



**Kangana's discontent**

Actor-politician Kangana Ranaut candidly admits that stepping into politics hasn't given her the fulfillment she expected

LEISURE | **P2**



**Boost for Kyiv**

US will send more weapons to Ukraine, just days after ordering a pause in critical weapons deliveries to Kyiv

INTERNATIONAL | **P10**



**Legal measure**

US trading firm Jane Street says it will contest a ban imposed by SEBI, terming the charges as inflammatory

BUSINESS | **P11**



**Eyes on Harmanpreet**

The Fourth T20I match between England and India, led by skipper Harmanpreet Kaur will decide the series today

SPORTS | **P12**

# Bharat Bandh today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 8:** Banking, postal and other services are likely to face disruption Wednesday as more than 25 crore workers affiliated with Central and sectoral trade unions have announced to go on strike across the country to protest against new labour codes and privatisation, and press for demands such as minimum wage of ₹26,000 and old pension scheme, according to union leaders.

The general strike is expected to disrupt services in sectors like banking, insurance, postal, coal mining, highway and construction, a trade union official said.

The Central Trade Unions such as CITU, INTUC and AI-

TUC are pressing for doing away with the four labour codes, contractualisation, and privatisation of PSUs, increasing minimum wages to ₹26,000 per month, as well as the demands of farmer organisations for Minimum Support Price (MSP) for crops based on Swaminathan Commission's formula of C2 plus 50 per cent and loan waiver.

Sectoral organisations such as the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) and NREGA Sangharsh Morcha have extended their support to the nationwide strike. RSS-aligned Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), however, will not participate in the general strike, calling it a politically-motivated protest. **P3**

## Drivers' cease-work stir hits life

**BHUBANESWAR:** An association of drivers of buses, trucks and other vehicles under the banner, Odisha Drivers' Mahasangha Tuesday launched cease work, demanding pension, rest shed and other welfare measures for them.

Due to the protest, private bus services have been affected



**COMMUTERS' WOES:** Buses parked at Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar Bus Terminal, Bhubaneswar as the drivers resorted to cease-work protest over their various demands PIC: MANORANJAN MISHRA

# Gloomy picture of primary edu

Only 53 % in Class VI know tables up to 10 and a similar percentage of students in Class III can arrange numbers up to 99

*Despite Centre's claims about advancements in primary education, particularly regarding the Right to Education Act and increased enrollment rates, ground reality tells a different story if the report of Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development (PARAKH) Rashtriya Sarvekshan is any indication. The survey covering over 21 lakh students from both government and private schools in Grades 3, 6 and 9, in 781 districts, spanning 36 states and Union Territories paints a gloomy picture. Many students do not achieve grade-level learning standards. So much so that nearly 50 per cent of Class 3 students can arrange numbers up to 99 in ascending or descending order while a similar percentage of students in Class 6 know tables up to 10*



in Class 6 know tables up to 10, a Ministry of Education (MoE) survey has found.

The Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development (PARAKH) Rashtriya Sarvekshan, formerly known as the National Achievement Survey (NAS), was conducted on December 4 last year, covering 21,15,022 students from both government and private schools in Grades 3, 6 and 9, across 74,229 schools in 781

districts, spanning 36 states and Union Territories.

The survey said 1,15,022 children from the three grades were assessed and 2,70,424 teachers and school leaders responded through questionnaires.

According to the report, only 55 per cent of students in Class 3 can arrange numbers up to 99 in ascending or descending order while 58 per cent of the students can perform addition and subtraction of two-digit numbers.

In Class 6, only 53 per cent of students understand and visualise arithmetic operations and the relationships among them, know addition and multiplication tables at least up to 10 and apply the four basic operations on whole numbers to solve daily life problems.

In Class 6, an additional subject 'The World Around Us', which covers environment and society, was introduced alongside Language and Mathematics. Students scored lowest in Mathematics (46 per cent), while Language averaged 57 per cent and The World Around Us scored 49 per cent nationally.

According to Ministry of Education officials, instances where less than 50 per cent of students were able to answer correctly indicate learning gaps.

"These learning gaps highlight the need for focused interventions to strengthen students' skills, refine instructional strategies, and provide additional learning support. Addressing these areas effectively will help improve overall student learning outcomes

in the nation," an official said.

In the case of Class 3, central government schools recorded the lowest performance in Mathematics.

Similarly, in the case of Class 6, government-aided and state government schools showed weaker performance, especially in Mathematics.

In Class 9, students from Central Government schools performed the best across all subjects, with a clear lead in Language.

State government and government-aided schools recorded similar outcomes, with the lowest performance observed in Mathematics. Language was the highest-scoring subject for all school types, while Mathematics consistently remained the weakest.

A significant rural-urban divide was also observed. While Class 3 students in the rural areas performed better in both Mathematics and Language, children of Classes 6 and 9 in the urban areas outperformed their rural counterparts across all subjects.

# Musk's X alleges press censorship in India

**AGENCIES**

**New Delhi, July 8:** Social media platform X, owned by Elon Musk, Tuesday said that they were "deeply concerned" over "ongoing press censorship" in India as blocking orders were issued against two handles of the international news agency Reuters.

The Global Government Affairs account of X stated in a lengthy post that July 3, the Indian government ordered X (formerly Twitter) to block 2,355 accounts in the country, including news outlets like @Reuters and @ReutersWorld, under Section 69A of the IT Act.

It further stated that the government warned it of "criminal liability" if it did not comply with the orders adding that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting sought that the order must be complied with within an hour.

It claimed that the Indian government requested X to unblock @Reuters and @ReutersWorld only after a public outcry. It urged users in India

to approach courts for legal remedies against such orders.

According to media reports quoting an official, the government did not have any reason to withhold the two X handles of Reuters, adding that they were blocked due to some "technical issues" and the government was working with X to resolve the problem.

The reports further stated that apart from Reuters, X accounts of other international news agencies like Turkey's TRT World and China's Global Times News were also not accessible in India since Saturday evening. However, all of them were accessible within 24 hours, reported the Hindustan Times.

However, later in the day the official spokesperson, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology denied having issued any such blocking orders July 3.

**IRREGULAR by MANJUL**



I wanted to be a cartoonist, stand-up comic, orsatirist. But I couldn't afford a lawyer—so I joined here

## Manmohan elected state BJP prez

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, July 8:** The ruling BJP Tuesday reappointed Manmohan Samal as its Odisha unit president.

Samal's reappointment to the post was announced by the BJP's central election observer Sanjay Jaiswal in the presence of senior leaders at the party's state headquarters.

He was the lone leader to file the nomination for the post and, therefore, elected unopposed, Jaiswal said.

This will be Samal's second

consecutive term and fourth term in all. Born April 15, 1959, in Bhadrak district, Samal belongs to the OBC community, which constitutes more than 50 per cent of the state's population. He joined politics as a student and was elected the students' union president of the Bhadrak College in 1979 as a member of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP).

He rose through the ranks and was made a minister in the BJD-BJP coalition government headed by Naveen Patnaik in the early 2000s. **P4**

# 'Bou Butt Bhuta' beats 'Chhaava'

## The Babushaan starrer becomes the most profitable Indian film of 2025 with over 400% ROI

**AGENCIES**

**Bhubaneswar, July 8:** Babushaan Mohanty's horror-comedy Bou Butt Bhuta has taken the Indian box office by storm, becoming not only the highest-grossing Odia film of all time but also the most profitable Indian film of 2025. The film has surpassed all expectations, outperforming even big-budget films like Chhaava, headlined by Vicky Kaushal, one of Bollywood's top actors.

In just 25 days, the film earned ₹15.10 crore net in India, with gross earnings reaching ₹17.81 crore (including taxes). It marked a major milestone as the first Odia film to cross ₹10 crore net, and now it has continued its success with earnings exceeding ₹15 crore.

Directed by Jagdish Mishra, the film was made on a modest budget of ₹2-3 crore. Even considering the higher end of the budget, the film has delivered a staggering ₹12.10 crore in profits. This results in an extraordinary



return on investment (ROI) of 403.33%. With its record-breaking run, Bou Butt Bhuta has not only elevated Babushaan's stardom but also redefined the potential of regional cinema. It has proven that strong content and audience connection can triumph, regardless of language or scale.

MOVIES	Budget	BO collection	ROI
Bou Butt Bhuta (Odia)	₹3cr	₹15.10cr	403.33%
Chhaava (Hindi)	₹130cr	₹615.39cr	73.37%
Rekhachithram (Malayalam)	₹6cr	₹27cr	350%
Court: State VS A Nobody (Telugu)	₹10cr	₹40.6cr	306%
Maaman (Tamil)	₹10cr	₹39.68cr	296.8%

# 448 suspected Bangladeshis, Rohingyas held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, July 8:** Intensifying its crackdown on Bangladeshis and Rohingyas living illegally in the state, police Tuesday held 448 people for verification of their documents, an officer said. While the police in Jagatsinghpur district detained four members of a family resid-

ing in the port town of Paradip, 444 persons were brought to two locations for their identification in Jharsuguda district.

"These 444 people in Jharsuguda district are not exactly detained but kept in wait till their documents are verified. We doubt that many of them do not have valid documents to stay in the country," Himanshu Lal, IGP Northern

Range Sambalpur, told PTI. Similarly, Paradip Lock police station IIC Rashmiranjan Das, said that the four persons were picked up from Zardari Pada area and taken for detention. "They have confessed to have entered India by crossing a river from Bangladesh and stayed for some time in Kolkata before coming to Paradip," the officer said. **P5**



# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
Today, you feel free and liberated! And in that spirit, you want to travel or do things you loved doing as a child. A good time for a family outing, says Ganesha. Keeping in mind your mood, you may even make plans for the future for your near and dear.

**TAURUS**  
You must learn to get to the root of a routine to keep things fresh today, feels Ganesha. Just learn the basic psychology of people and analyse the facts. All action and decision has a motive, you will need to understand the chain to get the most out of things, advises Ganesha.

**GEMINI**  
You have a certain degree of equanimity when it comes to reacting to praise and criticism. Today, however, you will be emotional, and it won't be too bad. You will get appreciated at work and your liberal show of emotions will only make others like you more. Your colleagues will say three cheers for you.

**CANCER**  
Today, Cupid will send its arrow right through your heart. You will be trembling with pain – the sweet pain of lust and love. But the overzealous Cupid may not stop at just that. Just to be completely sure, it will virtually do shooting practice at you. You can do nothing but tell your love interest how badly you have been hit.

**LEO**  
It is good to be impulsive sometimes; but if one were to ask you today, you would be all for a meticulously planned approach to life. So much so that from now on, planning will become almost a part and parcel of your life, predicts Ganesha. So, it is expected that you plan everything to perfection today, although the execution of your plans may be a different story.

**VIRGO**  
You will start the day by scribbling down things to do. But don't just jot them down; instead, set realistic goals and prioritise them. Items you mark highest will demand quick actions, cautions Ganesha.

**LIBRA**  
It's a spiritual and harmonious mood that grips you today, feels Ganesha. You may want to focus on meditation, as you essentially seek peace. This may have something to do with the fact that at work, your subordinates may attempt to throw around their weight to force you to make drastic changes.

**SCORPIO**  
It is more than likely that you will find yourself in a tricky situation today, says Ganesha. You may start the day feeling lonely and empty but yet, at the same time, you will have some responsibility that will prevent you from showing it. Try to keep your mind off negative thoughts.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Stay stern, says Ganesha, as it might be necessary to exercise your grit to get the desired results today. Your presence may be dominating at the workplace, but your subordinates will find your manner pleasing as you hold them in awe of you. Do not get carried away by your success or the tables may turn, suggests Ganesha.

**CAPRICORN**  
You will prioritise your needs, and the most critical would be the need to manage finances to save for the future. Also, the company you choose to keep will reflect the kind of person you are. So, beware of who you befriend, warns Ganesha.

**AQUARIUS**  
Today, you will have a lot of fun with your siblings! Though generally well-organised and methodical, you will enjoy going with the flow of what your siblings and friends plan for you. Sometimes, spontaneity is a good thing, says Ganesha.

**PISCES**  
There are indications you will be in hot pursuit of leisure today, says Ganesha. This will probably be in the form of a short trip to recharge your batteries, and is probably fuelled by your satisfaction in the realisation that the role you play within your organisation is consequential, satisfying as well as rewarding.



## DEPP DOESN'T WANT TO 'HOLD ONTO HATE'

Johnny Depp says he refuses to hold onto hate after his bitter legal battle with ex-wife Amber Heard. Their 2016 split and her later abuse claims led to a defamation trial that deeply impacted his career, following her controversial op-ed about domestic violence.

## THERON BLASTS GENDER BIAS IN HOLLYWOOD

Charlize Theron has called out a double standard when it comes to action movies. The Oscar-winning actress, who has been fronting action movies since 2005's *Aeon Flux*, said studios often give female actors just one shot to have an action movie hit, reports *Variety*.



## Saiyami's unique feat in sports

The Ghoomer actor becomes lone Indian actor to compete twice in Ironman 70.3 Triathlon

**Mumbai:** Saiyami Kher has completed her second Ironman 70.3 Triathlon and has become the only Indian actor to have commenced the race twice within a year. She completed it July 6, 2025, in Jönköping, Sweden. The Ironman 70.3, is one of the most grueling endurance challenges in the world, testing athletes across 1.9 km of open water swimming, 90 km of cycling, and a 21.1 km half marathon run all within a single day. "People often ask why I put myself through this kind of torture. The truth is, it's not about proving anything to the world. I've never thrived on external validation. For me, endurance sport is deeply personal — it's a race against my own doubts." "This year, my only goal was to be better than I was last year. And I did just that," said Saiyami in a heartfelt post after the race. She added: "As a woman it's additionally a big pain to do such a physically challenging activity with your period but it's just a reminder that it's always mind over matter. There's a strange, quiet pride in finishing something that once felt impossible. A deep joy." On the work front, the actress has Special Ops 2, which stars Kay Kay Menon, Vinay Pathak, Tahir Raj Bhasin, Karan Tacker, Arif Zakaria amongst other actors.

IAN S



## Buzz around Kriti's latest post

**Mumbai:** On Ranveer Singh's 40th birthday, his upcoming film *Dhurandhar* made headlines with its intense first-look teaser. However, what truly set social media abuzz was a seemingly innocuous birthday post by Kriti Sanon, which has now sparked fresh speculation about her joining *Don 3*.

Kriti's post, featuring a cheerful photo with Ranveer, praised his energy and talent. But it was her closing remark that set tongues wagging: "P.S. looking forward to working with you soon!" Fans instantly began connecting the dots, wondering if Kriti might be stepping into the female lead role in *Don 3*—a position left vacant after reports suggested Kiara Advani exited the project due to her pregnancy.

Though Sharvari Wagh was previously reported to have bagged the role, Kriti's cryptic note has reignited curiosity. The timing is also notable, coming just a day after a source revealed that the film had been delayed due to backlash over Ranveer replacing Shah Rukh Khan and the actor's need for intense training.

While there's been no official word from the makers, Kriti's post has certainly stirred the rumour mill. With fans eagerly awaiting clarity, all eyes are now on the *Don 3* team for an official announcement.

AGENCIES



## AAMIR ON HIS MARRIAGE PLANS

**Mumbai:** Aamir Khan has opened up about his relationship with Gauri Spratt, marking a rare moment of candour from the usually private actor. In a recent conversation, he confirmed that he has indeed found love again, saying, "Sure. I have." Reflecting on their bond, the *Dangal* star revealed, "Gauri and I are really serious about each other and we are in a very committed space. In my heart, I'm already married to her. Whether we formalise it or not is something we'll decide as we go along."

This marks Aamir's first public relationship since his 2021 divorce from filmmaker

Kiran Rao, with whom he shares a son, Azad. He was previously married to Reena Dutta, and has two children with her—Junaid Khan, who recently debuted as an actor, and Ira Khan, now married to fitness coach Nupur Shikhare.

On the film front, Aamir is busy soaring high on the success of his new film *Sitaare Zameen Par*. Also starring Genelia Deshmukh in the lead, the sports comedy drama is an official remake of the 2018 Spanish film *Champions*. It follows the story of Aamir as a basketball coach who is assigned to train a team of intellectually challenged players. Up next, he will begin work on a series of films based on the Hindu epic *Mahabharat*.

AGENCIES



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

## SOLUTIONS

### CROSSWORD

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

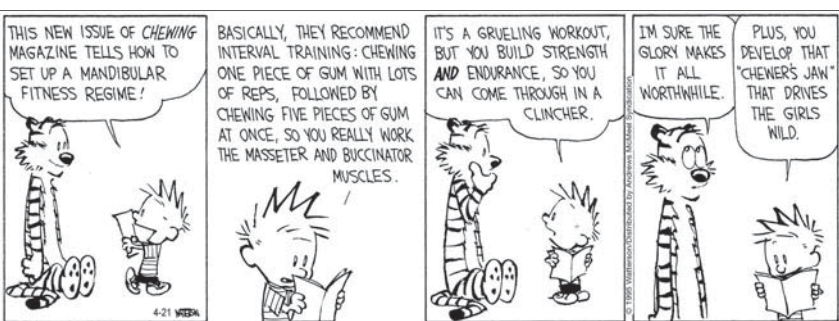
### SUDOKU

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

## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBS

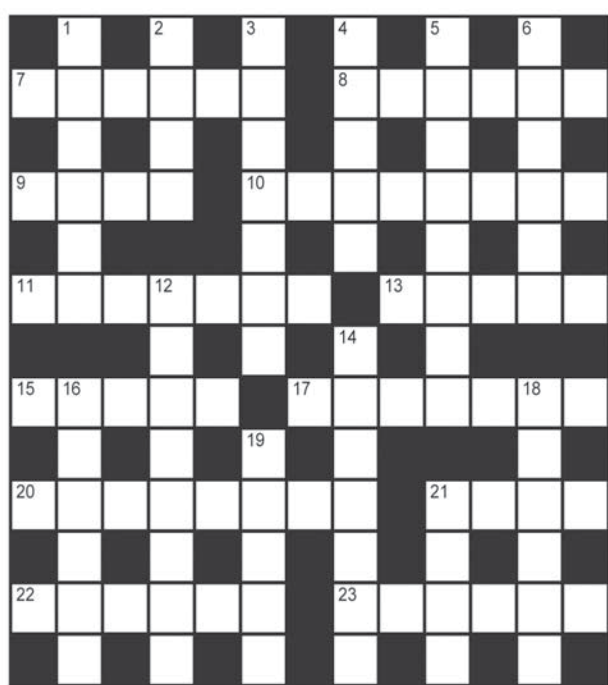


## BREVITY



## FUN post

## CROSSWORD



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### Across

- 7 Bordeaux wine
- 8 Earth colours
- 9 Opera set in Egypt
- 10 Fidgety
- 11 Strikes out
- 13 "Excuse me!"
- 15 Take a powder
- 17 Fate
- 20 Tame

### Down

- 21 Rewards for waiting
- 22 Muenster, e.g.
- 23 Nail polish
- 1 Mountainous
- 2 Marine menace
- 3 Narratives
- 4 Tilt for a knight
- 5 Relax (5,3)

### Across

- 6 It blows off steam
- 12 Looked at closely
- 14 Former name of Sulawesi
- 16 Trite remark
- 18 Campania port
- 19 Cat-like mammal
- 21 Streetcar

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



# Bharat Bandh: Trade unions flay labour codes



Members of Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) take out a rally against the Union government's policies on the eve of the proposed nationwide strike by over 25 crore workers from various sectors, in Kochi, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

Services including banking, insurance, postal, coal mining and others will be affected Wednesday as more than 25 crore workers are all set to participate in a nationwide agitation, opposing, what they say, the anti-worker, anti-farmer, and anti-national pro-corporate policies of the Union government aimed at weakening the collective bargaining power of trade unions. A forum of 10 central trade unions which is organising the 'Bharat Bandh' alleged that their 17-point charter of demands submitted to Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya last year was ignored by the government. Their key demands include filling up of sanctioned posts, creation of additional employment opportunities, withdrawal of the Union government's four labour codes, hike in both the number of workdays and remuneration for MGNREGA workers, and introduction of a similar legislation for urban areas. Speaking to **Orissa POST** correspondent **Manoj Kumar Jena**, several trade union leaders shared their views on the bandh



All India United Trade Union Centre (AIUTUC) state secretary **Jayasen Meher** said, "After coming to power, the BJP has been trying to take away the rights of the trade unions and the workers. This government has scrapped 29 out of 51 labour laws to favour capitalists. We want the government to withdraw the four labour codes."

**Mahendra Parida**, state general secretary of All India Central Council of Trade Unions (AICCTU), said, "10 central trade unions have



united against the government to fulfil their 17-point charter of demands and oppose the labour codes. Besides, we also demand increase in minimum wage of labourers and ensure proper job security for workers. The government should also stop privatisation of national properties."

State president and national vice president of Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), **Ramach-**

**andra Khuntia**, said, "Many labour union federations, including those in banking and farm sectors, will participate in this protest to pitch for withdrawal of four labour codes. The government is forcing us to hit the streets as it has been ignoring our demands for the last two years. We demand implementation of old pension scheme. We also demand regularisation of the services of contractual workers."

**Parilata Mohapatra**, state secretary-cum-district coordi-



nator of Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), said, "If the four labour codes are implemented, it will take a heavy toll on women workers. If a woman is working in an unorganised sector, she has no official identity. As per the labour codes, maternity leave is applicable only if more than 20 labourers are working in the organisation concerned. A casual worker will be deprived of maternity leave benefit and there should be wage parity as well."

AITUC state general secretary **Bijaya Kumar Jena** said, "The four labour codes of the Union government will benefit the owners/capitalists and affect the labourers from various sectors. The government should immediately withdraw this law and fulfil all our



demands."

Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS) state general secretary **Pravat Tripathy** said, "The govern-



ment is trying to snatch away the rights of labourers through the four labour codes. To oppose this, the labourers have united for a nationwide protest. We demand the minimum monthly wage be fixed at Rs 26,000, as per the country's price index.

We believe that the Central government will withdraw the four labour codes after our protest."

Trade Union Coordination Centre's (TUCC) state president **Jyoti Ranjan Mohapatra** said, "This (strike) is also an attempt to protect the rights of common man. The Central government could have averted this nationwide agitation by holding discussions with us. Howev-



er, it is yet to respond. Around 2 crore workers from Odisha will take part in this protest. We oppose the 12-hour-a-day work as per the new labour law. We demand the government to protect the rights of its citizens."

Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) state president **Janardan Pati** said, "This is for the 23rd time that Indian labour force is going to participate in a nationwide strike. The BJP government continues to attack on the working class by eliminating 15 out of 44 labour laws. The rest they have categorised into labour code which will heavily impact the working class. The government is focused on privatisation which we condemn."

CPI(M) state secretary **Suresh Chandra Panigrahi** said, "All sections of the soci-



ety are opposing this labour law which will eventually have a negative impact on the economy. Instead of focusing on the betterment of the working class, the government is serving crony capitalists."

**Yudhisthir Mahapatra**, state secretary of CPI (ML) Liberation, said, "We are supporting this strike because the new labour code is an attack on the common man. Jobs are being snatched away and national properties (PSEs) are being sold out to corporate houses. After BJP came to power, farmers are going through untold miseries while the working class is on the

receiving end. We oppose this law and want this scrapped."

**Ashis Kanungo**, state secretary of Communist Party of India (CPI), said, "This protest is in favour of the people and labourers. The new law will assure a clean chit for the companies which are firing workers for no reasons. The previous labour law was beneficial for the employees but the government now wants to snatch it away. Due to privatisation, the corporate houses are calling the shots. This needs to be stopped."

Joint secretary of All India Insurance Employees' Union, Jharsuguda, **Ratnakar Pradhan** said, "We vehemently oppose the Union government's decision to allow 100 per cent FDI in insurance sector. We also oppose the amendment to the Labour Law and imposition of 18% GST on

insurance premiums. All the financial institutions, shops and business establishments in Jharsuguda will remain shut Wednesday."

However, in a statement issued on the eve of the strike, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh-affiliated Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), the largest trade union in the country, announced it would not participate in the agitation, alleging the action was politically inspired. Of the four labour codes, the BMS welcomed the Code on Wages, 2019, and the Code on Social Security, 2020, noting that the latter provided for the social security of platform and gig workers for the first time.



## State celebrates 'Rasagola Dibasa' as sibling deities return to Srimandir



PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 8:** Odisha celebrated 'Rasagola Dibasa' Tuesday, marking the return of the sibling deities – Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath – to their abode in the 12th-century shrine in Puri after the annual Rath Yatra.

'Rasagola Dibasa' is celebrated on 'Niladri Bijē', the ritual of the deities' return to Srimandir as they are ceremonially offered the sweet on this day.

Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Leader of the Opposition Naveen Patnaik greeted the people on the occasion.

"On the occasion of Niladri Bijē and Rasagola Dibasa, heartfelt greetings to all devotees and residents of Odisha. Niladri Bijē and Rasagola Dibasa are a vibrant reflection of Odia culture, devotion, and pride. May everyone receive the blessings of the Lord on this sacred tradition. Jai Jagannath," the Odisha Governor said.

'Niladri Bijē' is being celebrated as 'Rasagola Dibasa' since 2015.

"In the early days, the sweet was known as 'Khira Mohan' in the temple. It is the same as rasagola," said researcher Asit Mohanty, who was instrumental in collecting evidence tracing rasagola's origin to the Puri temple.

"Our rasagola is totally different from that of Bengal. Bengal's rasagola came into existence in 1868, while the sweet originated here over 500 years ago. There is mention of rasagola in the Dani Ramayan written by Balaram Das," he asserted.

Maintaining that for centuries devotees have offered rasagola to Lord Jagannath on 'Niladri Bijē', Mohanty said there should be no debate on its origin. "Let Bengal enjoy its rasagola and we ours," he said.

People across the state exchange rasagola to celebrate the day, with sweet shops doing brisk business.

A special function was organised at Pahala, a village along the highway between Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, where a slew of sweet shops specialising in rasagola are located.

### Action likely against unruly servitors

The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration has urged the police to take legal action against servitors who violated orders by carrying mobile phones onto the chariots during the Rath Yatra. The OSD for security filed a formal complaint at the Singhadwar police station Tuesday stating that several servitors were seen using mobile phones on the chariots in clear violation of the directive.

Two-year commemoration of the  
**125<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of**  
a great nationalist thinker dedicated to  
India's progress & unity and true son of Mother India

**Bharat Kesari**  
**Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee**

6<sup>th</sup> July 2025 to 6<sup>th</sup> July 2027

"Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee's invaluable contribution to nation building will always be remembered with reverence."

-Narendra Modi  
Prime Minister

**Chief Guest**

**Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat**  
Hon'ble Minister of Culture & Tourism,  
Government of India

**9<sup>th</sup> July 2025 | 4:00 PM**  
**Venue: Siri Fort Auditorium, August Kranti Marg, Delhi**

**Program highlights**

Exhibition on the inspiring life, legacy & principles of Dr. Mookerjee

Special commemorative Stamp release

Special commemorative Coin release

**In the august presence**

**Dr. Jitender Singh**  
Hon'ble Minister of State (IC) of the Ministry of Science & Technology; Ministry of Earth Sciences; Minister of State in PM's Office; Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions; Department of Atomic Energy; and Dept. Of Space Government of India



GREENER CITIES, HEALTHIER LIVES

# Govt launches rooftop gardening campaign

Deputy Chief Minister and Agriculture Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo launches innovative campaign to boost urban green spaces and sustainable gardening practices

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 8:** Deputy Chief Minister and Agriculture Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo Tuesday highlighted the rapid urban growth in Odisha, noting that rising concrete constructions are reducing green spaces in cities.

At Krushi Bhavan, he flagged off a campaign vehicle to promote rooftop gardening across five major cities—Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Sambalpur, Berhampur, and Jeypore.

“The initiative aims to encourage greenery by educating and training residents and institutions in innovative rooftop and home gardening techniques,” Sing Deo said.

“Through this novel effort the government is encouraging greenery through rooftop and home gardening by educating and training the city dwellers in residential and institutional buildings by promoting innovative technologies for rooftop and home gardening,” he said.

The initiative is being carried out by the Central Horticultural Experiment Station



◀ **Initiative focuses on educating residents and institutions to promote greenery amid urban growth**

**Aims to reduce concrete landscapes and enhance green spaces in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Sambalpur, Berhampur, and Jeypore**

**◀ Project seeks to combat urban heat and improve livability through eco-friendly horticultural practices**

(ICAR-IIHR), Bhubaneswar, under the State Plan Scheme – Innovative Projects for Promotion of Urban Horticulture.

Funded by the department of Agriculture and Farmers’ Empowerment, the project aims to reduce the urban heat island effect and improve city livability. It focuses on innovative technologies for rooftop gardening, as well as peri-urban and urban horticulture.

The campaign vehicle is equipped with audio-visual materials in Odia and English, technical exhibits, and interactive kiosks to engage the public directly.

Over the next month, it will

travel across key areas of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, reaching residential colonies, educational institutions, RWAs, and community organisations.

Future plans include expanding the campaign to more cities, organising community engagement events, expert sessions, and launching an annual rooftop gardening competition to boost citizen participation.

Agriculture and Food Production director Subham Saxena, additional secretary Shubhbranshu Mishra and other senior officials of the department attended the launch event.

## BJEM School honours Class X, XII toppers

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 8:** Buxi Jagabandhu English Medium (BJEM) School held its 2025 felicitation ceremony at Bhanja Kala Mandap here Tuesday to honour students scoring over 90 per cent in the CBSE Class X and Class XII board exams (2024-25).

A total of 105 students—88 from Class X and 17 from Class XII—were felicitated with mementos and certificates for their academic excellence.

Class X student Somesh Pradhan emerged as the Odisha state topper, scoring an impressive 498 out of 500 marks (99.6 per cent). He was followed by Suniyachand Samal, who secured 98.6 per cent. In Class XII, Priyanshu Nanda scored 90 per cent in the Science stream, while Aditi Mohanty achieved 95 per cent in Commerce.



Former Regional Director of Education, Kamala Prasad Mahapatra, graced the occasion as the chief guest and lauded the students’ achievements. “Your success is a testament to your discipline and determination. You’ve made your school and parents proud,” he said.

Principal Sandhya Jena congratulated the students saying, “This is not just your success, but also the school’s pride. Don’t forget the contributions of your teachers and parents. Remember, failure and success come and go, but the courage to continue defines who you are.”

## Stewart School marks 65th Foundation Day

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 8:** Stewart School, Bhubaneswar marked its 65th Foundation Day with a vibrant Sapphire Jubilee celebration, commemorating over six decades of commitment to quality education and holistic development.

Students of Classes X and XII who scored above 90 per cent in the ICSE and ISC 2024-25 exams were felicitated with cash prizes for their academic achievements. Anup Kumar Samantary, Pro Vice-Chancellor of SOA University, graced the occasion as chief guest. Congratulating the institution and students, he said, “Sixty-five years of shaping young minds is a remarkable achievement. I wish the school continued growth and success.”

## OIC hosts law interns for RTI training

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 8:** The Odisha Information Commission (OIC) is providing valuable internship opportunities for law students, enabling them to gain practical knowledge of the Right to Information (RTI) Act. As part of the programme, students attend hearings and observe how cases are disposed of under the Act, offering firsthand insight into legal procedures and governance transparency.

Recently, 39 students from various institutions—including Fakir Mohan University, Balasore; University Law College (Utkal University), Bhu-



baneswar; Siksha ‘O’ Anusandhan University, Bhubaneswar; and Madhusudan Law University, Cuttack—participated in the initiative and received certificates upon completion.

State Chief Information Commissioner Manoj Parida stated that the internship helps students understand different

provisions of the RTI Act and witness its real-time application in the hearing process.

He expressed confidence that such exposure would empower students to promote public awareness on citizens’ rights to access information and contribute to strengthening transparency in governance.

## CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Shaikh Sarwar Alam, S/o. Sheikh Yousuf, At/ PO - Lataharan, Dist.- Puri-752119 declare by this Affidavit No.-36961, Dated 07.07.2025 that now onwards I shall be known as Sheikh Sarwar Alam for all future purposes.

By virtue of an affidavit No.15AA232130 sworn before Notary Public, Bhubaneswar, dated- 05.07.2025, I, Bhanupratap Sahoo Kundibag, Bhadrak Bypass, Bhadrak, Odisha, PIN-756181 declare that I have changed my name from Bhanu Pratap Sahu to Bhanupratap Sahoo. Henceforth, I shall be known as Bhanupratap Sahoo for all purposes. Bhanupratap Sahoo

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, July 8:** “Everyone should work together. ‘Impossible’ is not in our vocabulary—everything is possible. The party will firmly support the government led by Mohan Charan Majhi,” said Odisha BJP president Manmohan Samal, Tuesday.

He made the statement while addressing party workers and leaders during a grand felicitation held in his honour following his reappointment as state president for a fourth term.

Samal reflected on the BJP’s journey in Odisha, noting that a party once dismissed as a ‘sign-board’ by opponents has now, after years of struggle, formed a government on its own in the state.

He further stated that the BJP government will continue its journey through 2036, when Odisha marks 100 years of its formation, and 2047, the centenary of India’s Independence. “To achieve this vision, we must work with unity and team spirit,” he added.

Samal’s reappointment was announced by BJP central election observer Sanjay Jaiswal in the presence of senior party leaders at the state headquarters. Jaiswal informed that Samal was the sole nominee



for the post and was therefore elected unopposed.

This will be Samal’s second consecutive term and his fourth overall. His previous terms were from November 1999 to October 2000, October 2000 to May 2004, and March 2023 to July 2025.

CM Mohan Charan Majhi welcomed Samal and described him as ‘lucky’ for BJP. “When Samal was president of BJP in 2000, the party formed government, though in coalition with BJD. Later when Samal took charge during the 2024 elections, the BJP formed its maiden government alone. Therefore, Samal is lucky for the BJP,” Majhi said.

The CM said he is a four-time MLA and Samal is a four-time

BJP state president. “The power of this combine can defeat any force,” Majhi said

“The BJP is in power for 11 years at the Centre and one year in the state. Taking them together, it is 12. But it will reach 112 in the future. The party and the government are two sides of one coin,” the CM said. Puri MP Sambit Patra said, “The government has 3 Ms - Manmohan, Mohan and Modi - at the helm.”

Born April 15, 1959, in Bhadrak district, Samal belongs to the OBC community, which constitutes more than 50 per cent of the state’s population.

He joined politics as a student and was elected the students’ union president of Bhadrak

# Guv, CM condole demise of Rly Min Vaishnaw’s father

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, July 8:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati Tuesday condoled the demise of Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw’s father Daulal Vaishnaw.

He passed away at 11:52am at AIIMS-Jodhpur after remaining critically ill for the past few days.

“I am deeply saddened and heartbroken to hear about the passing of the revered father of Honourable Union Railway Minister Shri @AshwiniVaishnaw, Shri Daulal Vaishnaw. I pray that Lord Jagannath grants peace to the departed soul and provides strength to Ashwini ji and his family to bear this sorrow,” Majhi said in a post on X.

The Governor said, “May the departed soul attain Sadgati, and I pray to Mahaprabhu Jagannath to grant strength to the bereaved fam-



Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw arrives for the last rites of his father Daulal Vaishnaw, in Jodhpur, tuesday

ily to bear this loss.”

Leader of the Opposition Naveen Patnaik also expressed his condolences.

“My thoughts and prayers

are with the bereaved family members and friends during this hour of grief,” he said.

Vaishnaw is a Rajya Sabha MP from Odisha.

## KIMS Prof Sambit Das joins SAFES

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 8:** In a proud moment for Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS), Dr Sambit Das, Professor and head of the department of Endocrinology, has been nominated as an Executive Council Member of the South Asian Federation of Endocrine Societies (SAFES).

Das is one of three distinguished endocrinologists from India elected to this prestigious position, representing India on this prominent regional and global platform.

KIIT, KISS and KIMS founder Achyuta Samanta congratulated Das for his nomination to the



prestigious body.

An alumnus of the prestigious PGIMER, Chandigarh, Dr Das also serves as the national vice president of the Endocrine Society of India, and holds key positions in the state chapters of RSSDI and AIAARO. He is a member of the national task force of ESI for formulating guidelines on the management of obesity. Dr Das is an avid cli-

nician, dedicated teacher, and accomplished researcher. Recently he has also been awarded “Endocrine luminary clinical and academic excellence from Governor on the eve of Doctors’ Day. His passion for endocrinology continues to bring recognition and pride to the institution and the state.

Notably, SAFES is one of the largest and most vibrant endocrine bodies in Asia, comprising endocrine societies of many Asian countries, including India. The federation is committed to collaborative research, advancing patient care, developing regional clinical guidelines, and addressing the unique challenges of endocrine disorders in the South Asian region.

## NATIONAL FISH FARMERS' DAY JULY 10

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 8:** The Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying (MoFAHD) will observe National Fish Farmers’ Day July 10 at the ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA) campus here in Kausalyaganga.

## MoFAHD to organise event

The event will highlight India’s significant strides in fisheries and aquaculture, reaffirming the government’s commitment to the ‘Blue Revolution’.

In the run-up to the event, ICAR-CIFA, NFDB and MoFAHD officials have been working meticulously to ensure a successful gathering of over 1,500 stakeholders, including

fish farmers, entrepreneurs, women fisher groups, and policymakers.

The celebration will feature an exhibition with stalls from Fish Farmer Producer Organisations (FFPOs), fisheries start-ups, and community groups, demonstrating innovative and sustainable aquaculture practices.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	85.75 <span>▲</span> 0.22	SENSEX	83712.51 <span>▲</span> 270.01	GOLD	₹96,220 <span>▲</span> ₹105
EURO	100.73 <span>▲</span> 0.17	NIFTY	25522.50 <span>▲</span> 61.20	SILVER	₹107,369 <span>▲</span> ₹952

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	30.8°	28.28°	Cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain/thundershower . 
Min Temp	25.6°	23.5°	
Humidity	79%	89%	
Rainfall	0.2mm	28.2mm	

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The dramatic rescue and her survival against the odds have generated intense discussion in the area, with many calling it a clear example of divine intervention. Locals are now hailing Ahalya's resilience and the swift action of Fire personnel that saved her life just in time.







# Marathi protest turns tense; MNS detained, min heckled

The march organised by the Raj Thackeray-led Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) and other pro-Marathi groups under the aegis of Marathi Ekikaran Samiti to counter a protest staged by traders recently against the slapping of a food stall owner by MNS workers July 1 for not speaking Marathi



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thane, July 8:** High drama unfolded in Mira Bhayandar area near Mumbai Tuesday as hundreds took part in a protest march led by the MNS and other groups to defend the Marathi 'asmita' (pride) amid rising political heat following the attack on a shopkeeper for refusal to speak Marathi.

The march witnessed detention of several activists by the police with leaders and workers of opposition Shiv Sena (UBT) and NCP (SP) also joining the protest. Shiv Sena minister Pratap Sarnaik was heckled and driven away by angry demonstrators as he visited the site to express solidarity.

The march organised by the Raj Thackeray-led Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) and other pro-Marathi groups under the aegis of Marathi Ekikaran Samiti to counter a protest staged by traders recently against the slapping of a food stall owner by MNS workers July 1 for not speaking Marathi.

A video of the assault had gone viral on social media,

following which traders in Bhayandar staged a protest, seeking action against the attackers. Seven MNS members were later detained.

Ahead of Tuesday's proposed rally, security had been stepped up in Mira Bhayandar in Thane district. The police had denied permission to the rally.

The day started with the police detaining local MNS leader Avinash Jadhav from his house in Thane at around 3.30 am.

A prohibitory order was issued against Jadhav by the police Monday, restraining him from entering Mira Bhayandar to participate in the rally. He was released later in the day. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis stepped in saying permission had been granted for the MNS rally, but the party insisted on a specific route which posed law and order challenges.

"There is no opposition to holding a rally. It was difficult to give permission for the sought route. Police requested them to change the route, but the organisers were adamant on a particular route," he said. Fadnavis said permission

was sought late Monday night for holding a gathering, which was also granted.

"But when it came to the rally, they were pushing for a particular route. If permission was given, there might have been a law and order situation. For last so many years, we all are holding rallies and these are always done after consultation with police," he added.

MNS leader Sandeep Deshpande slammed the government, saying "CM Fadnavis says he is ready to grant permission, but only if we change our rally route. That is nothing but a tactic to suppress our voice."

Minister of State for Home Yogesh Kadam said there was no discrimination between Marathi and non-Marathi communities when it comes to granting permission for rallies, but law and order cannot be compromised.

The state government is committed to ensure law and order is maintained during such protests, he said.

The protest march, which began from Balaji Corner in Mira Road shortly after 12 noon, concluded at Mira Road railway station around 2.30 pm. However, several protesters remained in the station area till Jadhav arrived at the spot around 4 pm.

After the dramatic scenes on the streets and apparent political intervention, the morchha passed through the original route proposed by the organisers.

The situation became tense when police started detaining protesters raising slogans for protecting the 'Marathi asmita' (pride). Some of them were picked up by the police while they were addressing the media.



Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai with Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Deputy Chief Ministers Ajit Pawar and Eknath Shinde during a ceremony held in his honour by the Maharashtra legislature, at Vidhan Bhavan, in Mumbai, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

## Shankh Air looks to expand regional connectivity in UP

The new airline will launch services from Lucknow to Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Ayodhya, Chitrakoot, Indore and Dehradun initially

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 8:** UP-based regional carrier, Shankh Air, which is awaiting its flying permit from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), plans to connect six destinations from the state capital to begin with.

The airline also said that it is planning to lease narrow-body Airbus A320 planes for its operations against turboprop planes being operated by the existing regional players in the country.

As it prepares for the launch in the next couple of months, Shankh Air chairman Shравan Kumar Vishwakarma recently called on the Union Civil Aviation Minister K Ram Mohan Naidu in New Delhi to discuss the upcoming carrier's roadmap and explore collaborative opportunities to support India's regional air connectivity goals under the UDAN scheme, the company said.

Shankh Air has applied for the flying permit and is awaiting approval from the DGCA, Vishwakarma said.

"As we prepare for launch, we are working closely with policymakers to ensure that our expansion plans are aligned with national aviation goals," Vishwakarma said on his meeting with the Union minister.

The new airline will launch



services from Lucknow to Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Ayodhya, Chitrakoot, Indore and Dehradun initially.

Shankh Air looks to connect underserved regions in Uttar Pradesh, supporting local businesses, tourism, and job creation while aligning with the government's priorities, he said.

"The expansion plans are focused on connecting underserved regions in Uttar Pradesh and beyond. With plans to introduce a modern efficient fleet and customer-first service, the airline is set to take off as a symbol of progress for Uttar Pradesh," Vishwakarma said.

## Gandhi-linked heritage sites in Wardha to be restored

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Wardha, July 8:** Three heritage structures associated with Mahatma Gandhi in Maharashtra's Wardha district are set for a makeover, with a museum, prayer hall and a complex for artisans on the premises, an official said.

As per a release issued by the Mahatma Gandhi Institute for Rural Industrialisation (MGIRI) Monday, the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) has granted in-principle approval for the revival plan, under which the Gandhi Smriti Bhavan, Kasturba Raso, and Wardha Haat will be restored by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), Delhi.

The plan also includes re-vamping of the institute's departments and laboratories, it said.

The Gandhi Smriti Bhavan, which once served as Mahat-



ma Gandhi's residence, will be transformed into a museum and prayer hall, and this will involve structural repairs, digitisation of valuable collections, and an interactive exhibition showcasing Gandhian ideologies. A dedicated meditation area will also be created, the release stated.

Under the plan, the original structure of Kasturba Raso, where meals were once prepared for the ashram communi-

ty and visitors, will be restored, while Wardha Haat, inaugurated in 1936 as a bustling marketplace, will be transformed into a complex for artisans.

This will involve rebuilding damaged sections, improving ventilation and lighting, and creating dedicated workspaces for rural artisans.

The MGIRI has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the IGNCA, a heritage institution under the

Ministry of Culture, for the project.

Mahatma Gandhi founded the All India Village Industries Association (AIVIA) on this land in Wardha December 14, 1934, donated by his close associate Seth Jammalalji Bajaj. Between 1934 and 1936, he lived at Maganwadi with his wife, Kasturba, and directed the development of AIVIA as a centre for research, production, training, and promotion of village industries.

As AIVIA expanded, the Jammalal Bajaj Central Research Institute (JBCRI) was established in 1955 under the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) to continue research and development.

Between 2001 and 2008, MGIRI was further developed through a joint effort by KVIC and IIT Delhi. MGIRI later became a national autonomous research institute under the Ministry of MSME.

## Spell out measures taken to prevent children deaths in Maharashtra: NCP (SP) to govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 8:** The NCP (SP) Tuesday expressed concern over the death of 12,000 children in Maharashtra between April 2024 and February 2025, and asked what steps were being taken by the state government to prevent further loss of the innocent young lives.

The Maharashtra government cannot simply acknowledge these deaths without providing a comprehensive explanation and demonstrating a robust plan of action to prevent such tragedies from recurring, NCP (SP) spokesperson Mahesh Tapase said in a statement.

"We urge the government to immediately release the age-wise break-up of these deaths and the underlying causes, enabling a proper analysis and targeted interventions to safe-



guard our children's future," he said.

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

The figure came up during the question hour when ten MLAs 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 recent admission by Public Health and Family Welfare Minister Prakash Abitkar regarding the death of more than 12,000 children in Maharashtra between April last year and February 2025 is deeply disturbing and a grave indictment of the current government's priorities," NCP (SP) spokesperson Mahesh Tapase said in a statement.

## UP to plant 12.5cr saplings under the MGNREGA scheme

THIS YEAR'S PLANTATION DRIVE WILL BE CARRIED OUT UNDER THE THEME 'EK PED MAA KE NAAM 2.0', BLENDING ECOLOGICAL RESPONSIBILITY WITH EMOTIONAL AND CULTURAL SENTIMENT BY ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO DEDICATE A TREE TO THEIR MOTHERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow, July 8:** The Uttar Pradesh government is set to plant more than 12.5 crore saplings in the state under the MGNREGA scheme following the directives of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

According to the state government, the aim is not only to enhance greenery but also to generate large-scale rural employment.

This year's plantation drive will be carried out under the theme 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam 2.0', blending ecological responsibility with emotional and cultural sentiment by encouraging people to dedicate a tree to their mothers, it said.

The highest 42 lakh saplings would be planted in Lakhimpur Kheri, followed by Sonbhadra and Hardoi.

A total of 1.89 lakh planta-

tion sites have been identified across the state, with plant species selected based on local climatic and geographical conditions. The initiative ensures that plantation efforts are sustainable and tailored to each location.

In a special move to promote nutrition and health, each beneficiary of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Rural) will receive two drumstick (Moringa) saplings, known for their medicinal and nutritional value. This effort aims to enhance nutritional security for rural families, the official statement said.

The success of the campaign will not be measured by plantation numbers alone, but by the survival and growth of the saplings. For this, arrangements for regular watering, tree guards, maintenance, and monitoring will be made under MGNREGA, the statement said.



As part of the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam 2.0' campaign, the state also plans to plant 37 crore saplings in a day July 9. The drive will be launched by Chief Minister Adityanath from Ayodhya and Azamgarh, the state government said.

To ensure its success, a record 52.43 crore saplings have been prepared across nurseries

and designated sites statewide.

On the directive of the chief minister, all cabinet ministers will lead plantation drives in their respective districts. Designated nodal officers have already arrived in their assigned districts to review and finalize arrangements in coordination with forest department officials.

During his visit to Ayodhya

THE HIGHEST 42 LAKH SAPPLINGS WOULD BE PLANTED IN LAKHIMPUR KHERI, FOLLOWED BY SONBHADRA AND HARDOI

and Azamgarh, Adityanath will engage in public dialogue and distribute cheques to seven farmers under the carbon credit initiative.

Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel will lead the event in Barabanki, Deputy CM Keshav Prasad Maurya in Meerut, and another Deputy CM Brajesh Pathak in Lucknow.

Additionally, all cabinet ministers, ministers of state (independent charge), and ministers of state will participate in the

campaign by planting saplings in their respective districts under the theme 'Ek Ped Maa ke Naam'.

Every sapling and plantation site will be geo-tagged for the first time for real-time monitoring of each tree's growth, health, and location with the support of the Forest Department and other institutional partners.

To ensure the long-term survival of the saplings, the campaign will also deploy T-guards and other modern protective tools aimed at increasing sapling longevity and shielding them from environmental threats.

A Forest Department official explained that geo-tagging will create a digital record making it easier to track the condition of the plants and take timely action for their care and protection. It will increase transparency and accountability in the campaign.

## Senior UP govt official orders ban on outsiders in kanwariya camps

**MEERUT:** A senior Uttar Pradesh government official Tuesday directed authorities to ensure that no outsiders are allowed to enter camps set up for kanwariyas. Chairing a high-level meeting here, Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Singh said the safe and smooth completion of the Kanwar Yatra is the government's top priority. "Ensure that no outsider enters the camps (meant for kanwariyas). Also, a strict ban on single-use plastic should be enforced," Singh said. Kanwariyas must get access to basic facilities such as drinking water, food, and cleanliness, he said. He directed the Public Works Department and NHAI officials to repair roads along the Kanwar Yatra route. Directives were also given to the Power Department to cover electric poles with polythene and place barricades around transformers to prevent accidents. The Food Department was asked to inspect the quality of food at eateries and dhabas so that incidents of food poisoning do not occur. He said DJ setups must not exceed the prescribed height limit and obscene songs should not be played.



of the day **note**

I am shocked and deeply disturbed to learn that the Foreigners Tribunal in Assam has issued an NRC notice to Uttam Kumar Brajabasi, a Rajbanshi, resident of Dinhata in Cooch Behar for over 50 years. Despite furnishing valid identity documents, he is being harassed on suspicion of being a 'foreigner/illegal migrant'

**NAMATA BANERJEE** | WB CHIEF MINISTER

The existing Public Works Department guidelines allocate such works to labour cooperative societies, educated unemployed engineers, and eligible registered contractors

**DEVENDRA FADNAVIS** | MAHA CHIEF MINISTER

A newspaper has carried this news on the front page. The MLA says there have been three thefts at his home. When a newspaper puts it on the front page, you can imagine what the situation must be like for others in the state. No one is listening

**ASHOK GEHLOT** | FORMER RAJASTHAN CM

**SHORT TAKES**

**Four of Hyd family charred to death**

**Hyderabad:** Four members of a family—a couple and their two children—from Hyderabad have died in a car crash in Greene County, Alabama, in the United States, their relatives said here Tuesday. A truck speeding in the wrong direction hit their car Saturday night (local time) when the family was returning to Dallas after visiting one of their relatives in Atlanta, a relative told a TV channel.

**RG Kar case: Junior docs to rally today**

**Kolkata:** Junior doctors protesting the rape-murder of a woman doctor at Kolkata's state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital Tuesday said they would hold a night-long torch rally on the intervening night of August 8-9, marking one year of the gruesome incident. As part of the 'Abhyasa Memorial Programme', the rally will begin at College Square and proceed to Shyambazar More, said Aniket Mahata, a representative of the West Bengal Junior Doctors' Forum (WBJDF).

**DK Suresh appears before ED for 2nd time**

**Bangalore:** Former MP D K Suresh Tuesday appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for questioning in a money laundering case against a woman who is alleged to have cheated a number of people, official sources said. This is the second time Suresh, brother of Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, appeared before the ED officials in a span of a fortnight. Later, Suresh told reporters that during his previous questioning, the ED officials had inquired about his income and properties.

**Man held for repeated rape**

**Thane:** Police have arrested a 26-year-old man from Bhiwandi in Maharashtra's Thane district on the charge of raping a woman multiple times on the promise of marrying her, officials said Tuesday. The accused, Ashraf Afsar Chaudhary, was planning to flee to Dubai before being arrested, they said. The arrest was made a couple of days back based on the complaint filed July 2 by the 25-year-old woman from Kalyan, an official said Tuesday.



**The project is a recipe for ecological and humanitarian disaster. Why has the panel's report been submitted in a 'sealed cover'? Why this level of secrecy?**

**JAIRAM RAMESH** | CONGRESS LEADER

**KEY SUSPECT IN GOPAL KHEMKA MURDER KILLED IN GUNFIGHT**

A key suspect in the murder of industrialist Gopal Khemka was killed in a gunfight with the police in Patna's Damarla Ghat area in the early hours of Tuesday, officials said. Vikas alias Raja (29), the suspect, was wanted in several other criminal cases as well, they said



**PARLIAMENTARY PANEL MEETING**

**DGCA assures of mechanism to curb airfare surge**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 8:** Aviation regulator DGCA said Tuesday it will put in place a mechanism to curb whopping surge in air ticket prices, recently witnessed during the Maha Kumbh and post-Pahalgam terror attack, as the issue coupled with concerns over air safety after the Ahmedabad plane crash dominated proceedings at a parliamentary panel meeting. Air India CEO and MD Campbell Wilson told the committee his airline will complete retrofitting of its fleet in two years to address frequent complaints about its seats and other facilities, and underscored its commitment to flight safety, sources said.

An Air India Boeing 787 Dreamliner carrying over 240 people had crashed moments after taking off from the Ahmedabad airport on June 12, killing all but one person aboard in one of the worst aviation disasters that has brought the issue of air safety into sharp focus.

Some members of the Public Accounts Committee, led by Congress MP K C Venugopal, demanded an audit of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security, citing a spate of incidents concerning operational safety, and asked when the probe report in to the crash will be ready.

With the probe still going on, there was no detailed discussion on the Ahmedabad crash, and members confined themselves to broader concerns about safety. Venugopal told reporters after the meeting that the committee members were all worried about safety issues,

with NCP MP Praful Patel noting that several incidents following the crash were reported and that every passenger wants to feel safe about their journey.

Members grilled official agencies over what some of them described as an "arbitrary" surge in air ticket prices and cited a host of examples, including the manifold hike in fares for planes flying from Srinagar after the Pahalgam terror attack and during the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj, according to the sources. When an official said the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) will be talking to airlines to have a consensus on developing a mechanism against it, a BJP member shot back wondering if the unfair practice will continue for want of consensus while some other MPs added that the aviation regular has the remit to take action. The DGCA said it will be putting guidelines in place to curb any unreasonable surge in prices, the sources said.

Amid complaints of broken or uncomfortable seats in Air India planes and other issues of passenger convenience, an MP in the meeting recalled his recent visit abroad in the business class of the airline, highlighting his discomfort caused by the condition of the seat.

Air India CEO Wilson said his airline is working to address these concerns and will do an overhaul of its fleet in two years.

Some members demanded an overall safety audit of all flights in operation, with the DGCA asserting that it has kept passengers' well-being paramount.



A rickshaw puller carries passengers through a waterlogged street after rainfall in Kolkata, West Bengal

**Nitish govt announces 35% quota for women in govt jobs**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Patna, July 8:** The Bihar cabinet Tuesday decided that the 35 per cent quota for women in government jobs will now be restricted to only permanent residents of the state.

The decision was taken with barely a few months left before the state goes to the polls, amid growing demands for the implementation of a domicile policy in government jobs.

"The cabinet approved an important proposal of the General Administration Department, allowing the 35 per cent quota for women in government jobs to be restricted only for permanent residents of Bihar. The new policy will enhance financial independence and job security for permanent resident women of the state," Additional Chief Secretary (Cabinet Secretariat) S Siddhartha said.

The government had introduced 35 per cent reservation for women in government jobs at all levels in 2016. Earlier, women from any state could have taken advantage of it.

Ahead of the assembly elec-



tions, the demand for the implementation of a domicile policy has been growing. Leader of the Opposition Tejashwi Yadav has promised '100 per cent domicile' if his RJD comes to power following the polls.

Union minister Chirag Paswan, a BJP ally, also raised his voice for a domicile policy, but questioned the RJD's commitment to the issue. Last week, a large number of job aspirants demonstrated in the state capital, demanding the implementation of the domicile policy in government jobs.

Dilip Kumar, one of the leaders of the demonstration, welcomed the government's decision. "Now, the government must introduce a domicile pol-

icy to ensure 90 per cent representation of the state's youth in government jobs," he said.

Meanwhile, the Nitish government Tuesday decided to constitute the Bihar Youth Commission, with the aim of providing more employment opportunities for the youth of the state.

The proposal for the constitution of the commission was approved at a cabinet meeting, chaired by Kumar.

"I am happy to inform you that with an aim of providing more and more employment opportunities to the youths of Bihar, training them, and making them empowered and capable, the state government has decided to constitute Bihar Youth Commission," the CM said in a post on X.

"This commission will play a significant role in advising the government on all matters related to improving and uplifting the condition of youths in the society. It will also coordinate with government departments to ensure better education and employment for the youth," he said.

**India engaged in efforts to halt execution of Kerala nurse in Yemen**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 8:** India is engaged in efforts to prevent the execution of Nimisha Priya, an Indian nurse convicted in a murder case in Yemen whose death sentence is set to be carried out July 16, people familiar with the matter said Tuesday.

Priya, hailing from Kollengode in Kerala's Palakkad district, was found guilty of murdering a Yemeni man in July 2017. He was her business partner. In 2020, a Yemeni court handed her the death sentence, and the country's Supreme Judicial Council dismissed her appeal in November 2023. The 38-year-old nurse is presently lodged in a jail in Sana'a, the Yemeni capital city

that is under the control of Iran-backed Houthis. "We have been closely following the matter since then. We have been in regular touch with local authorities and her family members and rendered all possible assistance," said a government source. The people cited above said New Delhi is engaged in efforts to prevent the execution that has been scheduled for July 16. There are certain complications in the case as the Indian side has no formal contacts with the Houthi rebels. Priya's mother Premakumari travelled to Yemen last year as part of efforts to secure her release. The Indian side had even explored the option of securing Priya's release through "diyat" or paying "blood money". But that also ran into some problems, it is learnt.

**SNIPPETS**

**Puri defamation: HC refuses to accept TMC MP's apology**

**New Delhi:** The Delhi High Court Tuesday refused to accept the written apology of TMC MP Saket Gokhale in a case over his alleged defamatory utterances against former diplomat Lakshmi Murdeshwar Puri. A bench of Justices Navin Chawla and Renu Bhatnagar was dealing with Gokhale's appeal against a single judge's July 1, 2024 verdict restraining the TMC leader from publishing further on social media or any online platform against Puri. The single judge also directed him to apologise to her and pay ₹50 lakh in damages. The division bench said the contents of his affidavit couldn't be taken on record while asking Gokhale's counsel to withdraw the apology and file a fresh one.

**BMS not to participate in general strike today**

**New Delhi:** RSS-aligned Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) Tuesday said it will not participate in the nationwide general strike called July 9 by a forum of 10 central trade unions and their associate federations. According to a statement, the BMS has stated that certain trade unions have decided to go on strike Wednesday to protest against the government's plan to implement labour codes and it is not participating in this agitation. The BMS has stated that the government has given heed to its suggestion to make changes in labour codes and also ready for more such corrective steps in the interest of workers.

**Judicial custody for Kolkata law college gangrape accused**

**Kolkata:** A Kolkata court Tuesday remanded three persons, accused in the gang rape of a student in a law college here to judicial custody till July 22. The police prosecutors prayed that prime accused Monojit Mishra, an alumnus and temporary staffer of the college, and two current students Zaib Ahmed and Pramit Mukherjee, be remanded to judicial custody. The Alipore court, after hearing all the parties, granted the prayer. A security guard of the college, Pinaki Banerjee, who was also arrested in connection with the case, was also forwarded to judicial custody till July 22. It is alleged that the first-year student of South Calcutta Law College was raped inside the premises of the institute by Mishra, assisted by Ahmed and Mukherjee, on the evening of June 25.

**E-com, online payments abused for terror financing: FATF**

*The FATF in its update on TF risks also highlighted the methods used to raise, move, and manage funds and other assets for terrorist financing purposes and said online fund transfers using payment services platform offer less traceability and transparency compared to wire-transfer, making it harder to clearly identify initiators and recipients of transfers*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 8:** Global terror financing watchdog FATF Tuesday cited the February 2019 Pulwama terror attack, which killed 40 CRPF personnel, and the 2022 Gorakhnath Temple incident to say that e-commerce platforms and on-

line payment services are being misused for terror financing.

In its 'Comprehensive Update on Terrorist Financing Risks', the FATF also flagged 'state sponsorship of terrorism' and said a variety of publicly available sources of information and delegations' inputs to this report indicate that "certain



terrorist organisations have been and continue to receive

financial and other forms of support from several national governments".

"Delegations reported on this trend by referring to the use of state sponsorship for TF (terror financing) either as fundraising technique or as part of the financial management strategy of the certain organisations engaging in terrorist acts. Several forms of support have been reported, including direct financial support, logistical and material support, or the provision of training," the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) said.

In June, the FATF, while condemning the April 2025, Pahalgam terror attack, in which 26

people killed, and saying such attacks would not have been possible without financial support, had said it would come out with a "comprehensive analysis of terrorist financing", compiling cases provided by its global network consisting 200 jurisdictions.

Giving the case study of use of e-commerce platform for procurement of materials for terrorist attack in India, the FATF said a key component of the improvised explosive device used in the attack - aluminum powder - was procured through the EPOM Amazon. This material was used to enhance the impact of the blast.

In February 2019, a suicide

bombing targeted a convoy of Indian Security forces in Pulwama in Jammu & Kashmir, resulting in the deaths of 40 soldiers. India's authorities concluded that the attack was orchestrated by Jaish-I-Mohammed (JIM).

As a result of the investigation, 19 individuals were charged under relevant provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, including sections related to TF. Among those charged were seven foreign nationals, including the suicide bomber. LEAs also recovered moveable and immovable assets connected to the attack, such as vehicles and terrorist hideouts.



of the day

quote

These aren't isolated events - they mark a growing breakdown of public order, where criminal elements operate with bold impunity and law-abiding citizens are increasingly caught in the crossfire of violence



PARTAP SINGH BAJWA | LOP IN PUNJAB ASSEMBLY

All departments must treat the index as a foundational tool for policymaking and tracking outcomes. Departments should formulate actionable plans based on the index, prioritising women's empowerment in their respective areas. District-level strategies must be developed to localise the impact of state schemes



YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CM


The law will ensure that no person dares to indulge in sacrilege. Our work (on framing the legislation) is not finished yet. When the draft is completely ready, we will share



HARPAL SINGH CHEEMA | PUNJAB FINANCE MINISTER

XPOST

OF THE DAY



There is a difference between a dumb person and a wise person. A dumb person sees what things are "today". A wise person prepares for the "future". PS: I am not calling you dumb, I am just making a general point :) xxx

@Akshat\_World

SHORT TAKES

Lovers found dead at girl's home in Delhi

**New Delhi:** A 20-year-old man and a teenage girl, who were in a relationship, allegedly hanged themselves at the girl's residence in Delhi's Najafgarh, an official said Tuesday. The incident took place around 4 pm Sunday in the Nagli area of Dwarka's Najafgarh, he said. According to a senior police officer, the man and the girl (17) took the extreme step because their families disapproved of their relationship.

Indian Navy signs contract with BEL

**New Delhi:** The Indian Navy has signed a contract with a major defence PSU for the implementation of the National Maritime Domain Awareness (NMDA) Project towards strengthening maritime and coastal security, the defence ministry said Tuesday. The contract was signed in the presence of Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti, and Chairman and Managing Director, Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Bengaluru, Manoj Jain.

Ashwini Vaishnav's father passes away

**Jaipur:** Union minister Ashwini Vaishnav's father Daulal Vaishnav passed away at AIIMS Jodhpur Tuesday, hospital authorities said. Daulal Vaishnav, 82, had been critically ill for the past few days and was undergoing treatment at the hospital. "It is with profound sorrow that we inform you of the demise of Hon'ble Railway Minister's father, Shri Daulal Vaishnav, today 08 July 2025 at 11:52 am at AIIMS Jodhpur," the hospital said in an official statement.



The work to install 18,996 smart blackboards will be carried out in five phases. A teachers' training module to teach using the blackboards has also been passed in the meeting

ASHISH SOOD | DELHI EDU MINISTER

HAJ COMMITTEE OF INDIA OPENS APPLICATION PROCESS

The Haj Committee of India, under the Ministry of Minority Affairs, has officially started the application process for Haj 2026 and the online application window will remain open till July 31, 2025, an official statement said Tuesday



HIMACHAL RAINS

8 districts face flash flood risk



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Shimla/Nahan, July 8:** With heavy rain pummeling several parts of Himachal Pradesh, the local meteorological department Tuesday warned of a risk of flow to moderate flash floods in parts of eight districts in the next 24 hours.

These districts are Chamba, Kangra, Mandi, Kullu, Shimla, Solan, Sirmaur and Una.

Himachal Pradesh has received 203.2 mm of rain against the normal of 152.6 mm from June 1 to July 8.

The meteorological department also issued a 'yellow' alert warning of heavy rains at isolated places in seven districts of the state till next Monday.

The scheduled visit of Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu to the disaster-hit areas of Jangheli and Thunag in Seraj assembly segment, represented by Leader of Opposition Jai Ram Thakur, was cancelled Tuesday due to inclement weather.

A total of 198 roads, including 150 in the worst-hit Mandi district, are closed while 159 transformers and 297 water supply schemes are affected in the state, according to the State Emergency Operation

**Himachal Pradesh has received 203.2 mm of rain against the normal of 152.6 mm from June 1 to July 8**

Centre (SEOC).

Torrential rains in the Sirmaur for the past 24 hours have disrupted normal life, and Tons, Yamuna and Giri rivers are in spate. The district administration has warned people not to go close to the rivers, rivulets and Nullahs.

Nahan received 124.2 mm of rain in the past 24 hours.

According to the District Disaster Management Authority, three warnings of excess flood water release from the Jattaun Barrage in the main Giri River, which crosses the Paonta area to join Yamuna, were received from the Jattaun Barrage officials. The barrage is situated on the Giri River, near Dadahu in Sirmaur district.

A 50-metre stretch of Nahan-Kumarhatti National Highway (NH 907A) was badly damaged and a narrow passage is left for vehicular movement as floods in the main drain in

Cong slams govt, SEBI over inaction on Jane Street 'Illegal Profits'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 8:** The Congress Tuesday questioned market regulator SEBI and the government for failing to protect the interest of small investors and check outflow of "illegal profits" made by US algorithm trading firm Jane Street through stock market manipulation.

Addressing a press conference here, Congress' head of social media department Supriya Shrinate said Jane Street, which manipulated the Indian stock market through algorithms and made thousands of crores in illegal profits in the Futures and Options market has caused massive losses to ordinary retail investors, while regulator SEBI remained a silent spectator.

"Why was SEBI sleeping for all these 4.5 years when Jane Street was manipulating the direct equity market and the F&O market," she asked, alleging that instead of protecting small investors, SEBI turned a blind eye to "rampant fraudulent activities".

"Isn't it true that Jane Street transferred a massive amount out of India? The government and SEBI woke up only when FII outflow numbers skyrocketed. They didn't wake up to protect small investors but rather when foreign institutional investors withdrew large sums from India," she alleged.

Shrinate asked how much money has Jane Street repatriated in the last four and a half years, as its numbers from 2023 to 2025 are only known.

She claimed that Jane Street began operations in 2020 and Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has admitted that its profits are illegal.

"What will you do about the money repatriated to the United States? How will you retrieve it?"

She alleged that there are countless examples of institutions collapsing under the Modi government and SEBI instead of protecting small investors, turned a blind eye to "fraudulent activities".

"Why did SEBI ignore the red flags, and what were other agencies like the ED, CBI, Income Tax, and others doing?," the Congress leader asked.

"Did the Prime Minister and Home Minister know about this scam and market manipulation? Is it not true that Jane Street's repatriation of large sums was driving FII outflows, which is why the government woke up," Shrinate also asked.

She also claimed that Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi has repeatedly warned the government and market regulator SEBI to protect and ring-fence small investors in the volatile and highly risky Futures and Options Market.

TN: Three school students killed in van-train collision

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Cuddalore (Tamil Nadu), July 8:** Three school students were killed in this district Tuesday when the van they were travelling in collided with a passenger train, even as different versions of the tragic incident surfaced.

The gatekeeper posted at the level crossing in question has been suspended and arrested, Southern Railway, which apologised for the "unfortunate incident," said.

Around 7.45 am, the school van carrying the students attempted to cross the railway level crossing Gate No. 170 (a non-interlocked manned gate) between Cuddalore and Alappakkam, and was hit by Train No. 56813 Villupuram-Mayiladuthurai passenger, it added. Due to the impact, the van was flung a distance away from the level crossing. The loco pilot managed to stop the train after traversing some distance, police said.



People take rest under the shade of a tree on a hot and humid day in Srinagar

PTI PHOTO

Many of you can walk on moon: Shubhanshu to students

Shukla, who has now spent 12 days at the orbital laboratory, was interacting with students of seven schools from Meghalaya and Assam who gathered at the North East Space Applications Centre (NESAC) in Shillong for the rare opportunity to talk to an astronaut in orbit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 8:** "Many of you can become future astronauts, even walk on the Moon," Shubhanshu Shukla told a bunch of excited school students during an interaction through amateur radio from the International Space Station Tuesday.

Shukla, who has now spent 12 days at the orbital laboratory, was interacting with students of seven schools from Meghalaya and Assam who gathered at the North East Space Applications Centre (NESAC) in Shillong for the rare opportunity to talk to an astronaut in orbit.

The students had submitted

20 questions to Shukla, and he used a 10-minute window to connect with them via Ham radio to share his experiences on the ISS, training as an astronaut, and staying healthy while in space.

"I will be back, and I will guide you. Many of you will become future astronauts. Stay curious, work hard, and believe in yourself, someone from you could even walk on the Moon," Shukla said. He said life on-board the space station is not guided by sunlight, but by the clock set to Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

"We don't follow the Sun. On the ISS, we see 16 sunrises and sunsets every day because



we circle the Earth every 90 minutes. Our activities aren't guided by sunlight, but by GMT," Shukla said. He said the human body goes through a lot of changes in microgravity, and it was necessary for astronauts

to follow a regular exercise routine to stay healthy in orbit.

"We grow up in gravity on Earth, but here in space, there is none. The body goes through a lot of changes, and it takes some time to adapt. I experi-

enced some space sickness at first, but there are medications, and we adapt quickly," Shukla said.

"Microgravity causes muscle and bone loss. So we exercise every day using treadmills, cycles, and strength training machines. It's essential to stay fit for the mission and for our return to Earth."

Stressing the importance of physical and mental preparation, Shukla said astronauts train extensively in Russia, India, and other partner countries to handle every conceivable scenario, especially emergencies.

"Most of our training is about handling off-nominal

situations. Teamwork and a strong support system are crucial," he said.

"Robotics and AI are integral to our mission. We use robotic arms for many internal and external tasks, making our work safer and more efficient on the Space Station," Shukla said.

Students from Army Public School-Shillong, Alpha Higher Secondary School-Nongpoh, ARYA Vidyapith High School-Guwahati, The Christ Senior Secondary School-Umiam, PM SHRI Kendriya Vidyalaya-Barapani, The Army Public School-Umroi, and B K Bajoria School-Shillong had signed up for the event.



of the day

quote

An approach focused only on punitive measures, in our view, is unlikely to succeed. The United Nations and the broader international community have adopted more balanced and nuanced approaches in other post-conflict contexts

PARVATHANENI HARISH | INDIA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO UN



The United Kingdom is a strategic partner, an ally, a friend... Our bond is longstanding, forged by history and strengthened by trust

EMMANUEL MACRON | FRENCH PRESIDENT



I would like to clarify that any expression of mine, which may have been interpreted as a direct accusation about participation in a coup attempt in Colombia had no in intention of signaling anyone personally or questioning the role of the United States, without any proof

GUSTAVO PETRO | COLOMBIAN PRESIDENT



SHORT TAKES

18 missing as Nepal bridge washes away

**Kathmandu:** At least eighteen people were missing after a river flooded by monsoon rains Tuesday washed away the Friendship Bridge connecting Nepal with China. The continuous monsoon rainfall in China on Monday night triggered a flood in the Bhotekoshi River in Nepal. The Miteri Bridge in Rasuwa district, 120 km northeast of Kathmandu, was swept away by flooding at around 3:15 am Tuesday. Eighteen people, including six Chinese nationals, have gone missing, official sources said. According to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA), 11 people, including two police personnel, were rescued by the joint team of Nepal Army, Armed Police Force and Nepal Police. Arjun Paudel, chief district officer of Rasuwa, said the flood caused heavy damage. Authorities have advised residents downstream to move to safer areas. The flooding also swept away several houses and five electric vehicles imported from China. Meanwhile, police recovered two bodies from the Trishuli River in Gajuri Rural Municipality of Dhading district on Tuesday morning. Their identities could not be ascertained. Nepal Army's rescue team also rescued 23 labourers, including a Chinese national, who were stranded at Rasuwagadhi Hydropower project after the area was submerged due to flood triggered by heavy rain.

Iran: 1,060 killed in war with Israel

**Dubai:** Iran's government has issued a new death toll for its war with Israel, saying at least 1,060 people were killed and warning that the figure could rise. Saeed Ohadi, the head of Iran's Foundation of Martyrs and Veterans Affairs, gave the figure in an interview aired by Iranian state television late Monday. Ohadi warned the death toll may reach 1,100 given how severely some people were wounded. During the war, Iran downplayed the effects of Israel's 12-day bombardment of the country, which decimated its air defences, destroyed military sites and damaged its nuclear facilities. Since a ceasefire took hold, Iran slowly has been acknowledging the breadth of the destruction, though it still has not said how much military materiel it lost. The Washington-based Human Rights Activists group, which has provided detailed casualty figures from multiple rounds of unrest in Iran, has said 1,190 people were killed, including 436 civilians and 435 security force members.



Now, we've made a deal with the United Kingdom, we've made a deal with China...We're close to making a deal with India...Others we met with and we don't think we're going to be able to make a deal, so we just send them a letter. If you want to play ball, this is what you have to pay.

DONALD TRUMP | US PRESIDENT

THAILAND'S CABINET WITHDRAWS CASINO BILL

Thailand's Cabinet Tuesday withdrew a controversial bill that aims to legalise casinos after the Prime Minister was suspended last week over an ethics investigation.



US revokes terrorism designation of new Syrian leader's group

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Washington, July 8:** The Trump administration is revoking the terrorism designation of a group led by Syria's new president as part of a broader US engagement with the transitional government since the ouster of former leader Bashar Assad late last year.

In a statement released Monday, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the move, which will take effect Tuesday, "recognises the positive actions taken by the new Syrian government" under President Ahmad al-Sharaa.

Earlier Monday, the Federal Register published an advance notice, which said Rubio made the decision on June 23 in consultation with the attorney general and treasury secretary. The decision had not been previously announced, although it was made as the Trump administration has been moving to ease or end many US sanctions that had been imposed during Assad's rule.

The step looks to further end Syria's isolation since a lightning rebel offensive ousted the Assad family from decades of rule and give the new government a boost as it tries to rebuild a country shattered by 13 years of civil war.

President Donald Trump, before having dinner Monday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House, repeated that he previously had been told that Syria's new leader "comes from a very tough background."

"I said, Well, you know, I'm not that surprised. It's a tough part of the world," said Trump who met with al-Sharaa in Saudi Arabia in May. "But I was very impressed by him. But we took the sanctions off because we want to give them a chance."

The brief notice offered no details about the revocation of the foreign terrorist organisation designation for the al-Nusrah Front, also known as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham. Al-Nusrah was originally designated a foreign terrorist organisation for its previous affiliation with al-Qaida. In 2017, it split and changed its name to Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, which the first Trump administration added to the initial designation.

Syria has been improving relations with the United States and other Western countries following the fall of Assad in December in an offensive led by al-Sharaa's group. On June 30, seven days after Rubio signed the revocation, Trump inked an executive order ending many US economic sanctions on Syria, following through on a promise he made to al-Sharaa when they met.

"This FTO revocation is an important step in fulfilling President Trump's vision of a stable, unified, and peaceful Syria," Rubio said in his statement.

Trump says US will send more weapons to Ukraine

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Washington, July 8:** President Donald Trump said Monday the US will have to send more weapons to Ukraine, just days after ordering a pause in critical weapons deliveries to Kyiv.

The comments by Trump appeared to be an abrupt change in posture after the Pentagon announced last week that it would hold back delivering to Ukraine some air defence missiles, precision-guided artillery and other weapons because of what US officials said were concerns that stockpiles have declined too much.

"We have to," Trump said. "They have to be able to defend themselves. They're getting hit very hard now. We're going to send some more weapons — defensive weapons primarily."

The pause had come at a difficult moment for Ukraine, which has faced increasing — and more complex — air barrages from Russia during the more than three-year-long war. Russian attacks on Ukraine killed at least 11 civilians and injured more than 80 others, including seven children, officials said Monday.

The move last week to abruptly pause shipments of Patriot missiles, precision-guided GMLRS, Hellfire missiles and Howitzer rounds and weaponry took Ukrainian officials and other allies by surprise.



The Pentagon affirmed late Monday that at Trump's direction, it would resume weapons shipments to Ukraine "to ensure the Ukrainians can defend themselves while we work to secure a lasting peace and ensure the killing stops." Still, spokesman Sean Parnell added that its framework for Trump to evaluate military shipments worldwide continues as part of "America First" defence priorities.

Trump, speaking at the start of a dinner he was hosting for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House on Monday, vented his growing frustration with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Trump has struggled to find a resolution to the war in Ukraine but maintains he's de-

termined to quickly conclude a conflict that he had promised as candidate to end of Day One of his second term.

He has threatened, but held off on, imposing new sanctions against Russia's oil industry to try to prod Putin into peace talks.

Sen Lindsey Graham said last week that Trump has given him the go-ahead to push forward with a bill he's co-sponsoring that calls, in part, for a 500% tariff on goods imported from countries that continue to buy Russian oil. The move would have huge ramifications for China and India, two economic behemoths that buy Russian oil.

"I'm not happy with President Putin at all," Trump said Monday.

Impostor uses AI to impersonate Rubio

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Washington, July 8:** The State Department is warning US diplomats of attempts to impersonate Secretary of State Marco Rubio and possibly other officials using technology driven by artificial intelligence, according to two senior officials and a cable sent last week to all embassies and consulates.

The warning came after the department discovered that an impostor posing as Rubio had attempted to reach out to at least three foreign ministers, a US senator and a governor, according to the July 3 cable, which was first reported by The Washington Post.

The recipients of the scam messages, which were sent by text, Signal and voice mail, were not identified in the cable, a copy of which was shared with The Associated Press.

"The State Department is aware of this incident and is currently investigating the matter," it said. "The department takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard its information and continuously takes steps to improve the department's cybersecurity posture to prevent future incidents."

It declined to comment further due to "security reasons" and the ongoing investigation.

One of the officials said the hoaxes had been unsuccessful and "not very sophisticated". Nonetheless, the second official said the department deemed it "prudent" to advise all employees and foreign governments, particularly as efforts by foreign actors to compromise information security increase.

The officials were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Storms, fires hit Balkans following extreme heat

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Belgrade, July 8:** A severe hail storm ripped trees and roofs in Croatia Tuesday while hundreds of fires raged in neighbouring Serbia following a period of extremely hot weather in parts of the Balkan region.

A brief but powerful storm hit Croatia's Adriatic Sea port of Split during the morning Tuesday. High winds and hail damaged the roof of the city's soccer stadium and caused a ferry to slip its moorings at the port which then hit two other vessels, one of which sank.

At least three people were injured in the storm, and material damage across the city was huge. Photos carried by Croatian media showed downed trees and flooded streets.

The Index news portal said



that offices and the pitch itself at Split's Poljud stadium were damaged as well as the roof. The report quoted the Split meteorological service as saying that "such storms are usual after a long period of heat with extremely hot days."

Previously, Croatia and the rest of the Balkans experienced a heat wave with temperatures reaching 40 degrees Celsius and more. Meteorologists said the

storms prefigured cooler days ahead with temperatures set to drop to around 20 degrees Celsius in some areas.

The weather service in neighbouring Slovenia said on Tuesday that snow fell at high altitudes in the Alps while the rest of the country has been pounded with heavy rain and hail. In Serbia, firefighters battled more than 600 wild fires on Monday that injured six people.

Perils of unchecked tourism growth in Antarctica

The number of tourists heading to Antarctica has been skyrocketing. From fewer than 8,000 a year about three decades ago, nearly 125,000 tourists flocked to the icy continent in 2023–24. The trend is likely to continue in the long term.

Unchecked tourism growth in Antarctica risks undermining the very environment that draws visitors. This would be bad for operators and tourists. It would also be bad for Antarctica — and the planet.

Over the past two weeks, the nations that decide what human activities are permitted in Antarctica have convened in Italy. The meeting incorporates discussions by a special working group that aims to address tourism issues.

It's not easy to manage tourist visitors to a continent beyond any one country's control. So, how do we stop Antarctica being loved to death? The answer may lie in economics.

We recently modelled future visitor trends in Antarctica. A conservative scenario shows

by 2033–34, visitor numbers could reach around 285,000. Under the least conservative scenario, numbers could reach 450,000 — however, this figure incorporates pent-up demand from COVID shutdowns that will likely diminish.

The vast majority of the Antarctic tourism industry comprises cruise-ship tourism in the Antarctic Peninsula. A small percentage of visitors travel to the Ross Sea region and parts of the continent's interior.

Antarctic tourism is managed by an international set of agreements together known as the Antarctic Treaty System, as well as the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO).

The Treaty System is notoriously slow-moving and rivet by geopolitics, and IAATO does not have the power to cap visitor numbers.

About two-thirds of Antarctic tourists land on the continent. The visitors can threaten fragile ecosystems by: compacting soils; trampling fragile vegeta-



tion; introducing non-native microbes and plant species; disturbing breeding colonies of birds and seals.

Even when cruise ships don't dock, they can cause problems such as air, water and noise pollution — as well as anchoring that can damage the seabed.

Then there's carbon emissions. Each cruise ship traveller to Antarctica typically produces between 3.2 and 4.1 tonnes of carbon, not including travel to the port of departure. This is similar to the carbon emissions an average person

produces in a year.

Global warming caused by carbon emissions is damaging Antarctica. At the Peninsula region, glaciers and ice shelves are retreating and sea ice is shrinking, affecting wildlife and vegetation.

Of course, Antarctic tourism represents only a tiny fraction of overall emissions. However, the industry has a moral obligation to protect the place that maintains it. And tourism in Antarctica can compound damage from climate change, tipping delicate ecosystems

into decline.

Some operators use hybrid ships and less polluting fuels, and offset emissions to offer carbon-neutral travel. IAATO has pledged to halve emissions by 2050 — a positive step.

Market-based tools — such as taxes, cap-and-trade schemes and certification — have been used in environmental management around the world. Research shows these tools could also prevent Antarctic tourist numbers from getting out of control. One option is requiring visitors to pay a tourism tax. This would help raise revenue to support environmental monitoring and enforcement in Antarctica, as well as fund research.

Such a tax already exists in the small South Asian nation of Bhutan, where each tourist pays a tax of USD 100 a night. But while a tax might deter the budget-conscious, it probably wouldn't deter high income, experience-driven tourists.

Alternatively, a cap-and-trade system would create a limited number of Antarctica

visitor permits for a fixed period. The initial distribution of permits could be among tourism operators or countries, via negotiation, auction or lottery. Unused permits could then be sold, making them quite valuable.

Caps have been successful at managing tourism impacts elsewhere, such as Lord Howe Island, although there are no trades allowed in that system.

Any cap on tourist numbers in Antarctica, and rules for trading, must be based on evidence about what the environment can handle. But there is a lack of precise data on Antarctica's carrying capacity. And permit allocations amongst the operators and nations would need to be fair and inclusive.

Alternatively, existing industry standards could be augmented with independent schemes certifying particular practices — for example, reducing carbon footprints. This could be backed by robust monitoring and enforcement to avoid greenwashing.



of the day

quote

The Regional Committee Meeting in Colombo from 15-17 July is an opportunity to develop practical, investment-ready solutions with the potential to scale across countries and technologies

ASHISH KHANNA | DIRECTOR GENERAL, ISA

Since June, the dollar has weakened, increasing the appeal of gold to customers. Long-term demand has also been sustained by central bank purchases, particularly from developing nations like China and India

TEJAS SHIGREKAR | SENIOR TECHNICAL ANALYST, ANGEL ONE

Now, Trump is escalating the pressure. July 7, he signed formal letters to 14 countries, outlining the tariffs they will face from August 1 if they fail to conclude a deal

AIYAT SRIVASTAVA | FOUNDER, GTRI

SHORT TAKES

EV sales up

**Mumbai:** Electric vehicle (EV) sales in India rose 28.60 per cent to 1,80,238 units in June over the period year-ago, driven by massive jump in e-passenger vehicle volumes, Federation of Automobile Dealers' Association (FADA) said in a statement Tuesday. Electric passenger vehicle sales, as per FADA data, stood at 13,178 units in the previous month compared to 7,323 e-PVs in June 2024, registering a sharp increase of 79.95 per cent year-on-year. The e-passenger vehicles' share in the overall electric vehicle market shot up to 4.4 per cent in June 2025 from 2.5 per cent in June 2024, it said. Electric three-wheeler volumes during the month under review were recorded at 60,559 units, up 15.79 per cent from 52,302 units in the same month last year. The e-three-wheeler segment, as per FADA data, rose to 60.2 per cent in the total EVs demand in June 2025 against 55.4 per cent in the period a year earlier.

Tata Motors sales dip

**New Delhi:** Tata Motors Tuesday reported a 9 per cent dip in total global sales to 2,99,664 units in the June quarter. The company had sold 3,29,847 units in the April-June quarter of FY25. Global wholesales of passenger vehicles were lower by 10 per cent year-on-year at 1,24,809 units in the first quarter, Tata Motors said in a statement. Jaguar Land Rover dispatches stood at 87,286 units in the April-June quarter, a drop of 11 per cent over the same period last fiscal. Global wholesale of all Tata Motors commercial vehicles and the Tata Daewoo range in Q1 FY26 were 87,569 units, a decline of 6 per cent over Q1 of FY25. Shares of Tata Motors Tuesday ended 0.64 per cent up at ₹693.25 apiece on BSE.

Titan sees growth

**New Delhi:** Tata group's jewellery and watchmaking brand Titan has reported a 20 per cent growth in its standalone revenue in the June quarter of FY26, according to the latest quarterly updates by the company. Its jewellery division, which contributes over 80 per cent of its revenue, reported an 18 per cent growth on a year-on-year basis. Out of the total proceeds from the fresh issue of shares, the company will use ₹226 crore for capital expenditure related to the fit-outs in new centres and security deposits for these new centres. It will utilise ₹114 crore for payment of loans, and the remaining funds will be used for general corporate purposes.

India and Australia are talking about rare earth and there are blocks available. So there is an opportunity for India to take an early-stage block and have tie-ups with a few companies

MALINI DUTT | COMMISSIONER (TRADE), NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT

360 ONE GROUP GETS CCI NOD

Fair trade regulator CCI Tuesday approved 360 ONE group's proposal to acquire certain businesses of Switzerland-based multinational investment bank UBS AG. Credit Suisse Securities (India) is a step-down wholly-owned subsidiary of UBS AG. CCI said it has also cleared a loan portfolio which forms part of lending and financing business of UBS Finance India Pvt Ltd, undertaken as a systematically important non-deposit taking non-banking financial company by 360 ONE Prime Ltd

LPG import from US

India had rarely bought US LPG in the past due to higher freight costs, but state retailers began buying US LPG in May after China imposed retaliatory import tariffs on US propane

REUTERS

**New Delhi, July 8:** India plans to source about 10 per cent of its cooking gas imports from US beginning in 2026 as part of a broader effort to boost energy purchases to narrow its trade gap with Washington, four industry refining sources familiar with the matter said. The world's third biggest oil importer and consumer relies heavily on Middle Eastern producers of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), with more than 90 per cent of its roughly 20.5 million metric tons of imports in 2024 coming from the region. LPG is a mix of propane and



butane used for cooking fuel and is mainly imported by state retailers Indian Oil Corp, Bharat Petroleum Corp and Hindustan Petroleum Corp and sold at a subsidised price to households. India had rarely bought US LPG in the past due to higher freight costs, but state retailers began buying US LPG in May after China imposed retaliatory import tariffs on US propane. India plans to eliminate import tax on US propane and butane used for making LPG, sources previously told Reuters. India has pledged to increase US energy purchases by \$10 billion to \$25 billion in the near future and the two nations in

dle East, typically purchased on a free-on-board (FOB) basis. Chinese import tariffs on US propane, currently at 10 per cent, have opened up arbitrage opportunities for Indian buyers, further incentivising a shift toward US cargoes, a second source said. "We would prefer to import from US on a delivered basis to mitigate freight risks — similar to how we already buy US crude," he said. Indian state refiners are seeing annual LPG demand growth of about five to six per cent, with total imports projected to rise to 22 million tonnes to 23 million tonnes by 2026, two of the sources said. India's oil ministry and the three state fuel retailers did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Pricing will be key to determining the exact volume of US LPG imports, a third industry source said. The International Energy Agency expects India's LPG demand to grow at an average of 2.5 per cent between 2024 and 2030, reaching 1.2 million barrels per day, or roughly 37.7 million tonnes.

JANE STREET TO CONTEST SEBI



REUTERS

**Bangalore, July 8:** Jane Street has told staff it will contest a ban by India's financial regulator which has accused US high-frequency trading giant of market manipulation, adding that its practices in question were "basic index arbitrage trading". Jane Street said it was "beyond disappointed" by what it called "extremely inflammatory" accusations from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and is working on a formal response, according to an internal email sent to employees. SEBI Friday barred the firm from buying and selling securities in the Indian market and seized \$567 million of its funds. It alleged that Jane Street bought large quantities of constituents in India's Bank Nifty index in the cash and futures markets to artificially support the index in morning trade, while simultaneously building large short positions in index options which were exercised or allowed to expire later in the day. The regulator, which tracked Jane Street's trading patterns for more than two years, has also widened its investigation to include other indexes and exchanges, a source has said. Over the past three years, India's derivatives market has had explosive growth as retail investors swarmed in and is now the worlds largest. But that has also led to losses for many ordinary investors, which has become a concern for regulators. On the contrary, Jane Street has been sounding out Indian law firms for its up-

coming battle with SEBI but has yet to hire one, said some sources. The next step by Jane Street would likely be to lodge an appeal with the Securities Appellate Tribunal, the sources added. In its email to staff, Jane Street said arbitrage trades were "a core and commonplace mechanism of financial markets that keeps the prices of related instruments in line." SEBI's order that this activity is "prima facie manipulative" disregards the role of liquidity providers and arbitrageurs in markets, Jane Street added. The proprietary trading firm also took issue with SEBI's claims that it had failed to respond adequately to the regulator's concerns, saying the firm's executives had met with regulators and exchange officials multiple times. India accounted for roughly 60 per cent of global equity derivative trading volume in May, according to the Futures Industry Association. Data out Monday showed that equity derivative losses for India's retail traders widened by 41per cent to 1.06 trillion Indian rupees (\$12.4 billion) in the financial year that ended in March. SEBI Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey also said Monday that the regulator was enhancing its surveillance to scrutinise manipulation in derivatives trading, but added that there may not be many more cases like Jane Street. However, other overseas proprietary trading firms like Citadel Securities, IMC Trading, Millennium and Optiver are active in Indian market.

FSSAI warns DTC industry

The regulator asked e-platforms (Direct to consumer) to follow all Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and rules stipulated under the FSS Act

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**New Delhi, July 8:** Food regulator FSSAI Tuesday warned e-commerce platforms of severe action if they fail to comply with food safety protocols. The warning was given at a meeting chaired by the FSSAI CEO with more than 70 representatives of leading e-commerce platforms. The focus of the meeting was to strengthen food safety and hygiene practices throughout the e-commerce food supply chain. According to a statement, FSSAI's CEO G Kamala Vardhana Rao told representatives of leading e-commerce platforms that "any non-compliance with food

to disclose details of all warehouses and storage facilities linked to their operations on the PoSCoS portal. The possibility of displaying the "Date of Expiry/Use By" for food products at the consumer interface was also discussed. Rao instructed all e-commerce platforms to maintain strict adherence to hygiene and food safety protocols across all their warehouses and storage facilities. All food handlers involved in the process, including e-commerce personnel, must undergo compulsory FSSAI FoSTaC (Food Safety Training & Certification) training in hygiene protocols. Platforms are required to share their training plans and timelines with FSSAI. The regulator asked platforms to follow all Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and rules stipulated under the FSS Act. All warehouses associated with e-commerce operations should be registered or licensed by the FSSAI.

Chinese techies' return 'not' to impact iPhone 17 production

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**New Delhi, July 8:** The return of Chinese technology professionals from Apple vendor's facility will have no impact on the production of the upcoming iPhone 17, sources aware of the development said Tuesday. iPhone maker Apple continues to be on track to scale up production in India, sources said. According to the sources, Apple vendors in India, Foxconn and Tata Electronics, have also seen easing of capital goods sourcing from China. These

there has been an easing of the supply of capital goods from China as well for iPhones. "Apple partners have seen an easing of supply of capital goods. So there is no impact on iPhones' production in India," the source said. The person said that there is no change in Apple's plan to ramp up production in India. According to multiple sources, Apple plans to increase iPhone production to 60 million units this year from about 35-40 million units that it produced in 2024-25. Another source said that

INDIA FACES STIFF COMPETITION FROM BANGLADESH AND VIETNAM IN US GARMENTS MARKET. HIGH DUTIES ON BANGLADESH WILL HELP ENHANCE COMPETITIVENESS OF INDIAN PRODUCTS IN US MARKET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



gain a competitive edge in the US market following Washington's decision to impose higher tariffs on over a dozen countries, including Bangladesh and Thailand, exporters said. Monday, Donald Trump administration announced a 25 per cent tariffs on Japan, South Korea, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Tunisia; 30 per cent on South Africa, Bosnia and Herzegov-

ina; 32 per cent on Indonesia; 35 per cent on Bangladesh, Serbia; 36 per cent Cambodia, Thailand; and 40 per cent tariffs on Laos and Myanmar. These duties will come into effect from August 1. Bangladesh is the third biggest exporter of apparel (not knitted or crocheted) to the US with a market share of 13.15 per cent in 2024. India's exports to US in this sector were \$2.5 billion but it is not among the top three, according to an analysis by economic think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI). In apparel knitted and crocheted, Cambodia with about 6 per cent share is ahead of India (5.09 per cent). "India faces stiff competition from Bangladesh and Vietnam

in US garments market. High duties on Bangladesh will help enhance competitiveness of Indian products in US market," an exporter said. Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) President SC Ralhan said that sectors like leather and apparel may get competitive advantage from India's competitor countries. A Mumbai-based exporter said that the elevated duties on Thailand can lead to gains in exports of rubber and its articles. Thailand is the top exporter of rubber to US with a share of 15.16 per cent while India is at fourth spot with 2.93 per cent share of US imports. "We will get greater advantage in the leather segment also," the exporter added.

ELI scheme to promote job creation, social security

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, July 8:** The Employment Linked Incentive (ELI) announced in the budget for 2024-25 with an outlay of ₹one lakh crore, will promote job creation and provide social security, an official of Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) said Tuesday. Regional PF Commissioner-I Randhir Kumar said that the scheme is aimed at incentivising creation of 3.5 crore jobs over a period of two years, that it will be effective from August 1, 2025, and to continue till July 31, 2027. He said out of the total of 3.5 crore, 1.92 crore beneficiaries will be first-timers entering the workforce. Kumar said the thrust of the scheme is on the manufacturing sector, adding that you get benefits under the scheme; the establishments need to be registered with the EPFO. For first-time employees, the scheme provides for a maximum amount of ₹15,000 per annum to be paid in two installments. The employers will also get incentives by getting an amount of ₹3,000 per month for each additional and sustained employment generated, he said. For the manufacturing sector, the benefits will be extended by two years.



# Eyes on Harmanpreet to seal series



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Manchester, July 8:** India will hope that skipper Harmanpreet Kaur and hard-hitting opener Shafali Verma will return to run-making ways in their quest to clinch the women's T20I series during the fourth match here Wednesday.

India are leading 2-1 in the five-match series but England exposed a few chinks in the visitors' ranks in the third game at the Oval last week during a five-run win.

Shafali looked in prime touch during a 25-ball 47 and Harmanpreet made 17-ball 23 but both batters failed to build on the start, robbing India some momentum.

Smriti Mandhana and Jemimah Rodrigues and Amanjot Kaur have so far shouldered India's batting, and they would welcome a stronger support from these two experienced campaigners.

On a personal level too, Shafali will be eager to leave a larger footprint as she is yet to score big since her return to India colours after an eight-month hiatus

for this series. Her returns from the other two matches were 20 and 3.

Harmanpreet, who missed the first match with a head injury that she suffered during a side game, replaced Harleen Deol for the second and third match, but made 1 and 23. Deol was quite impressive in the first match, making a 23-ball 43 at Nottingham, helping Mandhana maintain her rhythm.

India have been served well in this series by spinners N Shree Charani (8

wickets), Deepti Sharma (6) and pacer Arundhati Reddy (4), as they have managed to fetch regular breakthroughs.

But they will need a bit more backing from left-arm spinner Radha Yadav and pacer Amanjot as they have given away 8.5 and 9 runs per over across the previous three matches.

India women's team bowling coach Aavishkar Salvi was effusive in his praise of Shree Charani, saying she had the traits to excel at the

international level.

"The way she has performed after she had a chance in the ODIs as well as in the T20s that speaks for itself. And she has those qualities to be successful at the international level. A youngster having so much potential obviously needs to be backed," Salvi told reporters on the eve of the match. "She's very hard-working and has a good mindset as well," he added.

With India relying more on spin than pace during the series and getting rewarded, the coach said he would persist with the plan.

**Teams:**

**India:** Harmanpreet Kaur (C), Smriti Mandhana (VC), Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Richa Ghosh (WK), Yastika Bhatia (WK), Harleen Deol, Deepti Sharma, Sneha Rana, Sree Charani, Shuchi Upadhyay, Amanjot Kaur, Arundhati Reddy, Kranti Gaud, Sayali Satghare.

**England:** Tammy Beaumont (C), Em Arlott, Lauren Bell, Alice Capsey, Charlie Dean, Sophia Dunkley, Sophie Ecclestone, Lauren Filer, Amy Jones (wk), Paige Scholfield, Linsey Smith, Danni Wyatt-Hodge, Issy Wong, Maia Bouchier.

## England announce squad for ODI series

Sophie Ecclestone and Maia Bouchier were Tuesday named in a 15-member England women's Squad to take on India in a three-match ODI series later this month. The three ODIs will be played July 16, 19 and 22 at Southampton, Lord's and Chester-Le-Street respectively. While Ecclestone returned to the ODI side having missed the series against West Indies, Bouchier was recalled after being named in the T20I series as a replacement for the injured Nat Sciver-Brunt. Sciver-Brunt, who was ruled out of the last three T20Is of the five-match series due to a groin injury, is expected to be fit for the ODI series. "Captain Nat Sciver-Brunt is expected to play a full part in the series despite missing the end of the IT20 series with a groin injury," the team management said in a release. India, who won the first two T20Is, lead the series 2-1. England head coach Charlotte Edwards said, "India have really pushed us during the IT20 series. We knew they would and we've learned a lot about the team in the three games so far."

**England Women's ODI squad:** Nat Sciver-Brunt (c), Em Arlott, Sophia Dunkley, Emma Lamb, Tammy Beaumont (wk), Amy Jones (wk), Maia Bouchier, Alice Capsey, Kate Cross, Alice Davidson-Richards, Charlie Dean, Sophie Ecclestone, Lauren Filer, Linsey Smith, Lauren Bell.

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- 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**

**PRATIVA LAKRA**

**SMRUTI RANJAN SENDH**

**Others who answered correctly are**  
Om Prakash Rath, Tanishna Bisoi, Saswat Sourabh, Archit Mahapatra, Rudra Narayana Sahoo, Megha Satapathy, Pratyush Satapathy, Debadatta Tripathy, Anurag Samantaray, Tapan Kumar Mohanty, R Sekhar Rao, Bhumika Subhalaxmi, Killamsetty Venkata Ramana, Y V Saimadhav, Jigyansa Priyadarshini, Debendra Kumar Roul, Shoumik Jena, Ruchismita Prusty, Sambit Biswaketan & Janvi Naik

**TODAY'S QUESTION**

On this day in 2011, the most recent sovereign state became independent via a referendum. Which country, that ranks amongst the least developed countries?

**ANSWER TO TUESDAY'S QUESTION**

**Atlantis**

### SHORT TAKES

#### Erigaisi, Gukesh seeded top two for FIDE Grand Swiss

**New Delhi:** Indian stars Arjun Erigaisi and world champion D Gukesh have been seeded as top two for the fourth FIDE Grand Swiss chess to be held at Samarkand, Uzbekistan from September 3 to 16 where an enhanced prize purse and tickets to the prestigious Candidates tournament will be at stake. As per regulations, the top two in both the Open and the Women's competition will qualify for the 2026 Candidates tournament, where the challenger for the title of world champion will be determined. The rule requiring players to have competed in 30 plus classical rated games between July 2024 and June 2025 has excluded high-profile names such as former world champions Magnus Carlsen and Viswanathan Anand. Former world champion Ding Liren will not be participating in the event either. Fabiano Caruana, who played in all three previous Grand Swiss tournaments, will also not be taking part, having already secured a spot in the 2026 Candidates Tournament by winning the 2024 FIDE Circuit. Erigaisi and Gukesh are number one and two seeds respectively, while R Praggnanandhaa is seeded fourth, just behind Nodirbek Abdusattorov.

#### Sabalenka, Fritz reach Wimbledon semifinals

**London:** Aryna Sabalenka trailed by a set, then twice was down a break in the third before grabbing the last three games to reach the Wimbledon semifinals by overcoming 104th-ranked Laura Siegemund 4-6, 6-2, 6-4 at Centre Court Tuesday. Taylor Fritz exorcised his quarterfinals demon at the Wimbledon Tuesday, defeating Karen Khachanov 6-3, 6-4, 1-6, 7-6(4) in a gripping contest on No 1 Court to book his place in the semifinals for the first time. The American, seeded fifth and fresh off titles in Stuttgart and Eastbourne, displayed grit and composure in a two-hour, 36-minute triumph that marked his first victory in three career meetings with the Russian. It also served as redemption after his agonising five-set quarter-final loss to Rafael Nadal in 2022, as per ATP.

### ISSF WORLD CUP

#### Indian skeet shooters fail to impress in Lonato World Cup



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 8:** Indian skeet shooters came up with dismal performances on the third day of qualification rounds with none of them in the men's and women's sections making it to the finals of the ISSF Shotgun World Cup in Lonato here Tuesday.

In men's skeet, 49-year-old veteran marksman Mairaj Ahmad Khan -- one of the senior-most shotgun shooters still competing professionally -- had rounds of 24, 25, 24, 25, 23 over three days as he aggregated 121/125 to finish 34th.

Olympian Anant Jeet Singh Naruka (24, 24, 24, 23, 24) fired a 24 in his final effort to finish with 119 points and a 64th spot in a 176-strong field, while Bhavtegh Singh Gill also aggregated 119 (23, 25, 25, 21) to finished 75th.

Vincent Hancock of the USA won gold with 26 in the final. He had aggregated

124 to top the qualification round. Daniel Korcak of the Czech Republic took the silver, shooting 24 in the title round, while compatriot Jakub Tomecek (24) bagged the bronze.

Women's skeet shooter and Paris Olympian Maheshwari Chauhan shot scores of 24, 22, 22, 25, 23 to aggregate 116 and top among the Indians at 31st spot.

Ganemat Sekhon came up with a below-par 20 out of 25 in the fifth and final round of qualification to also aggregate 116 (23, 25, 24, 24, 20) and finish 35th, while another Olympian Raiza Dhillon (22, 23, 24, 24, 22) totalled 115 to end up 40th in a field of 78 shooters.

Samantha Simonton, who aggregated 120 five rounds of qualification, shot 56 in the final to take the gold, while compatriot Dania Jo Vizzi (53) bagged the silver. Jiang Yiting of China (45) settled for the bronze.

### SNIPPETS

#### AISBRT KICKS OFF AT KALINGA STADIUM

**Bhubaneswar:** All India Senior Badminton Ranking Tournament (AISBRT) kicked off at Kalinga Stadium here Tuesday. At the inauguration ceremony, Sports Minister Suryabanshi Suraj attended as the chief guest and encouraged all the athletes. The minister expressed that organising AISBRT provides an excellent platform for badminton players across the country to showcase their talent and contributes to the development of sports talent through such competitions. Over 1,500 participants are taking part in the tournament across various categories like singles, doubles, and mixed doubles. The tournament will continue till July 15.



#### Sri Lanka eases to 99-run victory to clinch ODI series

**Pallekele (Sri Lanka):** Kusal Mendis smashed his sixth ODI hundred and led Sri Lanka to a commanding 99-run victory in the third and final one-day international as the home team clinched the series 2-1. Mendis marshaled Sri Lanka to 285-7 with an aggressive 124 off 114 balls after captain Charith Asalanka won the toss and elected to bat. The Bangladeshi batters struggled against the pace of Dushmantha Chameera and Asitha Fernando, who shared six wickets between them to bowl out the visitors for 186 and give Sri Lanka an eighth successive win in a home ODI series. Fernando clean bowled Tanzid Hasan (17) with a searing yorker in the third over of the chase and Najmul Hossain Shanto then deflected Chameera's incoming delivery back onto the top of the stumps for nought as the visitors slipped to 2-20. Sri Lanka's middle-order struggled against the spin as Dunith Wellalage (2-33) and Wanindu Hasaranga (2-35) struck with regular intervals and the Bangladeshi batters also couldn't put up strong partnerships.

#### Wrestler Reetika Hooda fails dope test

**New Delhi:** In a massive blow to Indian wrestling, talented Reetika Hooda, who became the country's first-ever U23 World champion in 2023, has been suspended provisionally by NADA for flunking a dope test, and is staring at a four-year ban. The 22-year-old Reetika, who also became the first Indian to qualify for the Olympics in heavyweight 76kg category, was tested March 15 during the selection trials for the Asian Championship and her urine sample found traces of S1.1 Anabolic Androgenic Steroids, which is a prohibited substance. "There is nothing confirmed as yet. I have not done anything wrong. I will fully co-operate with the officials. I have full faith in NADA and the (Wrestling) Federation. I can't say more than that," Reetika told PTI. The wrestler is considering going for a 'B sample' testing. After a failed Olympic campaign, Reetika won a silver medal at the Asian Championship in March and also put up a dominant show at the UWW Ranking Series event in Mongolia, winning a gold in May this year.

### EURO 2025

## Spain's 6-2 win secures QF place

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thun (Switzerland), July 8:** World Cup champion Spain booked a spot in the quarterfinals of the Women's European Championship after another statement victory, 6-2 over Belgium.

It was, surprisingly, the first time Spain won back-to-back matches at the Euros, after beating Portugal 5-0 in its opener. With 11 goals in two matches, Spain and its star-packed squad is living up to its billing as the tournament favorite and two-time Ballon d'Or winner Alexia Putellas had a stark warning for the other teams.

"The team is having an excellent performance. But almost all of us have room for improvement," Putellas said in translated comments.

She scored two against Belgium and was named player of the match in a second straight game.

"I'm feeling very well mentally and I'm being quick," Putellas said. "I see things in advance and for me that's the trigger that I feel good. And that means I can help others."

The result combined with

#### England need to avoid historic early exit today

**Zurich:** England has never lost its first two matches at the Women's European Championship, if that changes Wednesday, the defending champion could very well be out of Euro 2025. England endured a chastening 2-1 loss to France in their opener at the weekend and another defeat when it faces the Netherlands would almost certainly see the Lionesses eliminated -- unless tournament debutant Wales manages an upset against France. But forward Alessia Russo said Tuesday that it will be "massively" important to play without fear.

Italy's 1-1 draw against Portugal in the late match advanced Spain to the last eight. Spain tops Group B with six points. Italy is second with four, three more than Portugal. The top two progress to the quarterfinals. Friday, Italy faces Spain in their final group match and Portugal plays the eliminated Belgium.

But Belgium can take positives. The Red Flames went toe to toe with Spain before a flurry of late goals had them more concerned about goal difference -- which could be a deciding factor.

# My target is still 90kg, have tweaked my snatch technique: Chanu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Modinagar (UP), July 8:** She has won nearly every accolade the sport has to offer, but Tokyo Olympics silver-medallist weightlifter Mirabai Chanu remains in relentless pursuit of one elusive milestone -- the 90kg snatch lift.

Injuries had disrupted her previous Olympic cycle, and the former world champion hasn't competed since finishing fourth at the Paris Games. However, a recent tweak in technique has reignited belief that the long-cherished mark may finally be within reach.

"My target is still 90kg. I will compete full strength at the (2026) Asian Games," Chanu replied to a query by PTI on the sidelines of the opening of ASMITA Weightlifting League.

The diminutive Manipuri has been eyeing the 90kg mark since 2019. While she has managed to cross the barrier in training, replicating that success in competition has remained out of grasp even as several contemporaries have gone past the milestone.

"Before the 2026 Asian Games, I will try to give my best at the World Championships this year where we



will also assess what all I have to do to get better in 48kg category."

"All that we'll know at the World Championships.

But plan is to cross 90kg in snatch. Even juniors have now crossed 90kg. Recently a junior from China lifted it," she said.

#### Tweaked snatch technique

At the Paris Olympics, Chanu's clean and jerk -- her strong suit -- let her down. She failed to lift 111kg on her first attempt and 114kg on her final, finishing just 1kg shy of a second podium spot at the Games.

It was a rare off day in the clean and jerk, where she once held the world record with a 119kg lift. But Chanu draws heart from her snatch performance in Paris, where she equalled her personal best of 88kg.

"My snatch has improved. Earlier, I was not able to lift 88kg-89kg but I managed 88kg in the Olympics."

Chanu, along with India chief coach Vijay Sharma, has been working to improve her snatch, an area she admits has always been her Achilles' heel.

"Snatch is all technique. How to lift from the bottom and progress, how to control the back... all that is technique which I lack a little bit."

Snatch requires a blend of strength, speed, and precision, lifting the barbell from the floor to overhead in one explosive motion.

"The force from (sitting) down to (standing) up should be in sync, that has been my weakness since the

beginning. We have made small tweaks. Like, how to move fast from the second pull and the hip thrust. I don't have that combination."

"The technique can't be corrected instantaneously, we have to work on it also because my body is ageing, but moving fast and speed and combination can be done," Chanu, who turns 31 in a month, explained.

Coach Sharma remains optimistic. "Watching the Commonwealth Championship trials has given me a lot of confidence. She was able to snatch 85kg easily so now I feel she will cross 90 easily."