keep calm and unfluffed. Respond and behave in a manner befitting your better nature. Do not allow the other to spoil your composure, your graciousness.

**GEMINI**  
You will keep your emotions aside and concentrate solely on your work today. You will have to waste a lot of time in fulfilling the demands made by those around you. However, the more demands you fulfill, the more their expectations will rise, says Ganesha.

**CANCER**  
The day is very favourable, says Ganesha. You will feel a sense of joy and happiness with your valuable possessions. You may fall into love or have a strong romantic ties with someone. A great time for lovers. Ganesha foresees chance of having new contacts and ties.

**LEO**  
Your entire day will be spent at work. Those working in large corporations will have to fulfill heightened expectations from their superiors. Housewives will need to tackle other work, apart from their daily chores. It is an important day for you, says Ganesha.

**VIRGO**  
You will stay away from partnership ventures. Ganesha says you have the ability to control large-scale projects on your own. You have leadership qualities, and will be able to coordinate team work and direct your colleagues to get the required amount of work from them.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesha says you will put everything aside to pay more attention to your outward appearance and your beauty as you will be more aware about it. People will get attracted to your beauty today. You will be able to share your own ideas and thoughts with people, at the same time you will learn about their views and from their experiences.

**SCORPIO**  
You are ready to take up the challenges that life has to throw at you. Thanks to the confidence within you, which gives you power to fight it out against all odds. Even if you take up a mammoth task, you are bound to succeed today, predicts Ganesha.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
The day begins on a bright note and you decide to flaunt your sunny side up, foresees Ganesha. At home front, sharing of work with your partner will keep the home atmosphere peaceful and harmonious. Both of you discover a joy in cleaning and cooking together. A perfect recipe for love!

**CAPRICORN**  
Practical and creative, you are able to utilise your talents in the best possible manner. You will smartly solve family issues, without favouring or hurting anybody, says Ganesha. You'll like to play the role of a peace maker, as it gives you satisfaction from within. Also, you will love to help others as much as you can.

**AQUARIUS**  
Be it about solving financial issues or concerns about income, money matters will keep your mind occupied through out the day. You will have a gala time with your friends later on the day, predicts Ganesha. Not that you don't value your friends, but today, you will realise how important you are for one another.

**PISCES**  
You are fond of traveling and are always looking for an excuse to set off. Hence it comes as no surprise if you pack your bags and decide to embark upon a journey on a whim today. It is a much needed break too, from the daily stresses of earning a livelihood. While you are seeking solitude, you will take your friends and relatives along with you on the trip, says Ganesha.



## BRIAN MCFADDEN MARRIES AGAIN

The former *Westlife* singer Brian McFadden - who was previously wed to singer Kerry Katona from 2002 to 2006, and later god engaged to Delta Goodrem before marrying model Vogue Williams in 2012, only to separate three years later - has tied the knot with Danielle Parkinson after nine years together.

## McCONAUGHEY URGES FANS TO HELP VICTIMS OF TEXAS FLOODS

Hollywood star Matthew McConaughey has requested his fans to step in for a good cause and when it matters the most. The actor has requested his fans to lend a helping hand following the devastating floods in Texas. At least 78 people have died and dozens more are missing following flash floods.



# Vaani on actresses breaking barriers

**MUMBAI:** Actress Vaani Kapoor has opened up about the changing landscape for women in cinema. She highlighted how a new wave of actresses is breaking barriers by embracing adrenaline-charged, high-octane roles.

Kapoor praised this shift as a sign of growing strength, confidence, and versatility among female performers in the industry. The *Shamsher* actress shared, "A new wave of actresses is breaking barriers, taking on adrenaline-charged roles, showing that raw strength and deep emotion can thrive side by side on screen. Indian actresses are now fearlessly leading the action genre, something that was long overdue, and we're finally seeing a shift in the landscape."

Vaani, who is all set to make her OTT debut with Netflix's thriller *Mandala Murders*, also believes that actresses are getting meatier and more substantial projects on streaming platforms, which offer greater creative freedom and nuanced roles.

Talking about her OTT debut, she stated, "I was looking

for something incredibly special and challenging to mark my debut on Netflix streaming, and I'm glad I found *Mandala Murders*, where I'm venturing into bolder territory and taking centre stage in a thriller that pushes me both physically and psychologically. It is a genre I've never explored before. Taking this fearless leap has challenged me to discover new layers of intensity, grit, and vulnerability, which I believe are essential for truly compelling storytelling."

The mystery thriller is set to premiere on July 25 on Netflix.



# Anupam Patnaik's next titled *Mantra Muugdha*

**BHUBANESWAR:** National Award-winning filmmaker Anupam Patnaik's next movie is titled *Mantra Muugdha*. The announcement came after weeks of speculation, during which the project was cryptically teased under the initials *MM*.

Now revealed to be a fantasy comedy, *Mantra Muugdha* is being produced by Barsha Patnaik under the banner of Amiya Patnaik Productions.

The ensemble cast features a host of well-known Odia actors, including Suryamayee Mohapatra, Bhoomika Dash, Dipanwit Dash Mohapatra, Manmay Dey, Sanoj Kumar, Hara Rath, Choudhury Jayprakash Das, Nishant Majithia, Sama Hota, Pihu Mohapatra, and Bhakti Das.

The story is co-written by Anupam Patnaik and Roshan Bisoi, with the screenplay by Rohit Gehlot and Patnaik himself. Dialogues are penned by Pranab Rath, with additional screenplay and dialogue



contributions from Nishant Majithia.

Musically, the film promises a rich and varied soundscape, with five music directors on board: Ashish Pradhan, Anurag Panda, Sangeet Patnaik, Anurag Panda, and Roumyaj Pradhan.

"*Mantra Muugdha* isn't just about

laughs and spectacle," said Patnaik, adding, "Underneath its fantasy-comedy shell lies a story that pokes at societal norms and confronts the very structures we're conditioned to accept. Shooting will begin from the second week of July, shared the makers.



## Priyanka's favourite home chore

**MUMBAI:** Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas, who has been receiving a lot of positive response to her work in the recently released film *Heads of State*, has a least favorite household task just like everyone else.

The actress has shared that she once tricked her mother-in-law into doing the task, reports 'People' magazine.

She said, "Laundry is a hard chore for me. I find it tough. I'll always try to get someone else to do it".

She recalled how she made Denise Miller-Jonas, mother of her husband Nick Jonas do the chore.

She told 'People', "I can steam an iron, I can fold. But just getting through the process of laundry is just really tough. Too many buttons, too many choices, too many little things. ... My mother-in-law tried to teach me once, but that was just my way of getting her to do my laundry for me".

She adds with a laugh that she plans to give her mother-in-law a heads-up that she disclosed that story.

She added, "I'm going to call her right now and tell her I said this. 'Just want you to know'".

**MUMBAI:** Actress Kavita Banerjee, who is currently seen as Karn Mohini in the show *Divya Prem: Pyaar Aur Rahasya Ki Kahani* revealed that she is not afraid of being typecast as a villain.

Sharing that the tag does not bother her at all, Banerjee stated that playing a villain is much more challenging.

Kavita said, "Honestly, if you've followed Indian TV, you'd know how quickly actors get labeled. Even if you do just two shows as a villain, people start tagging you as a 'villain actor.' If you switch from positive to negative roles, that tag doesn't stick as much. But if you start your career with back-to-back negative characters, the 'villain stamp' is almost unavoidable."

She further added that her character Karn Mohini is not just a regular villain - she is a big, grand, and powerful character.

"And no, I'm not scared of being typecast. In fact, playing a villain is way more challenging than doing a simple positive role. In real life, I'm a cheerful, happy-go-lucky person, at least I like to believe that," Banerjee added.

Kavita not scared of being typecast



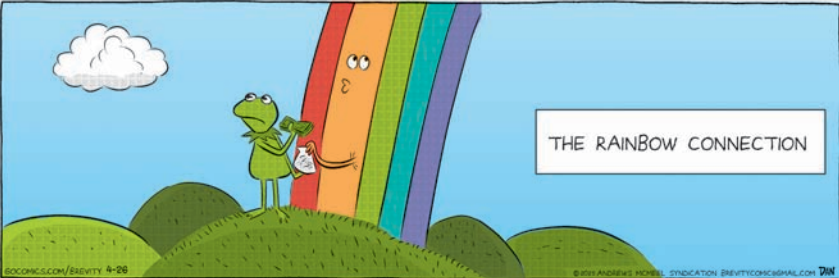
## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBS

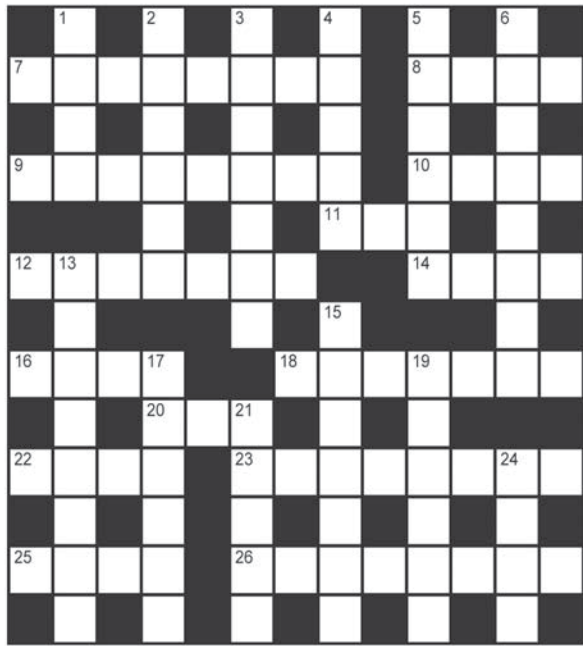


## BREVITY



## FUN post

## CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 New York City's nickname (3,5)
  - 8 Drink garnish
  - 9 Abandoned ship
  - 10 Dentist's directive
  - 11 Sweet potato
  - 12 Mombasa natives
  - 14 Entomb
  - 16 Simians
  - 18 Stoats, e.g.
  - 20 Misfortune
  - 22 Like hen's teeth
  - 23 Kind of attack or party
  - 25 Ukraine's capital
  - 26 "Divine Comedy," for one (4,4)
  - 3 Choices
  - 4 Breakwater
  - 5 Sang-froid
  - 6 Brainy
  - 13 Accentuation
  - 15 Black Sea republic
  - 17 Veer off suddenly
  - 19 Odds and ends
  - 21 Ruhr Valley city
  - 24 Hunt for
- Down**
- 1 Sweep under the rug
  - 2 Brasserie, e.g.

## SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.

	6						2	
7				5		9		
	2	4						
		9			6	3	4	
					3	7	8	
4				9				2
					1	6	5	
		7	2				3	
			4	8				

## SOLUTIONS

T	T	A	S	B	C
H	U	M	O	U	R
N	R	R	O	S	A
S	E	A	R	A	P
I	N	E	L	T	
H	O	T	D	O	G
B	E	W			
O	S	T	I	A	
E	N	A	T	E	
B	R	I	G	A	N
V	O	D	U	I	A
C	E	N	T	R	E
D	S	S	T	K	K

## CROSSWORD

## SUDOKU

3	2	1	8	9	5	6	4	7
9	6	7	1	4	3	2	8	5
4	5	8	2	7	6	1	3	9
8	3	4	9	6	7	5	1	2
1	7	5	4	8	2	3	9	6
2	9	6	3	5	1	4	7	8
7	4	2	6	1	8	9	5	3
6	8	9	5	3	4	7	2	1
5	1	3	7	2	9	8	6	4

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW







# Manmohan Samal set to be re-elected as state BJP chief



**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** Manmohan Samal is set to be re-elected as Odisha BJP president as he was the lone person to file nomination paper for the post Monday.

Samal, the incumbent state party president, filed the nomination papers for the post before Odisha BJP Election Officer and MP Pratap Sarangi in the presence of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, party's Central observer Sanjay Jaiswal and other senior leaders.

He was the lone leader to file nomination papers for the Odisha BJP president's post, the process of which was completed at 3:30pm.

Apart from Samal, many other leaders also filed their nomination papers for the post of BJP National Council Member.

Party sources said that Samal, a former minister in the BJD-BJP alliance government, will be declared elected unopposed Tuesday.

Samal is likely to be rewarded for his contribution to the party which under his leadership defeated the Biju Janata

**He was the lone leader to file nomination papers for the Odisha BJP president's post, the process of which was completed at 3:30pm**

Dal (BJD) headed by Naveen Patnaik in the Assembly elections in the state last year.

Samal was given charge of the party president on an ad-hoc basis in 2023, barely a year ahead of the general elections.

The BJP in Odisha under Sa-

mal's leadership won 20 of the 21 Lok Sabha seats and secured an absolute majority in the Assembly to form government in the state. The BJP won 78 seats in the 147-member Odisha Assembly while Naveen Patnaik's BJD secured 51 seats followed by Congress 14 seats, Independents 3, and CPI(M) 1.

However, Samal himself lost the Assembly election from the Chandabali constituency in Bhadrak district.

Samal was earlier Odisha BJP president for three terms- from November 1999 to October 2000, October 2000 to May 2004, and March 2023 to July 2025.

## Naveen discharged after surgery

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** BJD president Naveen Patnaik was Monday discharged from a private hospital in Mumbai, where he underwent a spine surgery for cervical arthritis, a party leader said.

The Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Odisha Assembly underwent the medical procedure June 22 at the Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital in Mumbai.

"The LoP was discharged from hospital Monday. He will stay in Mumbai for now. Doctors will suggest when he can return to Odisha," BJD leader Santrupt Mishra said.

Hospital sources said that Patnaik was discharged as his health condition improved.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge were among many to have wished a speedy recovery to Patnaik after the surgery.

A large number of BJD leaders and workers had also gathered at various temples in Odisha and offered prayers for Patnaik's successful surgery.

## 4-day AI workshop begins to boost Odisha public services



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** The Electronics and IT (E&IT) department, in collaboration with Wadhvani Foundation, launched a four-day AI Champions workshop Monday at the Odisha State Convention Centre here to build AI capacity among officials and boost digital public services.

E&IT department Principal Secretary Vishal Kumar Dev inaugurated the workshop, describing it as "a critical programme under the broader roadmap of the Odisha AI Mission."

He said, "It is designed to empower officials to take a leadership role in advancing the Mission, not only within their departments but also in contributing to Odisha's vision of becoming a front-runner in AI."

The workshop brings together senior officials, including Executive Director, Centre for Modernising Government Ini-

tiative (CMGI), Vineet Bhardwaj; Special Secretary, E&IT Manas Ranjan Panda alongside representatives of Wadhvani Foundation and other stakeholders in the state's digital ecosystem.

The workshop is designed to equip government officers with the knowledge and tools required to conceptualise and implement scalable AI solutions within their respective departments.

Sessions cover core AI and machine learning concepts, generative AI tools, and implementation models. Participants are exploring AI applications ranging from pest control management to road traffic monitoring and nutritional assessment in mid-day meals. The programme also focuses on guiding officials through structured problem-solving using DMAIC and SMART frameworks, transitioning ideas to pilot projects and scalable solutions.

# Earth's oldest rocks are over 4 billion years old

Earth formed about 4.6 billion years ago during the Hadean Eon—a period named after the Greek god of the underworld, reflecting the planet's intense early heat. By around 4.35 billion years ago, Earth may have cooled enough for the first crust to form and possibly for life to begin.

But the earliest chapter of our planet's history remains largely mysterious. Rocks from the Hadean are extremely rare, leaving major gaps in our understanding of Earth's formation and early evolution.

Our research team recently confirmed that the oldest known rocks on Earth are in northern Québec. Dating back more than four billion years, these rocks offer a rare glimpse into the planet's ancient beginnings.

Remnants of the Hadean The Hadean Eon lasted from Earth's formation around 4.6 billion years ago to about 4.03 billion years ago. The oldest terrestrial materials ever dated



are zircon crystals from Western Australia, some as old as 4.4 billion years. Though their original host rocks have eroded away, these tiny, durable minerals survived and have helped researchers piece together clues about early Earth.

Chemical analysis of these zircons suggests they formed in magmas derived from sedimentary rocks at the bottom of ancient oceans, indicating early crust formation and the presence of liquid water. Some

studies also hint that this first crust was mafic—rich in magnesium and iron.

Until recently, the existence of this Hadean crust had not been confirmed.

Ancient rocks in Québec

In 2008, one of us—Jonathan O'Neil—proposed that the Nuvvuagittuq Greenstone Belt in northern Québec might contain rocks from the Hadean. Located in Nunavik, north of the 55th parallel, this region hosts ancient, metamorphosed volca-

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** By 2036, 10 lakh green livelihoods will be created to make Odisha a model in eco-tourism, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said during the state-level 76th Van Mahotsav-2025 celebrations here Monday.

Addressing the event at BM High School in the City, Majhi said, "By 2036, under the 'Vision Odisha', developing a 'Green Odisha' is a primary goal. Through community-led forest initiatives, 10 lakh green jobs will be created, turning Odisha into a model in eco-tourism."

The CM said over 100 forest-produce processing units will be established for tribal communities focused on sal leaves, tamarind, bamboo, and medicinal plants. The initiative is expected to generate Rs 5,000 crore as revenue.

Inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the previous year's 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' saw plantation of 6.69 crore saplings, placing Odisha fourth nationwide. "This year, the goal is to plant 7.5 crore saplings," the CM said.

To mitigate lightning incidents, the state government planted 19 lakh palm trees last year, with 18 lakh more planned this year, he said.

Following the designation of Simlipal as a National Park, the government will invest Rs 50 crore for conservation efforts. AI-based forest fire detection systems are also being deployed, he added.

"The compensation amount for human-wildlife conflict deaths has been increased from Rs 6 lakh to Rs 10 lakh, along



with other compensation enhancements," the CM said.

To promote forest resources development, wildlife protection, and environmental conservation, various awards are granted in Odisha. In order to better encourage field staff and the general public, the structure of these awards has been reformed, he said.

Tulungpadar Forest Protection Committee and Pahadpur Forest Protection Committee have jointly received the CM's state-level award for their contribution towards forest pro-

7.5 crore saplings to be planted this year

100 processing centres for forest produce to be established

tection.

The Tulungpadar Forest Protection Committee (Kalahandi North Forest Division) was honoured for restoring 50 hectares of degraded forest through afforestation and successfully preventing forest fires over the past three years.

Similarly, the Pahadpur Forest Protection Committee in the

Karanjaia Forest Division was recognised for conducting regular patrolling in 159 hectares of Budhipat Forest, with zero incidents of forest fires in the past five years, and effective management of human-elephant conflict.

Among others, Ekamra-Bhubaneswar MLA Babu Singh, Bhubaneswar Mayor Sulochana Das, Forest, Environment and Climate Change department Additional Chief Secretary Satyabrata Sahu and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Suresh Pant were present.

## Cong meet ahead of Rahul Gandhi's visit

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** The Bhubaneswar District Congress Committee held a preparatory meeting Monday at Congress Bhawan to plan for the July 11 visit of senior Congress leader and Lok Sabha LoP Rahul Gandhi.

The coordination meeting, chaired by District Congress Coordinator Biswajit Das, saw participation from senior party observer and MLA Ashok Das, along with other key leaders who shared strategies and inputs to ensure the visit's success.

Party leaders and members from various wings pledged to work together to make the programme a success.

Notably, Lok Sabha LoP Rahul Gandhi will be accompanied by AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge and AICC General Secretary (Organisation) KC Venugopal during his



Odisha visit.

The trio will attend the 'Save the Constitution' rally in Bhubaneswar and are expected to address a large public gathering.

Meanwhile, the Odisha Pradesh Congress Seva Dal also held a key meeting at Congress Bhawan under the leadership of newly-appointed state president Shuvendu Mohanty. OPCC

President Bhakta Charan Das inaugurated the session, which was attended by senior leaders including former OPCC president Jaydev Jena, AICC joint in-charge Shahnawaz Choudhary, and others.

During his address, Das highlighted that the Seva Dal is the backbone of the Congress party and must be strengthened from the grassroots. He underscored the need for training camps to empower committed youth at the Panchayat level, who would be appointed and trained to serve with discipline and dedication.

The meeting saw enthusiastic participation from Seva Dal workers across multiple districts.

MARKET WATCH

CURRENCY


INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	85.97 ▲ 0.51
EURO	10.90 ▲ 0.08

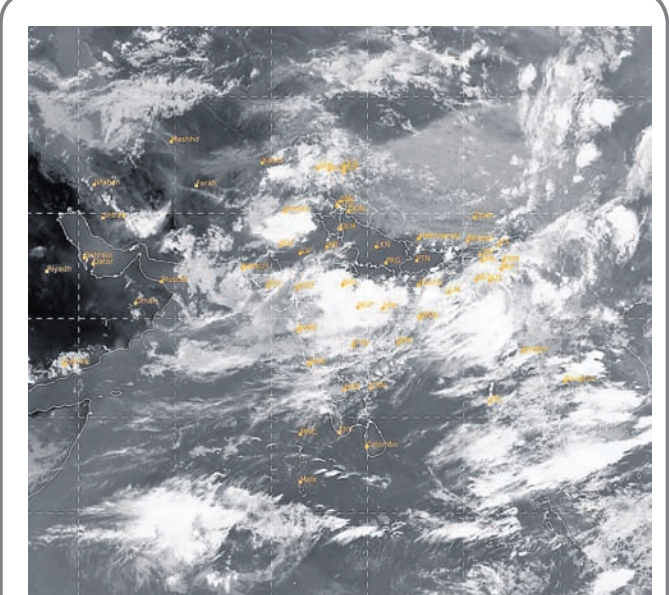
BOURSES

INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	83442.50 ▲ 9.61
NIFTY	25461.30 ▲ 0.30

COMMODITIES

INDEX	VARIATION
GOLD	₹96,821 ▼ ₹169
SILVER	₹108,15 ▼ ₹414





WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	30.2°	30.8°	Generally cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain/thundershower .y
Min Temp	24.6°	23.8°	
Humidity	94%	86%	
Rainfall	41.4mm	6.0mm	

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISESMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-DayalAgency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.





**WATER WOES:** Bikers negotiating a waterlogged stretch at Nuasahi Square in Balasore connecting the bus stand with Remuna Golei following a heavy downpour, Monday

OP PHOTO

## Lightning strikes claim 3 farmers

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Tihidi/Khaira, July 7:** Three farmers, including two siblings, were killed and another was rendered critical in separate incidents of lightning strike on farmlands Monday in Tihidi and Khaira areas of Bhadrak and Balasore districts, respectively.

In the first incident, two farmers identified as Madanmohan Moharana, 60, and his younger brother Hrudananda Moharana, 57, were struck by lightning at Chandisahi, Harasinghpur village under Pirhaat police limits and Tihidi block of Bhadrak district. Another injured farmer was identified as Giridhari Mahallick, 64, of nearby Barabatia village.

They were working on their farmland when lightning struck them during a thunderstorm and rendered them critical. Villagers and family

members rescued them and admitted them to Tihidi hospital, where doctors pronounced Madanmohan and Hrudananda dead. Giridhari was shifted to the Bhadrak District Headquarters Hospital after doctors administered him primary treatment.

Tihidi police registered two separate cases of unnatural death and sent the bodies for post-mortem.

In the second incident, a 25-year-old farmer Chandrakanta Panda died after being struck by lightning Monday afternoon while ploughing a field in Kurunta village under Khaira block in Balasore district.

Sources said Panda was operating a tractor when a lightning strike rendered him unconscious. Family members rushed him to Simulia Community Health Centre, but doctors declared him dead on arrival.

# Students eat MDM in rain under cover of umbrellas

*At a time when reports have surfaced on neighbouring Andhra government luring students of border villages to its schools through various facilities such as school buses, this incident from Nandapur block in Koraput has brought to the fore the sorry state of affairs in government-run schools.*



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Nandapur, July 7:** With low pressure induced incessant rainfall continuing across Odisha for the past 16 days, students in Koraput district's Nandapur block have been forced to eat their mid-day meals under the cover of umbrellas out in the open, due to absence of proper dining halls in their schools and hostels.

The matter came to the fore after around 140 girl students at the Marada Sevashram School in Hikimput panchayat under the block were seen having their mid-day meals holding umbrellas in front of their school, Monday.

Following this, members of the school management committee, including chairman Hari Dora, ward member Kamulu Lochan Dora, guardians Samara Bada Naik, Hari Dalapati, Dhanapati Karingia and Harishchandra Kirshani, voiced their dissatisfaction on the headmaster Udaynath Kirshani.

The headmaster cited a lack of infrastructure, including classrooms and a dining hall, as the reason behind the ordeal. He said he had already reported the matter through the block Welfare Extension Officer to higher district-level authorities.

The issue was also brought to the attention of block Welfare Extension Officer Nagen Tripathy, District Welfare Officer Sunil Kumar Tandi, and Assistant Block Education Officer (ABEO) Mumtaj Gomang.

Both the welfare officers acknowledged that Nandapur block has 18 Welfare department schools and 45 School and Mass Education (S&ME) department schools with hostels managed by the Welfare department. Over 4,500 students are continuing their education as boarders in these facilities.

Photos and accounts from the Welfare department-run residential schools and other government schools showed students drenched in rain, holding umbrellas during lunch. Such

a situation has sparked sharp discontent among the students and their parents.

Locals have urged the administration to address the infrastructure gaps urgently.

In Nandapur block of Koraput district, 16,034 students across 190 schools under the S&ME department are receiving mid-day meals, according to ABEO Gomang.

However, she revealed that nearly 95 per cent of these institutions lack proper dining halls. With the exception of a few, most schools do not have dedicated facilities where students can eat comfortably.

Officials across departments have reportedly informed the district and state administrations through their respective senior officers about the need for constructing dining halls. The matter drew attention during the recent district-level ITDA-PLC meeting, where the issue of students eating meals in the rain while holding umbrellas was highlighted.

The meeting, chaired by Koraput Collector V Keerthi Vasan, was attended by all MLAs from the district. He confirmed that the issue was discussed in the meeting.

To address the situation, the administration has decided to use funds from Article 275 and other schemes to gradually construct dining halls in all schools across the district. Collector Vasan stated that the goal is to complete the construction of dining halls in every school within the next year.

## Health camp begins in remote Nabarangpur

PNN & AGENCIES

**Nabarangpur/Bhubaneswar, July 7:** To provide quality healthcare to people living in remote Nabarangpur district, the state government Monday airlifted a team of doctors from SCB Medical College and Hospital, Cuttack, for a four-day health camp.

The camp is being organised under the 'Mukhya Mantri Bayu Swasthya Seva' initiative.

There is a lot of enthusiasm among people here as they no longer need to travel to bigger cities for critical treatment, said Sukant Satpathy, Addi-

tional Chief District Medical Officer (ADMO), Nabarangpur.

About 1,000 patients have registered themselves to receive advanced treatment, including certain surgeries, he added.

He added that modern medical science is finally reaching the unreach.

People will now have access to specialists in urology, nephrology, cardiology, neurology, endocrinology, and gastroenterology. Investigations like echocardiographs and endoscopy are also being provided during the camp, he said.

A statement by the CMO said



similar camps will also be held in Nuapada and Malkangiri districts later.

On the first day, five senior resident doctors examined patients and prepared them for surgeries and procedures.

On the second day, a team of six senior doctors will perform surgeries, offer consultations in various super-specialties, and prescribe medicines — all of which will be provided free of cost.

# Three Maoists surrender before Kandhamal police

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Phulbani, July 7:** Three Maoists, including two women and a youth, surrendered before Kandhamal police, officials said Monday.

The surrendered cadres were identified as Made Beti alias Champa, Admo Madhavi alias Manju and Raju Dodi alias Ajay. All three are natives of Chhattisgarh.

Champa was a Divisional Committee Member (DC-M)-rank cadre in the BGN (Bansadhara-Ghumsur-Nagabali) division of CPI (Maoist) while Manju and Ajay were Area Committee Member (AC-M)-rank cadres in the (Kalahandi-Kandhamal-Boudh-Nayagarh) KKBN division of the outlawed organisation. Champa had joined the Maoist outfit in 2009, Manju in 2011, and Ajay in 2016. They were all active in parts of Kandhamal, Boudh and Kalahandi districts and were reportedly working to reactivate the Maoist corridor between Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh.

The surrender took place during a press briefing at the district police headquarters in Phulbani, Monday where Southern Range IG Niti Shek-



har identified the ultras. The IG said the three were linked to previous Maoist activities in the region. Their surrender comes in the wake of a recent encounter in Baliguda police limits, where two Maoists were killed during a gunfight with security forces.

Police believe sustained anti-Maoist operations have weakened the rebel network in Kandhamal. In the past month alone, the number of active Maoists in the region has dropped by 15. Currently, the number of Maoists in Kandhamal, Boudh, and Kalahandi is estimated to be between 50 and 60.

"We appeal to others still

in the outfit to shun violence, join the mainstream and take advantage of government rehabilitation schemes," IG Shekhar said. "These three surrendered after developing disillusionment with the organisation and trusting the Odisha Police."

The government's surrender and rehabilitation policy, which includes financial aid and support for reintegration, is said to have encouraged their decision.

Kandhamal SP Harisha BC and Commandant Pankaj Verma of the 127 CRPF Battalion were also present during the press meet.

## Vyasagar municipality executive officer held captive by councillors

PNN & AGENCIES

**Jajpur, July 7:** The executive officer of Vyasagar Municipality in Jajpur district was allegedly held captive by some councillors in his office June 26, an official said Monday.

The incident came to light after Pradeep Kumar Padhy, the officer concerned, submitted a complaint to the Jajpur District Collector Sunday. According to his complaint, a group of councillors led by the municipality chairperson in-charge barged into his chamber and confined him for nearly eight hours.

They allegedly pressured him to sign several files and mentally harassed him. Padhy also stated that he was not allowed to take his prescribed medicines during the ordeal. He has been on leave since June 27 after informing his superiors about the incident.

Despite the seriousness of the allegation, no formal police complaint has been lodged. Collector P Anvesha Reddy confirmed receipt of the complaint and has ordered a probe by two senior officials — Kalinga Nagar ADM Sapan Kumar Nanda and Zilla Parishad executive officer Ashok Kumar Behuria. Meanwhile, the Jajpur ORS officers' association condemned the incident and warned of agitation if no action is taken within 24 hours.

## Vedanta Aluminium's mobile health services reach over 50 villages

**BHUBANESWAR:** Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest aluminium producer, has been providing quality health care services to more than 35,000 residents across 52 remote villages in Odisha through its flagship Mobile Health Unit (MHU) services. Operating in the districts of Rayagada, Kalahandi, Sundargarh and Jharsuguda, the company has conducted more than 2,000 free health camps over the last two years, addressing vital healthcare needs in underserved regions. Focused on bridging healthcare gaps in rural Odisha, the MHU camps offer a range of free services, including medical check-ups, malaria screenings, blood sugar tests, and distribution of essential medicines. Each MHU is fully equipped with diagnostics kits and basic medicines, and staffed by a qualified doctor, nurse, lab technician, and pharmacist. In Kalahandi's Thuamul Rampur block, the initiative covers 21 villages. In the Kashipur block of Rayagada district, services extend to 14 villages. In Sundargarh district's Hemgir block, communities across 11 villages benefit from regular health services. In Jharsuguda district's Lakhanpur block, the outreach includes six villages. The health camps commonly address ailments like hypertension, gastric issues, fungal infections, anaemia, common cold, joint pain, respiratory infections, diabetes, and skin conditions such as scabies.

# Strawberries, turmeric, coffee to be processed in Daringbadi

MISSION SHAKTI DIRECTOR VISITS KANDHAMAL, STRESSES ON VALUE ADDITION

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Daringbadi, July 7:** In a significant push to boost women-led agri-enterprises and promote local produce, Mission Shakti Director Manika Priyadarshini visited Kandhamal district's Daringbadi block to assess ongoing efforts and chart a roadmap for value addition in key crops like strawberries, turmeric, and coffee through processing units.

Priyadarshini arrived at the PWD Inspection Bungalow in Daringbadi Saturday evening and was received by BDO Preetiranjana Rath. She visited local coffee plantations, the Mission Shakti-run Coffee Café, Hill View Park, and turmeric processing centres at Dandima and Sulumaha villages, Sunday. These centres are managed by Mission Shakti women's groups and play



a vital role in empowering tribal women in the region.

She noted that several women in the block have successfully taken up strawberry farming, which offers good returns in a short span. However, due to the lack of processing infrastructure, their earnings are limited to the harvest season. She suggested that if facilities for making products like squash and jam were

created—either by the government or private entities—strawberries could provide year-round income. She instructed the BDO to explore steps in this direction.

Regarding the globally acclaimed Kandhamal turmeric, the director emphasised that steps would be taken to promote value addition and branding. She stated that turmeric will be processed, packaged, and sold with

GI tag labelling to enhance marketability and farmer incomes.

The director also highlighted the need to process coffee locally. Currently, organically grown Daringbadi coffee is collected by TDCOL (Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation of Odisha Ltd.), processed in Koraput, and sold under the Koraput brand. She said the state government is planning to set up a processing unit in Daringbadi itself, which will further strengthen the identity of Daringbadi coffee and provide better earnings to local growers. Plans are also in place to expand coffee cultivation to more areas.

During her visit, Priyadarshini had lunch at the Mission Shakti Café in Daringbadi and interacted with women members, discussing their initiatives and challenges.

## EAST COAST RAILWAY

**Tender Notice No.SBP-ELECT-2025-T-248A**

**NAME OF WORK :** SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF CABLE TRANSIT ENTRY SEALING & FOOLPROOF PROTECTION SYSTEM WITH MULTI DIAMETER HALOGEN FREE EPDM MODULES TO PREVENT RODENT ENTRY INTO HT COMPARTMENT OF SWITCH BOARD CABINET (SBC) PANEL OF EOG TYPE LHB AC COACHES, POWER CARS & PANTRY CARS OF SAMBALPUR COACHING DEPOT.

**Approx. Cost of the Work :** ₹ 14,12,927.10, EMD : ₹ 28,300/-

**Completion Period of the Work :** Six months from the date of issue of LOA.

**Tender Closing Date and Time :** At 1530 hrs. of 25.07.2025.

No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be rejected summarily without any consideration. Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

**Note :** The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website fifteen (15) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender. The tenderers/ bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/ bidder can participate on e-tendering.

**Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G)/ PR-330/G/25-26** Sambalpur

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**REQUIREMENT OF PREMISES**  
Bank of India requires suitable premises preferably on Ground Floor with appropriate frontage and sufficient parking space on lease basis for opening of New Branch in Tirtol. The premises should be in an approved building conforming to the conditions by the Govt. Authorities for commercial use. Detailed notification inviting offers for new premises is available in our website [www.bankofindia.co.in](http://www.bankofindia.co.in). Prescribed format for submission of offer may be obtained upto **1.00 P.M. of 17.07.2025** from our office at above address. Alternatively, the format can be downloaded from our website. Last date for submission of offer is upto **4.00 P.M. on 17.07.2025** at Zonal Office, Bhubaneswar.

**Zonal Manager, Bhubaneswar Zone**

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER**  
**BHUBANESWAR (R&B) DIVISION NO. III**

**No.B-276**

**BHUBANESWAR**  
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Date - 05.07.2025

**Government of Odisha “e”-Procurement Notice No (12) of 2025-26**  
**Bid Identification No : C.C. (R&B) 03**

1	Name of the Work	1) Civil (Building) work 2) E.I. (Road) Work
2	Total No of works	2 Nos work
3	Estimated Cost	<b>i) Rs.14,40,395/-, ii) Rs.18,10,977/-</b>
4	Class of Contractor	Sl. No. 1 - "D & C" Class Contractor, Sl. No. 2 - "HT" Class Contractor
5	Period of Completion	2 (Two) Calendar Months
6	Type of Tender	Single Cover System (Online)
7	Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal	From 09.07.2025 at 11.30 A.M. to 18.07.2025 at 5.30 P.M.
8	Last Date & Time for Receipt of bids in the Portal	<b>18.07.2025 upto 5.30 P.M.</b>
9	Name & Address of the Officer inviting Bid	<b>Er.Narendra Kumar Ghadai</b> , Superintending Engineer, Bhubaneswar (R&B) Division No. III, Bhubaneswar

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tendersorissa.gov.in>  
N.B : Subsequent corrigendum / addendum if required shall be available in the website as indicated above.

**Sd./- Superintending Engineer**



“

There is no greater courage than that of recognizing one's own mistakes.



# Bloodline

The coming together of the Thackeray cousins – Raj Thackeray, chief of the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) and Shiv Sena (UBT) president Uddhav Thackeray – on 5 July, two decades after they had fallen out, could not have happened at a more opportune time. The BJP-Shiv Sena government had to eat dust over its bid to include Hindi as a third language in school curriculum. It had to abandon the scheme altogether. It is not only on the backfoot, but has given the MNS and Shiv Sena (UBT) a golden opportunity to bury their differences and close ranks to redraw the contours of Maharashtra politics. Maratha pride is a potent political weapon that the two cousins have been handed over afresh following what is widely perceived as the imposition of Hindi in Maharashtra after the southern states, especially Tamil Nadu, fumed recently over a similar move on it but in a different form, by the Centre. The rollback on the Hindi imposition by the BJP-led Mahayuti government has brought Raj and Uddhav together when both are facing an existential crisis following the Maha Vikas Aghadi's (MVA) debacle in the Assembly elections last year.

The MNS and Shiv Sena (UBT) seem to have got the right issue and weapon to go after the ruling dispensation capitalizing on the three-language formula in school curriculum. The government's knee-jerk reaction and subsequent climbdown is being seen as an admission of a failed attempt to use Maharashtra to test the BJP-led NDA government's policy of promoting and imposing Hindi on non-Hindi states. The decision to scrap the government order on the three-language formula by the government of Maharashtra is being seen as an outcome of fear of antagonizing the Marathi population.

The most immediate and direct impact of the cousins' closeness appears to be for the Eknath Shinde camp as it has the potential to turn the Deputy CM's claim to the legacy of Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray hollow and challenges his standing among core Marathi voters. This is alarming for the ruling alliance in the coming municipal elections. With Bal Thackeray's son and nephew cementing their ties, Shinde runs the risk of being branded as an outsider and a traitor (gaddar). He is likely to face a major challenge on his turf – the urban pockets of Maharashtra, especially across the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR). He is likely to find a united Marathi regionalist platform propped by the two cousins too tough to handle. Though the Thackeray cousins are yet to formally announce a united front, speculations about such an alliance getting momentum just ahead of the civic body polls, including in the high-stakes BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), are apparently worrying Shinde. Poor showing could lead to waning of his influence in the state and the government he is part of.

The BJP of course remains the most dominant political party in the state at the moment having won 132 of the state's 288 seats in the Assembly elections last year. It has a 26.77 per cent vote share, more than double that of the second-placed Congress, which has a vote share of 12.42 per cent. However, if the Thackeray cousins do succeed in forming an alliance, which appears likely, they would pose a serious challenge to this dominance of the BJP by consolidating the Marathi voter base. The coming civic body polls will be a litmus test for both the BJP and the two cousins. Even a slight shift of voters away from the BJP in cities such as Mumbai, Thane, Pune and Nashik could seriously affect the party, which has for long tried to wrest the BMC from the Shiv Sena. A poor showing in the civic polls could become really problematic for the BJP led state government in the long run.

The Thackerays have synchronised it well to come together as they have enough time to consolidate their base with the Assembly elections being far away. Their plan seems to be to first test the waters in the civic body polls and then build on the gains they may achieve. The Congress may find it difficult to reconcile itself with Raj Thackeray's strident anti-minority pitch, but everything depends on the acceptability of the show of unity between the MNS and Shiv Sena (UBT).

WISDOM CORNER

“

If you want something you have never had, you must be willing to do something you have never done.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

“

Never give up on a dream just because of the time it will take to accomplish it. The time will pass anyway.

EARL NIGHTINGALE

“

Great minds discuss ideas. Average minds discuss events. Small minds discuss people.

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

■ 1497:

Vasco da Gama's first voyage to India. On this day in 1497, Vasco da Gama sailed from Lisbon with a fleet of four vessels, and he ultimately opened a sea route from western Europe to Asia by way of the Cape of Good Hope, ushering in a new era in world history.

■ 1777:

Vermont abolishes slavery. Vermont adopted its constitution that abolished slavery, becoming the first region in the now United States to abolish slavery. The constitution was adopted after Vermont declared independence from the British empire.

■ 1833:

The Treaty of Hünkâr skelesi, a defensive alliance between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, was signed at the village of Hünkâr skelesi, near Istanbul.

■ 1889:

Wall Street Journal published for the first time. Three financial reporters named Charles Dow, Edward Jones, and Charles Bergstresser created The Wall Street Journal to supersede a previous periodical called the Customers' Afternoon Letter.

■ 1889:

John L. Sullivan beat Jake Kilrain in 75 rounds to defend his title in the last heavyweight championship bout held under London Prize Ring rules.

■ 1896:

William Jennings Bryan delivered his “Cross of Gold” speech at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

■ 1947:

A local newspaper erroneously reported that a “flying saucer” had been recovered near Roswell, New Mexico; although that claim was quickly refuted by authorities, the Roswell incident eventually became the centre of a conspiracy theory involving UFOs and extraterrestrials.

■ 1950:

Douglas MacArthur was appointed commander of United Nations forces in the Korean War.

■ 1994:

Kim Jong-il takes office as Supreme Leader of North Korea. He took the office after the death of his father, Kim Il-sung.

FOCUS ENERGY

INDIA’S ETHANOL DRIVE



The ethanol blending programme is benefited by special subsidies provided for the purchase of feedstock by ethanol producers, and the lower rate of GST paid by them



Ajit Ranade

THANKS TO THE HIGH ASSURED PRICE FOR ETHANOL, DISTILLERIES OFTEN MAKE MORE MONEY CONVERTING RICE TO ETHANOL, RATHER THAN SELLING IT AS GRAIN

India's sustained economic growth will not happen without parallel and steady increase in energy usage. That will increase at roughly the same rate as GDP growth for the next two decades. We need to increase electricity for households, factories and offices, and fuel for transportation. Three-fourth of India's electricity is produced from coal and the remaining is from renewable sources such as solar, wind, hydro, nuclear and biomass. The installed capacity of renewables has reached nearly 50% of the total, but production is at 25%. India has the third largest deposits of coal but still needs to import more than one-fifth of its requirement from foreign sources. That means an outgo of \$20 billion or more for importing coal.

For transportation, the import dependence is higher. Nearly 90% of the crude oil consumed is imported, clocking 242 million tonnes last year. Depending on international prices, say in a range of \$65 to \$85, it drains \$125 to \$150 billion from India's foreign exchange. At higher oil prices the forex burden is much higher. The good news is that the export of petrol and diesel is increasing faster than the import of crude oil. Last year, the total export was 65 million tonnes of petrol and diesel, with very good profit margins. In the next few years, India's domestic refining capacity will go up by 20% and reach above 310 million tonnes. This growth in refining capacity is faster than the domestic requirement growth, meaning more export earnings. The refining capacity expansion happens due to a combination of brown-field expansion and building new refineries. The refineries in the Western world are closing down, and thus there is an opportunity for India. A proposed new refinery in western Maharashtra would be a big boost

for production, employment and exports. Imagine a future where one-fourth of the refining capacity of the country is used only for exports, which will actually reduce the total outgo of foreign exchange. Keep in mind that the world is also trying to move away from fossil fuels.

In order to reduce pressure on foreign exchange, and to reduce the carbon footprint, India embarked on an ambitious programme to blend ethanol with petrol and diesel. Ethanol was to be made from sugarcane i.e. molasses, or from grains such as maize and rice, or from dual feed. The progress since 2013 on ethanol blending is very impressive. It started with just 1.5% blending back in 2013. By this year the target of 20% has already been achieved. In terms of the growing volume it is a spectacular growth of nearly 30% per year, compounded over the past 12 years. This pace is far ahead of the growth of petrol and diesel consumption in India.

The ethanol blending programme (EBP) is benefited by special subsidies provided for the purchase of feedstock by ethanol producers, and the lower rate of GST paid by them. There are also interest subvention schemes, providing loans and lower interest rates to producers. India has

earned nearly Rs 1 trillion extra during these ten years and distilleries too earned another Rs 1 trillion. The percent increase in farm income for those sugarcane or maize farmers, is probably modest. EBP has provided an assured market for sugarcane, and hence the sugar sector, which is often plagued by excess production thanks to the MSP and assured price mechanism. Recently, the government has decided to divert 5 million tonnes of rice, which is about 9% of world exports, to ethanol production. It represents only 4% of India's production, and 10% of stocks sitting in government godowns.

One side effect of diverting grain like rice and maize to EBP is that it deprives the poultry feed sector which is suffering from scarcity and input cost escalation. India turned from net exporter to net importer of maize, thanks to EBP. It can also lead to food inflation, leading to instant and arbitrary bans on export of sugar and rice. Thanks to the high assured price for ethanol, distilleries often make more money converting rice to ethanol, rather than selling it as grain. Keep in mind that India provides free five kilos of wheat or rice to 810 million people. That operation too requires government procurement and distribution.

The excise and other tax burdens on oil marketing companies is more than 50% for petrol and diesel, but ethanol has a negligible tax burden. Can some of this be rationalised to make the fiscal burden fairer between petrol and ethanol? The bottom line is that at 20% blending, which is a great milestone, we need to take a comprehensive look at the EBP policy which has multiple objectives, inter-linked complicated incentives, and unintended side effects, on food security, food inflation and fiscal burden.

The writer is a noted economist. ©THE BILLION PRESS

SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

Norwegian lessons to safeguard the future

Over the first four months of 2025, 56 Norwegian citizens convened to discuss how Norway's immense oil wealth can best serve current and future generations, both domestically and globally. Unlike traditional policymaking, where elected officials and experts call the shots, this so-called Future Panel – the second such assembly held in Norway – allowed ordinary citizens, selected through a representative process and equipped with the necessary knowledge, to craft recommendations through informed debate.

The Panel was established by seven civil-society organizations – WWF Norway, Save the Children Norway, Caritas Norway, Framtiden i våre hender (The Future in Our Hands), the Norwegian Children and Youth Council, and the think tank Langsikt – to conduct a fact-based public discussion about Norway's wealth. Its remit is to amplify the people's voice on this highly important topic before the general election in September. By embracing a more radical model of deliberative democracy that focuses on the long-term collective good rather than short-term political interests, Norway is setting a precedent for other countries. Perhaps more importantly, when presenting its recommendations to the Norwegian parliament on 13 May, the Future Panel formally demanded a legal framework – including a dedicated commissioner – to safeguard future generations. If enacted, it would demonstrate that grassroots advocacy can bring about a paradigm shift in governance.

I experienced the potential of this shift firsthand as the first Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, which passed the Well-being of Future Generations Act in 2015. The law requires public bodies to consider the long-term consequences of their decisions, ensuring that sustainability and intergenerational justice are embedded in policymaking. Momentum for such legislation is growing globally. In September, the UNGA adopted a Declaration on Future Generations that encourages governments to institutionalize long-term thinking. Norway's opportunity to do so could prove particularly consequential because of the country's \$1.8 trillion sovereign oil fund. As climate change accelerates and economic uncertainty deepens, Norway must develop a new vision for financial stewardship that will help preserve planetary and societal well-being.

First and foremost, as one of the world's largest oil exporters, Norway must reckon with its fossil-fuel dependency. To be



Sophie Howe

MANY OF TODAY'S CHALLENGES ATTEST TO THE DIRE CONSEQUENCES OF FAILING TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

sure, the country has committed to ambitious climate targets, including net-zero emissions by 2050. But it continues to expand oil exploration, despite the global call for a managed decline in fossil-fuel production and the vulnerability of its pristine ecosystems – from the Arctic tundra to vast fjords – to environmental degradation. Norway also faces the challenge of moving to a post-oil economy amid the shift to renewables. To mitigate the cost of stranded assets, protect workers, and ensure a fair transition, the country will need to diversify carefully.

A Norwegian future generations act based on the Welsh model would embed intergenerational responsibility into policy decisions, ensuring that the government seeks to balance social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being for current and future generations. As part of that process, a future generations commissioner could act as an independent advocate, flagging measures that conflict with the law's aim and holding political leaders accountable for pursuing and achieving a balance between the short and long term.

Many of today's challenges attest to the dire consequences of failing to plan for the future. From climate change to demographic shifts, these often-in-

tersecting problems stem from shortsighted decision-making and a willful blindness to robust data and trends.

But long-term thinking is not only about preventing problems. It is also about working toward a better and more hopeful future. The Welsh model has given the government and public institutions a vision that seeks to transcend political cycles. Since becoming more future-oriented, policymakers have prioritized investing in public transport over building roads; focused on keeping people healthy, instead of just treating the ill; and even revived Welsh, a once endangered language.

Norway's Future Panel has spoken, and now the government is at a crossroads. Will it become a global leader in long-term policy planning, ensuring that its oil wealth benefits generations to come? Or will it make decisions based solely on short-term considerations, perpetuating crises that future citizens will have to fix? If its citizens' wishes are to be respected, Norway must assume the responsibility to help create a world that improves human well-being and equity.

The writer was the first Future Generations Commissioner for Wales. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: [edit@orissapost.com](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)



B-15, Rasulgarih Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010



**Police torture**

Sir, A contractual temple guard in Tamil Nadu's Sivaganga district Ajith Kumar was beaten to death by the police over an issue of missing jewels from a car. What could have been a simple case of routine inquiry, First Information Report (FIR) and follow-up, turned nasty due to police highhandedness. In a significant observation, the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court has said that the case was like “the state killing its own citizen.” Most custodial deaths in India go unreported because the police pick and choose their targets based on their socioeconomic status. As the poor and the marginalised have no voice, such highhandedness of the police goes unnoticed. There are, on an average, as many as five custodial deaths per day happening in the country. Though India has signed the United Nations Convention Against Torture (CAT), absence of a uniform Central law has emboldened the perpetrators. Retributory and preventive justice to families through fast tracking of such cases is the need of the hour.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

**Carlsen's burnout**

Sir, , After his second successive defeat at the hands of the Indian prodigy D. Gukesh, world's top-ranked chess player, Magnus Carlsen, has confessed that he is no longer enjoying the game. The latest loss comes just weeks after Gukesh stunned Carlsen in the classical format at the Norway Chess tournament, where the Norwegian reacted by famously banging the table in frustration. Carlsen said: “Honestly, I am not enjoying playing chess at all right now.” “I don't feel any flow at all when I'm playing. I'm constantly hesitating, and it's just really poor right now.” His statement comes as a surprise to many fans and experts in the chess world, especially considering Carlsen's reputation as one of the greatest players of all time. However, the five-time World Champion has been vocal in the past about burnout and the mental toll of constant high-level competition.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI



HOPE AMID DESPAIR

Mandi's miracle baby

11-month-old baby girl survives flash floods in Himachal, family swept away

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Mandi, July 7:** The catastrophic flash floods triggered by multiple back-to-back cloudbursts, tore through several villages of Himachal Pradesh's Mandi district, swallowing everything in their path.

The youngest victim of the calamity is an 11-month-old baby girl, a family's lone survivor, who desperately awaits maternal warmth to feel safe and confident amid the devastation. A week after the mayhem, that is almost a regular feature in the mountainous state every monsoon largely owing to unplanned infrastructure development, rescuers have been on their toes and risking their lives to bring normalcy in the deluge-battered villages.

One of the villages is Talwara in Parwada panchayat that was hit by the deluge in the wee hours of July 1, that swept away the baby's parents and grandmother.

Locals say the child was sleeping alone in the house when the tragedy struck.

Her parents, father Ramesh and mother Radha, along with grandmother Purnu Devi went outside, leaving the sleeping child behind to divert the gushing waters, in which they were swept away.

In the morning, the persistent and heart-wrenching cries of the baby pierced the air and the villagers went in to check on her and contacted the local authorities after realizing what had happened to her.

Now, the video of Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Samritika Negi, holding the child in her arms has gone viral, touching the hearts of many.

The body of the child's father has been recovered, however, her mother and grandmother are still missing.



SDM Negi told IANS over phone that the baby's parents were doing agriculture and her grandmother was working as a peon in a local government office. She said that only this family was affected by the deluge in the village.

However, the impact of the calamity was more in several villages in Thunag as at least 14 people died. Official figures say 30 people are yet to be found.

The SDM told IANS that the baby has been handed over to her father's cousin sisters, who also live in the village. Fortunately, she has adjusted with other family members.

"The district administration has provided Rs 25,000 ex-gratia to the caretakers of the baby. Also some ration kits were provided to them," she said.

SDM Negi said the district administration has got 100 plus phone enquiries about the child's welfare, with many extending financial assistance.

"The Deputy Commission-

er of Mandi will open a bank account for the minor child

and he will be the guardian. The compensation from the government will be deposited in the name of the child in the shape of fixed deposits so that they will take care of her education and well-being," SDM Negi told IANS. "Even the financial assistance of the donors will be deposited directly in that bank account for the child's safe future," she said, adding. "This will be decided after the 'kriya' of the child's father."

The Himachal Pradesh government provides Rs 4 lakh in case of death in a natural calamity irrespective of the place of residence and nationality, provided the death has occurred within the state.

Himachal Pradesh is reeling under severe monsoon devastation with 78 confirmed deaths and extensive infrastructure damage across the state.

MONSOON MAYHEM IN HP



Himachal Pradesh has witnessed 23 flash floods, 19 cloudbursts and 16 landslides since the onset of monsoon on June 20, and 52 people have died in rain-related incidents in the state so far, officials said Monday. In the worst-hit Mandi district, search and rescue operations

have been intensified with drones and sniffer dogs being used to trace 28 people who went missing last week in the Thunag, Gohar and Karsog subdivisions, they said. On Monday, a landslide occurred in Sai Kharsi area of Bilaspur district and a large part of a mountain fell on a petrol pump. However, no casualty was reported. Eyewitnesses said that suddenly a huge amount of debris and rocks started coming down from the mountain and fell on the petrol pump. In Mandi, about 250 personnel from the National and State Disaster Response Forces, Army, and Indo-Tibetan Border Police, along with home guards and locals, are undertaking the search and rescue work. Besides, 20 teams are gathering information and distributing ration and medical kits in inaccessible areas, the officials said. According to official data, the state has reported 80 deaths since June 20, of which 52 are linked to rain-related incidents such as cloudbursts, flash floods and landslides. The rest 28 fatalities were associated with road accidents, the officials said.

TN first state to implement TB death prediction model

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** Tamil Nadu has become the first state in the country to implement a model which predicts the probability of deaths among adults with Tuberculosis and has integrated it with the existing state-wide application TB SeWA, which triages them at diagnosis.

The predictive model, developed by ICMR's National Institute of Epidemiology (NIE) that was launched last week, aims to reduce the average time from diagnosis to hospital admission for severely ill TB patients, thereby bringing down the mortality rate further, said Dr Asha Frederick, State TB Officer of Tamil Nadu.

The new feature has been added to Tamil Nadu's existing TB SeWA (Severe TB Web Application), which has been in use since 2022 under the state's differentiated care model initiative Tamil Nadu - Kasanoi Erappila Thittam (TN-KET), she told PTI.

Under TN-KET, healthcare workers screen a triage every newly diagnosed adult with TB for very severe undernutrition, respiratory distress or poor physical condition using five variables -- body mass index (BMI), pedal oedema (swelling of feet and ankles), respiratory rate, oxygen saturation, and the ability to stand without support.

Then, health staff feeds these variables into TB SeWA, which then tells whether a particular patient is severely ill or not. Under TN-KET, all severely ill (very severely undernourished or having respiratory distress or poor physical status) have to be prioritised for admission, Dr Frederick said.

Until now, TB SeWA flagged patients as 'severely ill' based on these variables, helping health staff prioritise them for inpatient care, Dr Manoj Murhekar, Director of NIE said.



The predictive death model has been developed using data from nearly 56,000 TB patients diagnosed in public health facilities across Tamil Nadu between July 2022 and June 2023

"The new feature goes a step further - calculating and displaying predicted probability of death for adults with TB," Dr Murhekar said.

This objective risk percentage aims to overcome any subjective inference regarding severity and guide frontline staff to act immediately and firmly for the hospital admission of severely ill adults with TB at the time of diagnosis, he said.

"How this feature addition is helpful is that the predicted probability of death varies widely between a 'severely ill' and 'not severely ill' patient. The predicted probability for a severely ill adult with TB death ranges from 10 per cent to as high as 50 per cent, depending on how many of the conditions are present.

"In contrast, for patients not flagged as 'severely ill', the predicted probability drops sharply to just 1-4 per cent," explained Dr Hemant Shewade, a senior Scientist at NIE.

Data of last three years show that about 10-15 per cent of adults with TB in Tamil Nadu are found to be severely ill at diagnosis, he told PTI.

"This clear risk estimate will help ensure that the sickest patients are admitted to hospitals without delay," Dr Shewade stated.

All 2,800 public health facilities in Tamil Nadu -- from primary health centres to medical colleges -- currently use the TB SeWA application alongside a paper-based triage tool, said Dr Frederick. "Tamil Nadu is so far the only state in India to systematically record and use these five triage variables to guide patient management," she said.

According to a study by the NIE, after implementing TN-KET for around three years now, the losses in the care cascade have significantly reduced and around two-third districts have documented reduction in TB death rates.

The ICMR-NIE scientists emphasised that the initiative sets an important example for other states, where TB deaths, especially the early fatalities remain a persistent challenge despite free diagnosis and treatment.

HP to probe accumulation of forest wood after cloudbursts

Videos and photographs of wood flushing down the river and found floating in the dam went viral on media platforms, raising public concern and prompting calls for investigation

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Shimla, July 7:** Taking cognisance of forest wood and logs that accumulated in the Pandoh dam after last week's cloudbursts, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Sukhu has handed over the investigations to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID).

The logs were sighted in huge quantities floating in the Pandoh Dam in the Mandi district, that got accumulated after being swept down from the hills due to the cloudburst and flash floods.

A spokesperson for the state government Monday said the government has taken cognisance of the matter and would bring to light the possible reasons behind the accumulation of wood in such a large quantity. The government, under

the direction of the Chief Minister, has now decided to conduct the CID inquiry into the matter.

"The first and foremost reaction to the incidents of cloudbursts and floods was to save the lives of people and provide immediate relief to them, wherein effective measures were underway to bring back normalcy in the flood-hit regions," said the spokesperson.

He said that while the government and the administration were busy helping people, the BJP made a hue and cry regarding the forest wood.

"The BJP leaders were making irresponsible statements at the time of disaster, which highlights that the opposition is highly ignorant and selective when it comes to such matters, as the issues of illegal felling of trees were never inquired into, and no accountability was set during their tenure," said the spokesperson.

The spokesperson added that the state government has set a goal to make Himachal Pradesh a 'Green Energy State' by March 31, 2026, and any obstacle or act which stops the government from achieving its target would be dealt with under the rule of the law.



In this image via Defence PRO Chennai, Japan Coast Guard (JCG) personnel with Commander, Coast Guard Region (East) Inspector General Datwinder Singh Saini and NCC cadets after the arrival of JCG Ship Itsukushima at Chennai port, Monday

PTI photo

TN govt hostels renamed as 'Social Justice Hostels'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, July 7:** In a major step towards fostering social equity and unity among the youth, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin announced that all student hostels run by various government departments across the state will now be known as 'Social Justice Hostels'.

This move, the Chief Minister said, reflects the core principles of the Dravidian Model government and is aimed at creating a strong foundation for an egalitarian society.

"The renaming is not just symbolic but part of our broader effort to root out caste-based discrimination and foster a spirit of unity among the younger generation," he said.

The decision was taken based

on the recommendations of the Justice K Chandru Commission, a one-man panel set up by the state government to examine ways to eliminate caste markers in educational institutions.

The Commission had proposed removing caste-based names and symbols and recommended the introduction of a curriculum that encourages inclusive education. Acting on these recommendations, the government has decided to rename all 2,739 hostels catering to school and college students as 'Social Justice Hostels'.

These hostels currently house around 1,79,568 students from various communities, many of whom come from marginalised and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. "While we are transforming the names



and purpose of these hostels, the government remains committed to supporting students through existing welfare schemes," CM Stalin said.

"Financial assistance, scholarships, and other forms of aid will continue as before. This

renaming is a step forward in our resolve to create a discrimination-free learning environment," he said.

Hostels that have already been named after prominent leaders will retain their names, but the phrase 'Social

This is not just a policy decision but a step in building a socially just Tamil Nadu, where every student has the right to dignity, equality, and opportunity

MK STALIN | CM, TAMIL NADU

Justice Hostel' will be appended to them, the Chief Minister clarified.

Over the years, the state has implemented several initiatives aimed at improving the educational outcomes of students from marginalised communities. The Chief Minister noted that while these schemes have enhanced opportunities and capabilities, the time has now come to address deep-rooted societal biases directly.



of the day

quote

The most embarrassing thing for the government is that, despite loosening the definition of unemployment so much, only 51.7 per cent of people were found to be employed

JAIRAM RAMESH | CONG GENERAL SECY

The BJP has been trying to intimidate our leaders using central agencies like the ED and I-T, but we will never be scared. Our party leaders in Chhattisgarh, including former chief minister (Bhupesh Baghel), are being harassed (using probe agencies)

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | CONGRESS PRESIDENT

The Sittou port (in Myanmar) is ready. Now work is going on to develop the road connectivity to Aizawl. The entire Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project will be operational by 2027

SARBANANDA SONOWAL | UNION MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Youth dies after falling from 100-foot height

**Kota:** A 19-year-old youth died after he fell from a height of about 100 feet while making a reel on his mobile phone at a popular tourist spot here, a police officer said Monday. The deceased, Arjun Kahar, was a Class 12 student and a resident of Kaithun area. According to RK Puram Circle Inspector Mahendra Maru, Arjun had gone with six to seven friends to the Gapermath picnic spot near Rajasthan's Kota city Sunday afternoon. Since the original route to Gapermath was closed in view of the rains, the youths chose an alternative route through a hilly jungle on their way back in the evening.

Six detained for murdering youth

**New Delhi:** Six people, including two minors, have been apprehended in connection with the murder of a 25-year-old man after he resisted a robbery attempt in the Vijay Vihar area, an official said Monday. Four accused — Karan alias Doremon (22), who is the main accused, Aakash (23), Sumit (22), and Rahul (18) — were arrested, while the minors have been apprehended, the official said, adding that they allegedly spotted Manish alone in the area and attempted to snatch his belongings.

'Itskushima' arrives at Chennai Port

**New Delhi:** Japan Coast Guard ship 'Itskushima' will engage in a series of bilateral engagements during its week-long port call at Chennai, starting Monday, officials said. Following the Chennai visit, 'Itskushima' will participate in a joint sea exercise named 'Exercise Jaa Mata' (meaning 'see you later') with the Indian Coast Guard (ICG). This exercise will focus on enhancing coordination and operational synergy at sea, they said.

16 IEDs recovered from J'khand forest

**Chaibasa:** Security forces Monday recovered 16 IEDs from a forest area in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district, police said. The improvised explosive devices were recovered in a forest stretch between Kotsona and Lanji villages, as part of an anti-Naxal operation by a joint team of security forces, SP Rakesh Ranjan said.

Rahul slams Modi govt over SEBI crackdown

*Rahul Gandhi accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Centre of turning a blind eye to the revelation and wondered if there were more players rigging the market*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi Monday accused the Narendra Modi government of making the rich richer and pushing ordinary investors to the brink of ruin by being silent on “manipulation” by big players in the futures and options (F&O) market.

Rahul Gandhi, in a post on X, said he had predicted the loopholes in the F&O market. “I clearly stated in 2024 -- the F&O market has become a playground for ‘big players,’ and small investors’ pockets are continuously being drained.

“Now SEBI itself is admitting that Jane Street (Group) manipulated thousands of crores. Why did SEBI remain silent for so long?” he asked in his post in Hindi.

The Congress leader accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Centre of turning a blind eye to the revelation and wondered if there were more players rigging the market.

“At whose behest was the

GORAKHPUR GIRL RETURNS TO SCHOOL AFTER YOGI'S HELP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Gorakhpur (UP), July 7:** Forced to drop out because of financial constraints four months ago, Class seven student Pankhuri Tripathi returned to school Monday, days after her story became a political talking point for both the government and the Opposition.

During Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's Janta Darshan at Gorakhpur temple July 1, the student of Saraswati Shishu Mandir had pleaded for fee exemption.

Moved by her plea, Adityanath assured that her education would not be disrupted. “If the school does not waive the fees, the government will,” the CM had assured.

However, the school did not budge and when July 5, Pankhuri and her family visited the school with a formal application regarding the waiver, the principal allegedly refused.

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav also took up the girl's matter and criticised the ruling BJP government.

Planned C-section linked to higher child leukaemia risk: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** Having a planned caesarean section during delivery could be related to an increased risk of leukaemia -- a blood cancer -- later in the child's life, compared with an emergency C-section, a study has found.

A C-section delivery of a child involves making a surgical cut in the mother's abdomen and uterus. The need for delivering via a C-section can be planned or arise as an emergency during labour.

Researchers at Karolinska Institutet said that exposure of a baby to vaginal bacteria in an emergency C-section -- which usually begins as a vaginal delivery -- could be why planned

C-sections carry an increased risk of certain diseases, com-



Most of the equipment we once imported is now being made in India. Our reforms are succeeding because of the clarity of vision and commitment at the highest level

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER



Modi government sitting with its eyes shut? And how many more big sharks are still shorting retail investors?” he said.

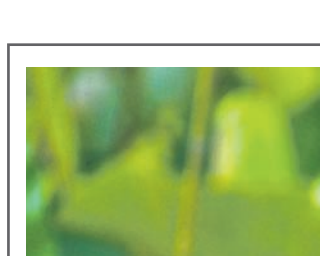
“In every case, it is clear -- the Modi government is making the rich richer and pushing ordinary investors to the brink of ruin,” he alleged.

Gandhi tagged his September 24, 2024, post in which he had stated, “Uncontrolled F&O trading has grown 45x in five years. Ninety per cent of small investors have lost ₹1.8 lakh crore in three years.”

It went on: “SEBI must reveal the names of the so-called ‘Big Players’ making a killing at their expense.”

The Congress' head of media and publicity department, Pawan Kherra, also joined in on the issue with Gandhi alleging that the market watchdog has ignored alleged corruption in the market and said SEBI has to answer a lot of questions.

“This is the tip of the iceberg of corruption our market watchdogs have ignored so far. SEBI and its former chairperson Madhavi Puri Buch have a lot of questions to answer,” Kherra said in a post on X while tagging Gandhi's post.



A cattle egret stands amid blooming lotus flowers on the bank of the Yamuna in New Delhi

Woman gangraped in empty train coach

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Panipat, July 7:** A 35-year-old woman was allegedly gangraped in an empty coach of a stationary train here, police said Monday.

According to police, they received a missing report about her June 26. Her husband told them that she had been missing since June 24 after a quarrel. He said that this had happened before, but she would return on her own.

Meanwhile, the woman told the police that she was sitting at a nearby railway station when a person, claiming to have been sent by her husband, approached her.

"She said he took her with him and boarded an empty bogie of a stationary train where he raped her. Later, two other men joined him and raped her," Shri Niwas, SHO of Quilla police station said.

The woman, who appeared to be traumatised, also stated that later on she was taken to Sonipat where the accused threw her on the tracks and she lost her leg when a train went over her. She was later admitted to a hospital and is undergoing treatment, Niwas said.

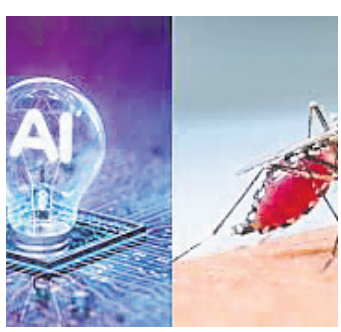
"We registered a Zero FIR for gangrape and forwarded it to the Panipat Government Railway Police (GRP) for further action," Niwas said over the phone.

Inspector Rajesh, SHO of the Government Railway Police here, said that they have received a zero FIR on Sunday evening and further investigation is underway.

Zero-FIR can be filed in any police station, irrespective of the place of incident/jurisdiction, and it can be later transferred to the appropriate police station.

ANDHRA TO USE AI FOR MOSQUITO CONTROL

Andhra Pradesh is set to launch a pilot mosquito control programme using Artificial Intelligence (AI) called the Smart Mosquito Surveillance System (SMOSS) to monitor mosquito density, detect species, and enable timely insecticide spraying



Chandrachud reveals why he overstayed in CJI residence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** In the wake of the controversy over his stay at the official residence beyond permissible time, former Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud Monday cleared the air saying his luggage was packed and he along with his wife and children would soon move to a paid government accommodation.

Chandrachud, his wife Kalpana and daughters Priyanka and Mahi, both of whom are persons with disabilities, were living in the official CJI residence of 5, Krishna Menon Marg, New Delhi. "We have actually packed up our luggage. Our luggage is already completely packed up. Some of the luggage is already gone to the new house and some are kept here in the storeroom," Justice Chandrachud told PTI while elaborating on reasons for his overstay in the bungalow.

The 50th CJI, who superannuated from the office November 8, 2024, was responding to the Supreme Court administration's communication to the Centre to vacate the official bungalow due to the purported overstay. The former CJI lamented over the controversy and referred to the medical condition of his daughters who required a wheelchair-friendly home.

"I won't tell you how I feel, but you can imagine how I feel about it...one thing which I would like to mention is that we are the parents of two children, Priyanka and Mahi. They are special children and they have special needs. They have a condition called Nemaline



myopathy... And you know, this is a very rare genetic disorder which affects the skeletal muscles."

He continued, "Even at home, we maintain a high standard of hygiene, sanitation and we have a very specialised nurse who looks after them. So now it's a matter of maybe a couple of days, or not a couple of days, but maybe a couple of weeks at the most. As soon as they tell me that the house is ready for occupation, I will be moving out.' Justice Chandrachud recalled his elder daughter Priyanka being in the ICU for 44 days at PGI Chandigarh in 2021 and in January, 2022.

The former CJI pointed out his children's regular chest, respiratory and neurological therapies aside from pain and speech management.

He said one of the kids had difficulty in swallowing as a multi-disciplinary team looked after both his children on a daily basis.

Justice Chandrachud referred to former CJIs Justices U U Lalit and N V Ramana and other top court judges, saying they too were granted extension of time to stay in their official residences.

ALARMING CHILD MORTALITY IN MAHARASHTRA

More than 36 deaths per day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 7:** Maharashtra has recorded over 12,000 child deaths between April last year and February 2025, averaging more than 37 fatalities per day, the state's Public Health and Family Welfare Minister Prakash Abitkar said Monday.

The figure came up during the question hour when ten MLCs from the Opposition and treasury benches asked a question as to whether 12,438 children died in the state in 11 months.

They also highlighted the situation in Kolhapur district where 1,736 deaths of children, including 11 newborns, were reported. In a written response, Abitkar confirmed the numbers, acknowledging the traumatic loss of young lives throughout the state. However, the minister neither provided any age-wise break-up nor specified the causes behind the death of the children. The period from April 2024 to February 2025 mentioned by the minister comes

MMC nod to homoeopaths irks IMA

**Mumbai:** The Maharashtra Medical Council (MMC) has issued a notification permitting homoeopaths to prescribe modern medicines after completing a six-month course in pharmacology, drawing a sharp reaction from the Indian Medical Association, which claims it will dilute modern medical practices. Demanding a rollback of the permission, the IMA will submit memoranda to Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis via the district collector and the tahsildar. If their concerns are not addressed, the association plans a 24-hour withdrawal of non-emergency health services July 11. The MMC notification, dated June 30, authorises the initiation of a Certificate Course in Modern Pharmacology (CCMP) for homoeopathy practitioners, enabling them to practice modern medicine. Following these amendments, the Medical Education and Drugs Department, Government of Maharashtra, August 13, 2014, approved to launch the certificate course in pharmacology for homoeopathy practitioners to practice in modern medicine. This development stems from a previous notification issued June 25, 2014, regarding amendments to the Maharashtra Homeopathic Practitioners Act and the Maharashtra Medical Council Act, 1965. Following these amendments, the Medical Education and Drugs Department, Government of Maharashtra, August 13, 2014, approved to launch the certificate course in pharmacology for homoeopathy practitioners to practice in modern medicine.

to 11 months and with 12,438 child deaths reported during the period, the daily average comes up to approximately 37 deaths per day. Replying to another question, Abitkar also addressed the progress of trauma care infrastructure in

the state and said that 117 such units have been approved for government hospitals situated along highways.

Of these, 78 trauma care units are currently operational, with work underway to complete the remaining 39 units.

- A C-section delivery of a child involves making a surgical cut in the mother's abdomen and uterus
- The need for delivering via a C-section can be planned or arise as an emergency during labour
- Overall, children born by a C-section were seven per cent more likely to develop acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, compared to those born vaginally

kaemia.

"We observed an increased (acute lymphoblastic leukaemia) risk among children delivered by planned C-section (of 21 per cent)," the authors wrote.

Emergency caesarean sections usually begin as a vaginal



cer affecting blood and bone marrow.

Overall, children born by a C-section were seven per cent more likely to develop acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, compared to those born vaginally.

However, compared to an emergency C-section, birth via a planned C-section was associated with a 21 per cent higher risk of developing acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, the most common form of childhood leu-





In the past 11 years, over 34,000 km of new railway tracks have been laid, and 1,300 stations are being re-developed as modern Amrit Bharat stations

ASHWINI VAISHNAW | RAILWAY MINISTER

EPS LAUNCHES POLL CAMPAIGN

AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami launched his statewide campaign for the 2026 Assembly election from Tamil Nadu's Mettupalayam Monday



of the day quote

I have told the Committee chairman that the Opposition leaders need to be taken into confidence on the report

D K SHIVAKUMAR | K'TAKA DY CM

The BJP is not just a political organization, but a dedicated movement of ideas, values and service. The training session is not just a formality, it is a medium to prepare the leadership, strengthen the organization and motivate the workers

JP NADDA | BJP PRESIDENT

Transform Andhra Pradesh into a zero-crime state by leveraging technology. The state should set an example in law and order monitoring

N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | AP CM

POST OF THE DAY

Now UAE golden VISAs in ₹23 Lakh.  
> 0% Income Tax.  
> Quality of life.  
> Best Infra  
In India pay 30% Direct Tax and

28% GST and get  
• Freebies  
• Reservation  
• Broken infra  
• Third grade quality of life

@RajeshwariRW

SHORT TAKES

Youth thrashed for obscene message

**Bangalore:** A college student was allegedly kidnapped, stripped, and brutally assaulted on the outskirts of Bangalore, after which eight people were arrested and later released on bail, police said Monday. The incident occurred June 30 in Nelamangala taluk, police added. The victim, identified as Kushal, a college student, was previously in a relationship with a minor girl from the same locality. However, the couple had broken up a few months ago, after which Kushal allegedly sent her obscene messages.

Two kids fall from speeding school van

**Thane/Mumbai:** Two children were injured after falling off a speeding school van when its rear door opened in Ambarnath town in Thane district Monday, police said. A video of the incident has gone viral on social media. The Regional Transport Office (RTO) at Kalyan stated that action will be taken against the school van under the School Bus Rules, 2011, and relevant sections of the Motor Vehicles Act after document verification.

South Calcutta Law College reopens

**Kolkata:** South Calcutta Law College reopened Monday amid heavy security after remaining closed for 11 days following the alleged gang rape of a first year student on campus. Vice Principal Nayna Chatterjee said only BA LLB students of the first semester, who were yet to fill out their examination forms, have been asked to come on the first day after reopening to complete the formalities. Senior officers of the Kolkata Police were overseeing security at the campus as private guards thoroughly checked the ID cards of students going in. Around 100 students, many accompanied by their parents, turned up as the gates reopened at 10 am.

‘Drones to boost Indian industry to \$23bn by 2030’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** Buoyed by rising demand from sectors like defence, agriculture, logistics, and infrastructure, the drone industry is expected to boost the country's manufacturing potential to USD 23 billion by 2030, says a report.

As drones emerge as a key component of modern warfare strategies, India's Operation Sindoor in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack has marked a notable shift in the country's adoption of drones, the report by Nexgen said. The report, based on a survey

of 150 companies from 15 cities, revealed that 40 per cent of drone companies believe that agriculture and precision farming are anticipated to drive the largest demand for drones in India by 2030, following the defence sector.

Estimates suggest the global agricultural drones market size will reach USD 5.89 billion by 2030. In its endeavour to further support this momentum, Delhi is hosting the largest Drone International Expo 2025, scheduled for July 31 to August 1, 2025. Organised by Nexgen Exhibitions, the Drone International Expo 2025 is showc-



ing the latest innovations from over 6 countries, including Russia, Taiwan, Canada, Ukraine, and India. Over 50 national and international Drone manufacturers are showcasing their product innovations at the ex-

po. Aadhar Bansal, Director, Nexgen Exhibitions, said in the statement, "The entire world has witnessed the impressive capabilities of drones during Operation Sindoor. I firmly believe that adopting indigenous

PM: BRICS must secure critical minerals supply

In his address at a session on multilateralism, financial matters and artificial intelligence, Modi also called for creation of global standards for use of AI to maintain transparency and prevent misuse

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Rio de Janeiro, July 7:** The BRICS nations must work together to make supply chains for critical minerals and technology secure and ensure that no country uses these resources for its own "selfish gain" or as a "weapon" against others, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at the annual summit of the grouping.

In his address at a session on multilateralism, financial matters and artificial intelligence Sunday, Modi also called for creation of global standards for use of AI to maintain transparency and prevent misuse.

The prime minister's comments on critical minerals came amid concerns over China restrictions on the export of the vital resources as well as its non-transparent policy approach in the sector.

"We need to work together to make supply chains for critical minerals and technology secure and reliable. It's important to ensure that no country uses these resources for its own selfish gain or as a weapon against others," Modi said.

Critical minerals such as lithium, nickel and graphite are considered vital for high-end technology products including electric vehicles (EVs), drones, and battery storage. China has been a dominant player in the critical minerals supply chain globally.

On artificial intelligence, Modi said it can greatly improve everyday life but on the other hand, it also raised concerns about risks, ethics, and bias.



The Prime Minister announced that India will organise the "AI Impact Summit" next year.

"We believe that resolving concerns and encouraging innovation should be given equal importance in AI governance. We must work together for responsible AI," Modi said.

"Global standards must be created that can verify the authenticity of digital content, so that we can identify the source of the content and maintain transparency and prevent misuse," he said.

The top leaders of BRICS held deliberations on a range of pressing challenges facing the globe at the summit in this seaside Brazilian city.

Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin skipped the summit. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Egypt's Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi also didn't attend the gathering.

The BRICS has emerged as an influential grouping as it brings together 11 major emerging economies of the world, representing around 49.5 per cent of the global population, around 40 per cent of the global GDP and around 26 per cent of the global trade. In his remarks, the prime minister also talked about efforts by BRICS to help the Global South.

"In the form of BRICS New Development Bank (NDB), we have offered a strong and credible alternative to support the

development aspirations of countries in the Global South," he said.

At the same time, he said the NDB must focus on demand-driven approaches, long-term financial sustainability, and healthy credit rating. Strengthening our internal systems will further enhance the credibility of our call for reformed multilateralism, he said.

Modi said the countries of the Global South have some special expectations and aspirations from BRICS and it should work together to fulfil them.

"For instance, the BRICS Agricultural Research Platform, established in India, is a valuable initiative to enhance collaboration in agricultural research." "It can become a medium for sharing research and best practices in topics such as agri-biotech, precision farming, and climate change adaptation. We can also extend its benefits to countries in the Global South," he said.

The prime minister also proposed creation of a BRICS Science and Research Repository, which could also serve as a valuable resource for the countries of the Global South.

"The Global South has many hopes from us. To fulfil them, we must follow the principle of 'Lead by Example'," he said.

"India is fully committed to working shoulder-to-shoulder with all our partners to achieve our common goals," he added.

9 murdered in 4 places of Bihar in 24 hours

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Purnea/Nalanda (Bihar), July 7:** At least nine people were murdered in four incidents in Bihar over the last 24 hours, police said Monday.

The killings took place in Purnea, Nalanda, Muzaffarpur and Patna districts.

In Purnea district, five members of a family were killed and their bodies set on fire by villagers on suspicion of practising witchcraft. In Nalanda district, a 22-year-old woman and another person were shot dead after a dispute between children from two neighbouring families escalated into violence.

A government engineer was allegedly stabbed to death by robbers in front of his family in Muzaffarpur, while a 50-year-old businessman was shot dead in Patna. Police said that initial probe suggested that five members of a family in Tetma village in Purnea were first murdered on suspicion of practising witchcraft. Two persons have been arrested in connection with the murders, and a man-hunt has been launched to nab the other accused, they said. Police are trying to ascertain the identity of the deceased.

"Preliminary investigation suggests that five members of a family in Tetma village were first murdered on suspicion of practising witchcraft. It ap-

pears that the accused then burnt their bodies in a bush. The incident took place on Sunday night," DIG (Purnea) Pramod Kumar Mandal told PTI.

In Nalanda's Dumrawan village, two persons, including a 22-year-old woman, were shot dead Sunday night when members of two families fired at each other over a domestic dispute, police said.

Law and order completely collapsed, says Tejashwi

**Patna:** A day after five members of a family were killed on suspicion of practising witchcraft in Purnea district of Bihar, Opposition RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav Monday claimed that law and order has completely collapsed in the state. Yadav also listed a number of other murders that have taken place in Bihar recently. Independent Lok Sabha MP from Purnea, Rajesh Ranjan, alias Pappu Yadav, said the killing of five members of a family is "Shameful". In an X post, he said: "I am ashamed. The world has reached Mars and our people are indulging in massacres on the suspicion of witchcraft!"



A Mahila Congress member shouts slogans during a protest seeking the resignation of Kerala Health Minister Veena George over the death of a woman when a portion of the Kottayam Medical College building collapsed, in Thiruvananthapuram

PTI PHOTO

Citizens can self-enumerate for 1st time in upcoming Census

In the country's first digital Census, enumerators will collect the data of citizens using mobile applications on their Android and Apple phones

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** A special dedicated web portal will be launched for self-enumeration during the upcoming Census, which will be available for both phases of the national enumeration exercise, officials said Monday.

In the country's first digital

Census, enumerators will collect the data of citizens using mobile applications on their Android and Apple phones, they said.

It will also be the first time in the country that citizens will get a chance to self-enumerate through a dedicated web portal which will be available for both the phases of Census - Houselisting and Housing Census (HLO) and Population Enumeration.

"Digital Census initiative is a transformational step towards modernising the Census process. For the first time, technology will be used to collect data and send it electronically to the central server. This will result in early availability of Census data," an official said.

Very stringent data security measures would be kept in place to ensure data security at



the time of collection, transmission and storage.

HLO will start from April 1, 2026 followed by phase 2 starting on February 1, 2027 in which Population Enumeration (PE) will be conducted. Castes of household members will be enu-

merated in the ensuing Census.

Reference date for the Census 2027 will be 00:00 hrs of March 1, 2027 and 00:00 hrs of October 1, 2026 for Union Territories of Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir and snowbound non-synchronous areas of Himachal

Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

It will be the 16th Census since start of the exercise in the country and 8th after Independence, for which a gazette notification was issued on June 16.

The Registrar General of India has put in place a three-tier focused and need-based training for each phase-national trainer, master trainer and field trainer.

The field trainers will train around 34 lakh enumerators and supervisors for the massive exercise.

The RGI has told states and Union Territories to make any proposed changes in the boundaries of administrative units before December 31, when they will be considered final for the Census exercise.

In a letter to all states and Union Territories, Registrar

Rahul's 'photo' on sanitary pads: IYC files complaints

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** Amid a row over Rahul Gandhi's image on sanitary pad packets to be distributed in Bihar, the Indian Youth Congress has filed police complaints in multiple states alleging a "coordinated and defamatory" digital campaign targeting the Congress leader and undermining the dignity of women.

The IYC has claimed that the campaign involved a "doctored image and vulgar video" linked to the Congress' sanitary pad distribution drive in Bihar, which was part of a social welfare initiative led by Gandhi.

In the video, Gandhi's picture is shown on a sanitary pad, which has angered the Congress.

The IYC alleged that the BJP was manufacturing fake narratives to divert public attention.

According to IYC leaders Monday, the content was first circulated on social media by an individual and was subsequently shared by other prominent accounts.

The IYC has accused these individuals of spreading offensive and misleading content with the intention of politicising a gender-sensitive issue and discrediting Gandhi through what it describes as "digital propaganda cloaked in misogyny".

Complaints have been filed in multiple states under the supervision of IYC national in-charge Krishna Allavaru, national president Uday Bhanu Chib, and legal cell chairman Roopesh Singh Bhadauria.

According to the Youth Congress, an FIR has been registered at High Grounds police station in Bengaluru under relevant sections of BNS, including sections 192 (wantonly giving provocation with intent to cause riot), 294 (obscene acts or words in public), and 196 (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, etc), along with Section 67 of the IT Act. In Delhi, a complaint has been filed at Mandir Marg police station, and another has been submitted via the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal by Delhi Youth Congress legal cell chairman Vivek Punia.



# international

## of the day quote

I am of the belief that we could very much easily resolve our differences and conflicts with the United States through dialogue and talks

MASOUD PEZESHKIAN | PRESIDENT, IRAN

Today, as we mark 20 years since the tragic events of 7th July 2005, my heartfelt thoughts and special prayers remain with all those whose lives were forever changed on that terrible summer's day

KING CHARLES III | BRITAIN

What the government gave us was something spectacular in a very short period of time and a very complicated manner

TOM BARRACK | THE US ENVOY TO LEBANON

## SHORT TAKES

### Ukraine withdraws from mine ban treaty

**Kyiv:** Oleksiy, a 26-year-old Ukrainian soldier, is six months into a difficult recovery after losing most of his left leg to an anti-personnel mine. Despite his injuries, he says Ukraine is right to withdraw from a treaty banning such weapons. Facing challenges in securing new US supplies of artillery and munitions, or to recruit enough new soldiers to hold frontline positions, Kyiv announced its withdrawal from the Ottawa Convention June 29. Military analysts and a Ukrainian unit commander said that doing so could help slow the Russian advances Kyiv is struggling to contain over three years after Moscow's full-scale invasion.

### Kenya police fire at protesters, 10 killed

**Nairobi:** Police in Kenya clashed with demonstrators Monday during the latest anti-government protests, killing 10 people, according to the state-funded human rights commission. Authorities blocked major roads leading into the capital, Nairobi, and most businesses closed amid the strictest measures yet to contain the unrest. Protesters lit bonfires and threw stones at police. Police fired and hurled tear gas canisters, injuring demonstrators. Young men carried another man, his shirt drenched in blood, saying he had been shot. The protests were reported in 17 of 47 counties. Kenyan youth and others for weeks have been protesting police brutality and poor governance.

### Death toll from Texas floods reaches 78

**Kerrville:** Search teams looking for dozens of people still missing after flash floods in central Texas faced the danger of more heavy rain and thunderstorms Monday after a disaster that has killed at least 78 people including 28 children. Search teams waded through mud-laden riverbanks and flew over the flood-stricken landscape on the fourth day of the search for survivors after Friday's flash floods.

### Lankan Navy rescues 4 Indian fishermen

**Colombo:** Sri Lankan Navy rescued four Indian fishermen, who went missing at sea, from a distressed fishing boat off the western coast, an official statement said Monday. The fishermen were rescued Sunday following a coordinated Search and Rescue (SAR) launched by the Sri Lankan Navy after being alerted by the Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC) Mumbai, said an official statement released by the Sri Lankan Navy.

REUTERS

**Rio De Janeiro, July 7:** President Donald Trump said the US will impose an additional 10% tariff on any countries aligning themselves with the “Anti-American policies” of the BRICS group of developing nations, whose leaders kicked off a summit in Brazil Sunday.

With forums such as the G7 and G20 groups of major economies hamstrung by divisions and the disruptive “America First” approach of the US president, the BRICS is presenting itself as a haven for multilateral diplomacy amid violent conflicts and trade wars.

In a joint statement from the opening of the BRICS summit in Rio de Janeiro released Sunday afternoon, the group warned the rise in tariffs threatened global trade, continuing its veiled criticism of Trump's tariff policies.

Hours later, Trump warned he would punish countries seeking to join with the grouping.

“Any Country aligning themselves with the Anti-Ameri-



### BRICS nations resist 'anti-American' label

Developing nations participating in the BRICS summit Monday brushed away an accusation from US President Donald Trump that the bloc is “anti-American,” as he threatened them with additional 10% tariffs.

“Tariffs should not be used as a tool for coercion and pressuring,” Mao Ning, the Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said in Beijing. The BRICS advocates for “win-win cooperation,” she added, and “does not

can policies of BRICS, will be charged an ADDITIONAL 10% Tariff. There will be no exceptions to this policy. Thank you for your attention to this matter!” Trump said in a post on Truth Social.

Trump did not clarify or expand on the “Anti-American policies” reference in his post.

Trump's administration is seeking to finalize dozens of trade deals with a wide range of countries before his July 9 deadline for the imposition of significant “retaliatory tariffs”.

REUTERS



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REUTERS



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## 25% TARIFFS ON GOODS FROM JAPAN, SK IN LETTERS TO LEADERS

President Donald Trump said Monday the US would impose a 25% tariff on imports from Japan and South Korea beginning August 1 as he unveiled the first two of what he has said will be a wave of letters to trading partners outlining the new levies they face. “If for any reason you decide to raise your Tariffs, then, whatever the number you choose to raise them by, will be added onto the 25% that we charge,” Trump said in letters to the leaders of the two Asian countries, which he posted on his Truth Social platform. The rate for South Korea is the same that Trump initially announced April 2, while the rate for Japan is 1 point higher than first announced. Trump a week later capped all of the so-called reciprocal tariffs at 10% until July 9 to allow for negotiations. Only two agreements have so far been reached, with Britain and Vietnam. US stocks fell in response, the latest market ruction since Trump unleashed a global trade war on his return to office in January. His moves have repeatedly rolled financial markets and sent policymakers scrambling to protect their economies.

is “not anti-American,” trade ministry spokesman Kaamil Alli said, adding that talks with the US government “remain constructive and fruitful.”

A Kremlin spokesman said Russia's cooperation with the BRICS was based on a “common world view” and “will never be directed against third countries.”

India and Brazil, which is hosting the BRICS gathering,

did not immediately provide an official response to Trump.

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva told reporters that he would only comment after wrapping up the summit. His opening remarks to BRICS leaders gathered in Rio de Janeiro Monday focused on the environmental and public health issues on the summit's official agenda.

## GEN SINGH'S 'LIVE-LAB' JIBE

# Munir rejects Indian allegation of Chinese help in May conflict

REUTERS

**Islamabad, July 7:** Pakistan's army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir Monday rejected New Delhi's allegation that his military received active support from longtime ally China in its conflict with India in May.

Indian army's deputy chief Lieutenant General Rahul Singh said last week that China gave Islamabad “live inputs” on key Indian positions.

The “insinuations regarding external support” are “irre-



sponsible and factually incorrect”, Munir said in an address to graduating officers of the national security and war course in Islamabad, according to an army statement.

Pakistani officials have previously dismissed allegations of receiving active support from China in the conflict.

Beijing and Islamabad have longstanding close relations, with billions of dollars of Chinese investment in the South Asian nation's energy and infrastructure.

India's relationship with China meanwhile was strained after a 2020 border clash that sparked a four-year military standoff, but tensions began to ease after the countries reached a pact to step back in October.

India and Pakistan used missiles, drones and artillery fire during the four days of fighting in May - their worst in decades - triggered by an attack in April on tourists in Indian Kashmir that New Delhi blamed on Islamabad, before agreeing to a ceasefire.

# China protests Modi's greetings to Dalai Lama

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Beijing, July 7:** China said Monday it protested to India over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's greetings to the Dalai Lama on his 90th birthday and the attendance of Indian officials at the celebrations, stressing New Delhi should fully appreciate Beijing's sensitivities on Tibet-related issues.

China's position on Tibet-related affairs is consistent and clear and it's known to all, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a media briefing here.

Mao was replying to a question on Prime Minister Modi's greeting the Dalai Lama on his 90th birthday and the attendance of senior Indian officials at his birthday celebrations.

The 14th Dalai Lama is a political exile, who for a long, has been engaged in separatist activities and attempted to separate Xizang from China under the cover of religion, Mao alleged. China refers to Tibet as Xizang.

“India should fully appreciate the great sensitivity



of Xizang-related issues and recognise the anti-separatist nature of the 14th Dalai Lama and honour the commitment it made to China on issues related to Xizang,” she said.

India should act and speak prudently and stop using this issue to meddle in China's internal affairs, she said, adding that “China has protested to the Indian side” on the matter.

Prime Minister Modi Sunday extended warm wishes to the Dalai Lama, and said he has

been an enduring symbol of love, compassion, patience and moral discipline.

“His message has inspired respect and admiration across all faiths. We pray for his continued good health and long life,” Modi posted on X.

Union ministers Kiren Rijju and Rajiv Ranjan Singh, Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu, and Sikkim minister Sonam Lama had attended his birthday celebrations in Dharamshala.

India should fully appreciate the great sensitivity of Xizang-related issues and recognise the anti-separatist nature of the 14th Dalai Lama and honour the commitment it made to China on issues related to Xizang

MAO NING | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON, CHINA

China on last Friday objected to Minority Affairs Minister Rijju's statement that the incarnation of the Dalai Lama should follow his own wishes urging India to act cautiously on Tibet-related issues to avoid affecting the improvement of bilateral relations.

India should be clear of the anti-China separatist nature of the 14th Dalai Lama and honour its commitments on Xizang (Tibet) related issues, Mao told media here reacting to Rijju's assertion that the decision on the incarnation of the Dalai Lama would be taken by the established institution and the leader of Tibetan Buddhist himself and no one else.

## SNIPPETS

### B'desh tribunal to decide on charges against Hasina July 10

**Dhaka:** Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal Monday set July 10 to determine whether charges will be framed against ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina and two of her top aides. Hasina, former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, and former inspector general of police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun are accused in the case over alleged crimes against humanity committed during the July uprising last year. The International Crimes Tribunal-1 (ICT-1) set July 10 to decide whether charges will be framed against Hasina, Kamal, and Al-Mamun, The Daily Star newspaper reported. On that day, the three-member tribunal will hear the petitions filed by the defence counsels, who argued that the charges against their clients are baseless and should be dropped, it said. Hasina, Kamal, and Al-Mamun were charged with five counts of crimes against humanity June 1. The prosecution pressed formal charges against the deposed prime minister, the former home minister, and the former top cop for murder, attempted murder, torture, and use of lethal weapons, among others.

### Australian Erin Patterson convicted of mushroom murders

**Sydney:** An Australian woman was Monday convicted of murdering three elderly relatives of her estranged husband with a meal laced with poisonous mushrooms, and attempting to murder a fourth, in a case that gripped the country. After a week of deliberation, the jury found Erin Patterson lured her mother-in-law Gail Patterson, father-in-law Donald Patterson and Gail's sister, Heather Wilkinson, to lunch at her home and poisoned them with individual servings of Beef Wellington that contained death cap mushrooms. They also found the 50-year-old guilty of the attempted murder of Ian Wilkinson, Heather's husband, who survived the 2023 meal at Erin Patterson's home in Leongatha, a town of about 6,000 people some 135 km (84 miles) southeast of Melbourne. Patterson had pleaded not guilty to the four charges, saying the deaths were accidental. The mother of two will be sentenced at a later date and faces a maximum life sentence. She can appeal against the verdict.

# Poland reinstates border controls with Germany, Lithuania

Pressure has been mounting after far-right groups in Poland have alleged Germany was transporting migrants into Polish territory after they reached Western Europe.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Slubice, July 7:** Poland reinstated border controls Monday with Germany and Lithuania following similar German restrictions imposed earlier this year aimed at discouraging asylum-seekers.

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, whose government recently survived a confidence vote in parliament, announced the restrictions last week. Pressure has been mounting after far-right groups in Poland have

alleged Germany was transporting migrants into Polish territory after they reached Western Europe.

The reinstated controls, which began overnight Sunday, will last for an initial period of 30 days, though authorities have not ruled out extending them, according to the Polish Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration.

“Illegal migration is simply a crime,” Polish Interior Minister Tomasz Siemoniak said Sunday during a news conference.

The border guard discovered an alleged smuggling operation within minutes of the controls taking effect overnight, officials said. An Estonian citizen was allegedly trying to take four Afghan nationals over the Lithuanian border.

“We're doing this for you as well,” Tusk said Monday told Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof during a news confer-



ence. “For the Germans, for the Dutch, for the French — because this is the European Union border.”

The Polish border with Lithuania, which stretches 104 kilometres, will see checks in 13 locations. Poland's border with Germany, 467 kilometres long, will have controls at 52 crossing points.

Lithuanian authorities said Monday they were ready to deal with possible traffic jams at the Polish border.

“If traffic begins to build up, we will start managing the flow ... to minimize disruptions and keep checks as brief as possible,” Antanas Montvydas, deputy head of Lithuania's State Border Guard Service told

### The Polish border with Lithuania, which stretches 104 kilometres, will see checks in 13 locations. Poland's border with Germany, 467 kilometres long, will have controls at 52 crossing points

Lithuania radio.

After taking office in May, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, who made a tougher migration policy a pillar of his election campaign, ordered more police at the border and said some asylum-seekers trying to enter Europe's biggest economy would be turned away.

Last week, Merz said Poland and Germany were in close con-

tact to keep the impact of Germany's border controls “as low as possible.”

“The protection of borders against irregular migration is an interest that Germany has, that Poland has, that our European neighbours share with us,” Stefan Kornelius, Merz's spokesperson, said Monday. “We do not want permanent border controls.”

The European Union has a visa-free travel area, known as Schengen, that allows citizens of most member states to travel easily across borders for work and pleasure. Switzerland also belongs to Schengen although it is not an EU member.

According to the EU, member states are allowed to temporarily reintroduce border controls in cases of a serious threat, like internal security. It says border controls should be applied as a last resort in exceptional situations, and must be limited in time.



# business

## of the day quote

There is a need for demand-based research. Research should not be done just for paper formalities; it should be done keeping in mind the utility to the farmers

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUDHAN | AGRICULTURE MINISTER

GSi has also helped us shape compelling in-store narratives and customer education tools, enabling us to deliver a jewellery experience that's rooted in authenticity, expertise, and care

HEMANG NENSEE | LEAD, TANISHQ

MapmyIndia Mappis -- the nation's leading digital mapping and deep-tech pioneer -- proudly joins hands with India Post to bring to life India's first comprehensive digital address system through the integration of DIGIPIN into the Mappis app platform

RAKESH VERMA | MD, MAPMYINDIA MAPPLS

## SHORT TAKES

### JLR sales dip

**New Delhi:** Jaguar Land Rover Monday said its dispatches to dealers declined by 11 per cent year-on-year to 87,286 units for the first quarter ended June 30. Compared to the prior year, wholesale volumes for the first quarter were down in North America, Europe and UK by 12 per cent, 14 per cent and 25 per cent respectively, JLR said in a statement. UK market was the most impacted by the planned cessation of the legacy Jaguar models, it added. The British marquee brand said its retail sales for the April-June period this year stood at 94,420 units, a dip of 15 per cent as compared with same period last fiscal. Volumes reduced in line with the company's expectations following a challenging quarter, it said.

### InPrime Finserv raises ₹50 crore

**New Delhi:** Non-banking financial company InPrime Finserv has raised ₹50 crore in a funding round led by Pravega Ventures. The fresh funds will be used to scale the company's operations into deeper geographies, the company said in a statement. Over the next 12 months, the company aims to expand its footprint to around 50 locations, resulting in a presence across Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Haryana. The round also saw participation from existing investors Z47, InfoEdge Ventures, and Kettleborough VC.

### Wiselife raises ₹8 crore

**New Delhi:** Fitness and wellness products company Wiselife has raised ₹8 crore in funding from Rukam Capital and plans to use the funds to scale operations and expand the supply chain. Shark Tank India Season 3 fame Wiselife earlier secured funding from boAt Co-Founder Aman Gupta, Shaadi.com CO-Founder and CEO Anupam Mittal, OYO Rooms Founder and CEO Ritesh Aggarwal, and Emcure Pharmaceuticals Executive Director Namita Thapar.

### Siemens Energy India March qtr profit rises

**New Delhi:** Siemens Energy India Ltd (SEIL) Monday posted 36.34 per cent rise in net profit at ₹246.1 crore for January-March 2025, mainly driven by income from power transmission and generation segment. It had reported ₹180.5 crore profit for the second quarter a year ago. The company follows October to September as financial year. Revenues from transmission rose to ₹1,013.8 crore from ₹604.9 crore in January-March 2024.



IT integration of recently amalgamated Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) on the principles of 'One State One RRB' is expected to be completed by September 15

SHAJI KV | CHAIRMAN, NABARD

## SKODA VOLKSWAGEN INDIA ADDS BENTLEY TO PORTFOLIO

Skoda Auto Volkswagen India Pvt Ltd Monday announced the addition of British super luxury brand Bentley as the sixth marque under the group's umbrella in India. From July 1, the company has taken the responsibility of exclusively importing, distributing and servicing Bentley vehicles across India. All marketing, sales and after-sales operations will be conducted under a newly established entity, Bentley India, a group company of SAVWIPL



## SEBI to enhance surveillance against derivatives manipulation

REUTERS

**New Delhi, July 7:** India's markets regulator is enhancing its surveillance to scrutinise manipulation in derivatives trading, its chairman said Monday, and days after it barred US firm Jane Street from the local markets after its investigation found the firm manipulated stock indexes.

"There may not be many more such cases," Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey said without elaborating.

India is the world's largest derivatives market, accounting for nearly 60 per cent of the 7.3 billion equity derivatives traded globally in April, according to the Futures Industry Association.

The surge in derivatives trading, which has also been driven by retail investors, has prompted the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to limit the number of contract expiries and increase lot sizes to make such trades more expensive.

Friday, SEBI barred trading firm Jane Street from buying and selling securities in the Indian market and also seized \$567 million of its funds, citing manipulation of stock indexes.

The regulator alleged that the trading firm had bought large quantities of Bank Nifty constituents in the cash and futures markets to artificially support the index in morning trade, while simultaneously building large short positions in index options.

# Carrier to sue India over electronic waste rules

REUTERS

**New Delhi, July 7:** The Indian unit of US air conditioning giant Carrier has become the latest major firm to sue Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government over electronic waste rules that have hiked the fees manufacturers must pay to recyclers.

South Korea's Samsung Electronics and LG Electronics as well as Japan's Daikin and Tata's Voltas have also brought suits, which are set to be heard by the High Court of Delhi Tuesday. All of the companies are seeking to have the rules quashed.

India is the third-biggest generator of electronic waste behind China and US, but the government says only 43 per cent of the country's e-waste last year was recycled.

Modi's government in September fixed a floor price that electronics makers must pay recyclers, which manufacturers argue is roughly three to four times higher than what they paid earlier.

In a 380-page court filing dated June 3, which has not been disclosed publicly, Carrier said recyclers were willing to continue their work at the older prices and the government should not interfere in private dealings between companies and recyclers.

"The burden of the benefit being given to the recyclers



has been put on the producers, which is unfair and arbitrary," said submissions by Carrier Airconditioning & Refrigeration which were reviewed by Reuters.

The submissions added that the rules will impose a "huge financial burden" on the company. However, both the parties have not commented on this. It has previously argued in court that the pricing rules are needed to ensure proper waste disposal and were a "reasonable" intervention.

The new rules mandate a minimum payment of 22 rupees per kilogram to recycle consumer electronics. Such rates are still lower than levels in US where they are up to five times higher, according to research firm Redseer.

Carrier reported sales of \$248 million in India last year, its highest level since at least the financial year ending March 2020. Its filing said it installed India's first-ever air conditioning system in Jaipur city in 1936.

# SEBI mulls relief for MFs

Presently, AMC's and their subsidiaries are only allowed to provide services which are in the nature of management and advisory of pooled funds. However, the market regulator is likely to relax restrictions on business activities of mutual funds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Monday proposed allowing asset management companies (AMCs) or their subsidiaries to offer additional services related to fund management, such as acting as Points of Presence (POP) for pension schemes and serving as global distributors for the funds they manage or advise.

Presently, AMCs and their subsidiaries are only allowed to provide services which are in the nature of management and advisory of pooled funds.

On Points of Presence (POP) for pension funds, SEBI proposed that subsidiaries of AMCs registered as pension fund managers may be allowed to offer POP services and receive compensation as permitted by PFRDA, according to its consultation paper.

However, AMCs should ensure that the interests of mutual fund investors are not affected.

Currently, AMC subsidiaries can act as POP for pension funds under the direct plan, but they are not allowed to receive any commission or fees directly or indirectly from investors or pension funds.

On global distribution, SEBI suggested that AMCs can market and sell only direct plans of



their mutual funds (even internationally). AMCs may continue to do this through overseas subsidiaries. However, they cannot receive any commission or fees for distributing direct plans.

On distributing other non-MF schemes globally, AMCs may be allowed to distribute other than mutual fund schemes managed or advised by them outside India through their subsidiaries. This is subject to compliance with relevant regulations.

Also, SEBI has proposed relaxing the broad basing requirement and permitting AMCs to serve pooled non-broad based funds. This is subject to strong governance and regulatory controls that would address any concerns related to conflicts of interest situations.

In case the broad basing requirement is relaxed, few con-

flicts are likely to arise such as differential fees for pooled non-broad based funds and diversion of resources, risk of contrary trade positions and front-running, risk of insider trading and inter business transfer of assets on unfavorable business terms for mutual funds investors.

To address the concern relating to diversion of resources, SEBI has "proposed that AMCs may be required to ensure that the resources dedicated to pooled non-broad based funds should be proportionate to the fee earned by AMC from such funds vis-a-vis fees from investors in mutual fund schemes".

Further, mutual fund investors should not made to bear the cost of servicing mandates for pooled non-broad based funds, it added. The regulator has sought public comments by July 28 on the proposals.

## IDBI Bank association expresses concern over privatisation



**Bhubaneswar, July 7:** The All India IDBI Officers Association (AIIDBIOA), Bhubaneswar Zone, held a meeting at a city hotel, Sunday for safeguarding IDBI Bank's public sector character. The meeting was attended by AIIDBIOA General Secretary Vithal Koteswara Rao, Bhubaneswar Zone Secretary Goutam Pattanaik, President Lalatendu Behera, and Vice President Debabrata Behera.

The association expressed concern over the implications of the Reserve Bank of India's reclassification of IDBI Bank as a private sector bank. Speakers highlighted that this shift has already impacted lending under priority sector schemes like Kisan credit card (KCC) loans, and warned that further privatisation would jeopardise small loans under MUDRA, PMSVANIDHI, Stand-Up India, and unsecured education

loans for needy students.

AIIDBIOA underscored IDBI Bank's significant role in social banking, with over 18.72 lakh PMJDY accounts, 10.86 lakh PMSBY holders, and extensive participation in other government schemes. The bank operates 2,106 branches and has over 20,000 plus employees, including substantial representation from SC, ST, OBC, EWS, women, and differently-abled groups.

Despite earning net profits for five consecutive years — ₹7,515 crore in FY 2024-25 alone — the proposed sale of IDBI Bank by the Centre and LIC (holding 45.48% and 49.24% respectively) threatens depositors and borrowers alike, the association warned.

AIIDBIOA urged the government to regain a 51 per cent stake to ensure IDBI's public sector status and advised RBI to classify the bank as a PSU for regulatory purposes.

## Jindal gets nod for steel project

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** Jindal (India) Ltd Monday said the company has received a letter of approval from the Odisha government for its proposed greenfield project in the state to be set up with an investment of ₹3,600 crore.

The company plans to invest ₹15,000 crore in three phases in Odisha by 2030, it said in a statement. The company's facility will focus on manufacturing special coated steel products. The plant will feature coating facilities such as a Cold Rolling Mill (CRM) with a Continuous Galvanizing Line (CGL) and a Colour Coating Line (CCL) for steel sheets with multiple high potential downstream products having total annual capacity of 9.6 lakh MT. This phase will be commissioned by 2027. In parallel, its wholly-owned subsidiary Jindal India Steel Tech Limited (JISTL) will enhance the total capacity of the Odisha plant to 30 lakh MT per annum in the flat product division by 2030.

Jindal (India) Limited will also establish a steel pipe manufacturing facility that will have an estimated annual production capacity of 2 lakh MT per annum.

# Domestic automobile retail sales up 5% in June

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 7:** Automobile retail sales in India rose around 5 per cent year-on-year in June with all vehicle segments, including passenger vehicles and two-wheelers, witnessing growth, Federation of Automotive Dealers Associations (FADA) said Monday.

Overall automobile registrations last month stood at 20,03,873 units, up 4.84 per cent as compared with 19,11,354 units in June 2024. Passenger vehicle (PV) retail sales rose 2 per cent year-on-year to 2,97,722 units last month as against 2,90,593 units in the year-ago period.

"Heavy rains and tight market liquidity weighed on footfall and conversion, even as elevated incentive schemes and fresh bookings lent selective support," FADA President CS Vigneshwar said in a statement.

Some dealers indicated that certain PV OEMs have introduced compulsory billing procedures such as automatic



wholesale debits -- to meet volume targets; inventory consequently stands at around 55 days, he added.

June thus painted a picture of modest but steadfast passenger vehicle performance amid varied market cues, Vigneshwar stated.

Two-wheeler retails rose 5 per cent year-on-year to 14,46,387 units in June.

"While festival and mar-

riage-season demand provided a boost, financing constraints and intermittent variant shortages moderated sales," Vigneshwar said.

Several dealers cited compulsory billing and forced stock lifts -- often via auto-debit wholesales -- leading to mandated high days of inventory aligned with festival-season targets, he added.

Commercial vehicle (CV)

registrations went up 7 per cent to 73,367 units in June. Last month sales reflected a resilient CV segment adeptly navigating cost pressures and a softening economy, Vigneshwar stated.

"Early-month deliveries buoyed volumes before monsoon-induced slowdowns and constrained liquidity dampened enquiries and conversions," he added.

Members pointed to the impact of new CV taxation and mandatory air-conditioned cabins, which have elevated ownership costs, alongside muted infrastructure demand, he said.

Three-wheeler retails increased 7 per cent to 1,00,625 units while tractor registrations rose 9 per cent to 77,214 units last month. In the April-June period, overall retail sales increased 5 per cent year-on-year to 65,42,586 units as compared with 62,39,877 units in same period last fiscal year.

PV sales rose 3 per cent year-on-year to 9,71,477 units. Similarly, two-wheeler registrations

increased 5 per cent year-on-year to 47,99,948 units.

CV and three-wheeler retail sales rose 1 per cent and 12 per cent, respectively, in the April-June period. Tractor registrations rose 6 per cent year-on-year to 2,10,174 units in the first quarter.

On business outlook in the near term, FADA stated that above-normal monsoon forecast at over 106 per cent of the LPA in July, with regional variances should bolster rural demand even as heavy-to-very-heavy precipitation zones introduce logistical complexities.

However, evolving geopolitical tensions and potential spillover from US tariff measures warrant vigilant supply-chain management and could temper consumer sentiment, FADA stated. Against this mixed backdrop, FADA adopts a stance of cautious optimism -- leveraging rural demand drivers and government capex while remaining agile to navigate monsoon-related disruption.



# Gill pips Sachin, Kohli

The skipper's masterclass in Edgbaston breaks flurry of records



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 7: Shubman Gill's batting masterclass in the second Test of the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy made the India skipper break a flurry of records, overtaking the greats like Sachin Tendulkar and Virat Kohli. India beat England by 336 runs to get their first-ever Test match win at Edgbaston, a venue where they had not won a Test before. This win in Birmingham was also India's biggest away Test win in terms of runs and also Gill's maiden as a Test captain. He was super

with a bat, hitting 269 and 161 for a total record of 430 runs, the second most runs in a single Test, just 26 behind Graham Gooch (456), which he, coincidentally, hit against India in 1990. His 269 in the first innings at Edgbaston was the highest individual Test score for an Indian batter in England. He also achieved the feat of the highest score by an India captain in Tests, surpassing Kohli's unbeaten 254 against South Africa in Pune in 2019. He also became the second batter to make two 150-plus scores in a Test, after Allan Border, who

This is something that I would cherish for the rest of my life; probably whenever I would retire, I think this would be one of my most happiest memories

SHUBMAN GILL | SKIPPER, INDIA

scored 150\* and 153 against Pakistan in Lahore in 1980. Gill's 269 is also the highest by an Indian batter in Tests outside Asia, leapfrogging Tendulkar's 241 not out at the SCG in 2004 - which was the previous highest. This was also just the second Test double century by an India skipper away from home, with Kohli having

## A win for ages

■ The 336-run victory for India is their biggest in Test history, in terms of runs. The previous best was a 318-run triumph against the West Indies in North Sound, back in 2019

■ For the first time in the nation's history, India crossed the 1000-run mark in a Test match. Against England, Shubman Gill's side scored a total of 1014 runs. Only 5 teams had managed to do so before India

achieved the feat against the West Indies in 2016.

In the process, he also broke Tendulkar's 21-year-old record of having the highest score by an Indian batter in overseas (barring other Asian countries) conditions.

Gill has been in phenomenal form in the first two matches of the series. He has accumulated 585 runs at an average of 146.25 in just four innings so far and is the leading run-getter in the series.

With 585 runs, he recorded the highest tally in the first two Tests as captain, bettering Kohli, who scored 449 runs. Moreover, it is the second-highest aggregate in the first two matches of a series, behind Graeme Smith's 621 in England in 2003. He also achieved the feat of scoring the most runs in a captaincy debut series.

He is the first Indian and only the fifth batter to be part of four century stands in a Test. The others are: Hanif Mohammad (vs West Indies in 1958), Graham Gooch (vs India in 1990), Mark Taylor (vs Pakistan in 1998) and Joe Root (vs Pakistan in 2016).

Gill is also the second Indian with hundreds in both innings of a Test in England, after Rishabh Pant, who achieved the feat in the series opener at Headingley.

The 25-year-old became the third Indian captain with hundreds in both innings of a Test after Gavaskar and Kohli. Gavaskar scored 107 and 182 not out against West Indies at Eden Gardens in 1978 and Kohli scored 115 and 141 against Australia in Adelaide in 2014.

## Greats hail historic Edgbaston win

The legendary Sachin Tendulkar hailed Akash Deep as the "standout bowler" of the match and described his delivery to dismiss Joe Root in the second innings as the "ball of the series," following India's emphatic 336-run series-levelling win in the second Test at Edgbaston. Tendulkar was full of praise on 'X'. "India's approach was to take England out of this game and force them to play differently, making sure that there would only be 1 winner. What impressed me most about the bowlers was the length they bowled." "Needless to say, Akash Deep was the standout bowler, and in my opinion, he bowled the ball of the series to Joe Root," Tendulkar wrote. On a funny note, he also didn't forget to mention Siraj's diving catch at short mid-wicket. "Enjoyed the catch taken by Mohammad 'Jonty' Siraj," the owner of 51 Test hundreds commented. Tendulkar also praised the batting effort which set up an easy win. The recently retired Virat Kohli wrote: "Great victory for India at Edgbaston. Fearless and kept pushing England to the wall. Brilliantly led by Shubman with the bat and in the field and impactful performances from everyone. Special mention to Siraj and Akash for the way they bowled on this pitch." Another former India skipper Sourav Ganguly was all praise for Shubman Gill and his team. "What a performance from shubman gill and his team.. with the bat and now with the ball.. akasdeep (sic) and Siraj just brilliant .indian attack looking far superior than the English attack .. Akasdeep (sic) and Siraj are workhorses. india win without burnrah. Can't be better result with the fantastic Gill in charge. What a fantastic batting effort," Ganguly wrote on X.

## Mexico beat US to win 10th Gold Cup crown



REUTERS

Houston, July 7: Mexico defeated the United States 2-1 at NRG Stadium in Houston, Texas Sunday to successfully defend their CONCACAF Gold Cup crown and capture their 10th title in a pulsating final that delivered drama from start to finish.

The US went ahead just four minutes in when Sebastian Berhalter's free-kick found Chris Richards, whose powerful header struck the underside of the crossbar and cannonned straight down, with the referee confirming the goal was good.

Mexico found the equalizer through Raul Jimenez in the 27th minute after the striker converted from close range. He then dedicated the goal to the late Diogo Jota , his former Wolverhampton Wanderers teammate, by holding up a Mexico shirt with the Portuguese for-

ward's name on it.

"We came from behind and are leaving with the title," Jimenez said. "It's great and really important to clinch the crown a summer before the World Cup. It's something we've been trying to do since the tournament began."

Despite Mexico's first-half dominance they struggled to capitalise on numerous golden opportunities.

Roberto Alvarado and 16-year-old Gilberto Mora both tested US goalkeeper Matt Freese, with Mora's venomous long-range effort requiring a crucial save from the American shot-stopper.

Mexico's victory secures back-to-back Gold Cup triumphs and brings them a record-extending 10th crown. Mexico also won the CONCACAF Nations Championship, the Gold Cup's predecessor, three times.

## SNIPPETS

### MS Dhoni turns 44

Mumbai: Legendary Indian wicketkeeper-batter Mahendra Singh Dhoni, who is the only captain in the history of international cricket to have won the ODI World Cup, the T20 World Cup and the Champions Trophy, turned 44 Monday. Under Dhoni's captaincy, the Indian Test side also held the No 1 spot for a period of 18 months. Last month, Dhoni was inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame for the class of 2025. While he retired from international cricket nearly five years ago, Dhoni continues to feature in the Indian Premier League for Chennai Super Kings despite a nagging knee injury. Dhoni stood in for regular CSK skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad for the majority of this year's IPL after the latter suffered an elbow injury, and led their faltering and imbalanced side with resilience to notch up a few impressive victories towards the end of the season.



### Sanjog new ICC CEO

Dubai: Indian media mogul Sanjog Gupta was on Monday named the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Jay Shah-led International Cricket Council (ICC), replacing Australian Geoff Allardice, who stepped down before the Champions Trophy earlier this year citing personal reasons. Gupta, who was serving as the CEO (Sports & Live Experiences) at JioStar, will be taking charge of his new role with immediate effect. He will be the seventh CEO of the ICC, which said it received more than 2,500 applications from 25 countries from which 12 candidates were shortlisted.



# Mulder declares 33 runs short of Lara's 400-feat

PROTEAS' STAND-IN CAPTAIN PUT HIS TEAM IN FRONT IN THE SECOND TEST AGAINST ZIMBABWE AND CHOSE TO DECLARE ON 367

REUTERS

Bulawayo, July 7: South Africa's stand-in captain Wiaan Mulder scored the fifth highest test score of 367 not out against Zimbabwe Monday but then declared his side's innings despite being only 34 runs away from the record for the most runs in a test innings.

Mulder, leading the side for the first time as a depleted team take on their neighbours in a two-test series at Bulawayo's Queens Sports Club, hit 53 boundaries (49 fours and four sixes) in his knock to see South Africa to

626-5 at lunch on the second day of the second test.

With plenty of time still left in the test, it was expected he would bat into the second session to chase down Brian Lara's 21-year-old record of 400 not out for the West Indies against England in Antigua but Mulder turned down the chance and declared at lunch, to put Zimbabwe into bat.

The 27-year-old all-rounder had come in at No 3 with South Africa on 24-2 after being put into bat on the opening day Sunday and was 264 not out at the close

HERE . NOW

OrissaPOST

MEETLE MEET 2025

OrissaPOST

A QUIZ Extravaganza

It's time for **METTLE MEET**. An initiative by the state's only home grown English daily, **OrissaPOST** to revive quizzing in Odisha. This year, the Preliminaries will take place **August 9** and the **Grand Finale August 10**. Like in the previous years, top educational institutions of the State both from schools and higher education institutions will be competing for Prizes worth ₹3,50,000 & the **Champions Title in both Junior and Senior segments**.

As a reader of **OrissaPOST**, this is a chance for you to be part of the exciting **Grand Finale** if you can give correct answers in the daily quiz. Starting **July 01, 2025** there will be one question each day for you to answer till **July 31, 2025**. Every day two winners will be selected from correct entries. Then winners will be decided by draw of lots. The winners will be invited for the **Grand Finale** which will be conducted by a nationally acclaimed quizmaster. So buckle up and get set for some brainstorming.

TODAY'S QUESTION

On this day in 2011, NASA's final space shuttle mission, STS-135, departed, marking the end of the Space Shuttle Program after 30 years. What was the name of the last space shuttle to fly?

ANSWER TO MONDAY'S QUESTION

Kalpna Dash

RULES & REGULATIONS

- Everyone will have to mail their answers to [mettlemeet@orissapost.com](mailto:mettlemeet@orissapost.com)
- Answers to the questions will follow the next day. The names of the winners will also be announced along with their pictures.
- Answers mailed between 8.00am to 6.00pm each day will be considered valid.
- OrissaPOST's** decision on all entries will be final. No complaints will be entertained.
- Participants must send their entries with a **passport size photograph, mobile numbers and residential address**. Otherwise the entries will not be entertained.
- There can be only one winner from one family.
- Invitation cards to the winners will only be issued on presentation of Valid ID proof – **Voter Card, Aadhaar Card, Driving License, Passport, School ID card** (In case of students till Class XI)
- No employee or families of **OrissaPOST** team can be part of the competition.

THE TWO LUCKY WINNERS

**SK AZARUDDIN MD**

**JYOTI PRAKASH JAGADEV**

Others who answered correctly are

Tanishna Bisoi, Om Prakash Rath, Bhumiika Subhalaxmi, YV Saimadhav, Sambit Biswaketan, Archit Mahapatra, Bhubanananda Behera, Basanti Behera, R Sekhar Rao, Subhashree Jena, Shoumik Jena, Pratyush Satapathy, Janvi Naik, Amar Kumar Jena, Smruti Ranjan Senth, Jigyansa Priyadarshini, Anurag Samantaray, DebadattaTripathy, Ruchismita Prusty

## Djoko storms into QFs

The Serbian overcomes a poor start to beat Alex de Minaur and reaches his career's 63rd Slam quarterfinal

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, July 7: Novak Djokovic overcame an uncharacteristically unsteady start to avoid what would have been his earliest exit at Wimbledon since 2016, coming through for a 1-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 victory over 11th-seeded Alex de Minaur in the fourth round Monday.

With Roger Federer, an eight-time Wimbledon winner, sitting in the front row of the Royal Box, so little went right at the outset for the 38-year-old Djokovic on the grass below during a breezy afternoon with the temperature in the 60s Fahrenheit (teens Celsius), a week after matches were contested in record-breaking heat.

But Djokovic turned things around enough to grab the middle two sets and then really took control after trailing 4-1 in the fourth. He won the last five games and 14 of the final 15 points.

His bid for an eighth Wimbledon title and 25th Grand Slam singles trophy overall will continue

against No 22 Flavio Cobolli of Italy. Cobolli reached his first major quarterfinal with a 6-4, 6-4, 6-7 (4), 7-6 (3) victory over 2014 US Open champion and two-time major runner-up Marin Cilic.

Against de Minaur, he made mistake after mistake, double-faulting four times in the first set alone. By match's end, he had faced a hard-to-believe 19 break points.

## India's challenge ends

India's Yuki Bhambri and his American partner Robert Galloway fought hard before going down to Marcel Granollers of Spain and Horacio Zeballos of Argentina in the third round of Wimbledon men's doubles here Monday. Yuki and Galloway, seeded 16th, gave their fourth seeded opponents a tough fight but couldn't end on the right side of the result, losing 4-6 6-3 6-7 (10) in a gruelling contest that lasted for two hours and nine minutes. Yuki and Galloway had progressed to the second round with a 7-6 (8) 6-4 win over Romain Arneodo of Monaco and Manuel Guinard of France on Wednesday. India's challenge ended at the Wimbledon with Yuki's exit.

## 5th Odisha Naval Tata Hockey Grassroot League C'ship to kick off today

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 7: The Odisha Naval Tata Hockey High-Performance Centre (ONTHHPC) is proud to announce the much-awaited 5th Edition of the Odisha Naval Tata Hockey Grassroot League Championship 2025 – Final Phase, set to take place from 8th July to 12th July 2025 at the iconic Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.

This prestigious event will bring together the finest young talent in both the boys' and girls' categories to compete for glory in one of India's most anticipated grassroots hockey tournaments.

The ceremony, starting at 4:00 PM, will mark the commencement of what is expected to be an exhilarating week of hockey.

The tournament promises high-energy matches, featuring fierce competition between the brightest upcoming stars in hockey. Teams will compete in a round-robin format before advancing to the knock-out stages, with thrilling semifinal and final matches ensuring an exciting conclusion to the championship.

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