



Bebo's fitness secrets

Kareena Kapoor's nutritionist reveals the actor's timeless wellness routine that fuels her glow and inner strength

LEISURE | P2



Putin to fight on

Vladimir Putin intends to keep fighting in Ukraine until the West engages on his terms for peace

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Deficit narrows

Trade deficit narrows to a four-month low of \$18.78 billion during June, government data shows

BUSINESS | P11



Skipper's validation

India captain Shubman Gill lauds allrounder Ravindra Jadeja for pushing the Lord's Test into the final session

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VOLUME 15, ISSUE 106 | www.orissapost.com

BHUBANESWAR | WEDNESDAY | JULY 16, 2025

12 PAGE | ₹5.00

Yemen: Indian nurse's execution postponed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 15: The execution of Kerala nurse Nimisha Priya, an Indian nurse on death row in Yemen, has been postponed by Yemeni authorities, government sources said Tuesday.

The execution was scheduled for Wednesday.

Priya, hailing from Kollengode in Kerala's Palakkad district, has been found guilty of murdering a Yemeni citizen in July 2017.

It has been learnt that the local authorities in Yemen have postponed the execution scheduled for July 16, the sources said.

The government of India has made concerted efforts in recent days to seek more time for Priya's family to reach a "mutually agree-

able" solution with the other party, they said.

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.

The sources said the government of India has been rendering all possible assistance in the case since beginning.

Despite the sensitivities involved, Indian officials have been in regular touch with the local jail authorities and the prosecutor's office, leading to securing the postponement, the sources said.

Two lecturers held for 'raping' student

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, July 15: Two college lecturers in Dakshina Kannada district and their associate have been arrested for allegedly raping a student after 'blackmailing' her with videos and photos, police said Tuesday. One of the lecturers invited her to Bangalore, citing academic reasons, and raped her at his friend's residence, according to the student.

The accused reportedly boasted about the assault to another lecturer, who then allegedly began blackmailing her using videos and demanded sexual favours.

She further alleged that the associate also raped her, blackmailing her with videos of the initial assault. The assaults took place last month but came to light recently.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No, not a police case! He was beaten up by Kanwariyas

The death of a girl student of Fakir Mohan University, who was undergoing treatment following an immolation bid July 12 allegedly after enduring prolonged sexual harassment by a faculty member, late Monday night has thrust Odisha into the national spotlight. While Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi condemned the incident as an 'organised murder by system', University Grants Commission constituted a fact-finding panel to probe the matter amid a flurry of recriminations between political parties. Gandhi, also hitting out at BJP, sought an answer and not PM's 'silence' in the issue. Meanwhile, Congress-led Opposition called a state-wide bandh July 17 to protest the tragedy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 15: Attacking the ruling BJP in Odisha over the death of the college student who set herself on fire, Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi Tuesday alleged it was nothing less than an "organised murder by the system."

"The death of a daughter fighting for justice in Odisha is nothing less than a murder by the BJP's system. That brave student raised

BACK HOME: Axiom-4 astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla greets as he reaches Earth with other crew members of the mission aboard the Dragon spacecraft that splashed down off California. (Report P8)

Organised murder by system: Rahul

CONGRESS-LED BANDH JULY 17

Bhubaneswar: Eight opposition parties, led by the Congress, called an Odisha bandh July 17 to protest the death of the college student who set herself on fire following inaction over her sexual harassment complaint against a professor. State Congress president Bhakta Charan Das said the bandh is being supported by eight parties, including the Left. Das said the bandh has been called to seek justice for the deceased student.

her voice against sexual harassment - but instead of delivering justice, she was threatened, tormented, and repeatedly humiliated," he alleged in a post on X.

BJP's system continued to shield the accused and forced an innocent daughter to set herself on fire," he alleged. Gandhi claimed the girl's death was not suicide, it was an organised murder by the system.

"Modi ji, whether in Odisha or Manipur - the daughters of the nation are burning, breaking, and dying. And you? You remain silent," he said. "The country doesn't need your silence;

UGC FORMS FACT-FINDING PANEL

New Delhi: In response to widespread media reports and public concern over the tragedy the University Grants Commission (UGC) has constituted a high-level fact-finding committee to investigate the incident and recommend preventive measures. The four-member committee will be chaired by Prof. Raj Kumar Mittal, Professor at Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University and UGC Member. Other members include Prof. Sushma Yadav, former UGC Commission Member; Dr. Neerja Gupta, VC of Gujarat University; and Dr. Ashima Mangla, Joint Secretary, UGC.

Southern hemisphere full of birds found nowhere else on Earth

AGENCIES

Melbourne, July 15: The snow petrel, a strikingly white bird with black eyes and a black bill, is one of only three bird species ever observed at the South Pole. In fact, the Antarctic is the only place on Earth where this bird lives.

It isn't alone in this. Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic harbour a large number of endemic species, which means these species are only found in one or a few locations in the world.

A study suggests that southern-hemisphere communities showed higher rates of local endemism than northern-hemisphere communities across all

tories or unique ecological functions, and these birds are largely restricted to the southern hemisphere.

Among these are the palaeognaths - the bird lineage that includes kiwis, emus, cassowaries and ostriches. They also include the lyrebirds and the New Zealand wrens, as well as iconic Antarctic species such as penguins and albatrosses.

The higher rates of endemism in the southern hemisphere are likely related to the uneven global distribution of landmass. Put simply, there is much more available landmass in the northern hemisphere. The findings further suggest that birds in the northern and southern hemisphere

might react differently to environmental pressures. Unfortunately, most studies on the impact of climate change to date are from the northern hemisphere. In response to climate change in particular, species are expected to shift their ranges towards cooler climates.

While northern-hemisphere birds are likely free to shift their ranges across large stretches of uninterrupted landmass, birds in the southern hemisphere are hindered by vast expanses of ocean that separate the different landmasses on which they live.

The potentially heightened vulnerability of southern-hemisphere birds calls for more protection.

Delhi most affordable city globally for students

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 15: Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Chennai are among the world's top 130 cities for students with the national capital being ranked as the most affordable city globally for students, according to QS rankings announced on Tuesday.

All four Indian metropolises featured in the 2026 QS Best Student Cities ranking - Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Chennai - have improved their positions, reflecting growing momentum in India's higher education appeal.

According to prestigious rankings announced by London-based QS, Mumbai has re-entered the global top 100, rising 15 places to secure the 98th position. Delhi has climbed seven spots to 104th, while Bangalore sees the most dramatic improvement among the Indian cities, soaring 22 places to 108th.

Chennai has also advanced significantly, gaining 12 positions to rank 128th.

Mumbai and Bangalore have also performed strongly on the affordability metric, placed within the top 15.

In the Employer Activity category, Delhi and Mumbai both break into the global top 50, highlighting strong graduate employment prospects. Bangalore makes the sharpest leap in this dimension, jumping 41 places to rank 59th, while Chennai climbs an impressive 29 spots, underscoring a growing recognition of its graduates in the job market.

"India's rising presence in the 2026 QS Best Student Cities Rankings is more than a statistical bump - it reflects a structural shift in the country's higher education landscape. As we approach the fifth anniversary of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, its focus on global engagement, quality enhancement, and student-centric learning is starting to bear fruit on the international stage," said Jessica Turner, CEO of QS.

The ranking, compiled by global higher education consultancy QS Quacquarelli Symonds, assesses 150 cities worldwide. This year's edition signals a shift in the global education landscape, with Seoul overtaking London to be named the world's best student city.

OrissaPOST PRESENTS



METTLE MEET 2025

A Quiz Extravaganza



Prelims

9th August



Grand Finale

10th August

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Jessica Alba has sparked romance rumours after being spotted leaving Cancun with actor Danny Ramirez. The pair was seen boarding a flight to Los Angeles together, with Ramirez initially dubbed a "mystery man" before being identified as the 32-year-old actor.

repeatedly.

She wraps up dinner by 6 PM and follows an early bedtime of 9:30 PM, making room for her early morning workouts. Yoga remains the heart of her fitness routine, supplemented by Pilates, strength training, and breathwork.

Kareena's philosophy is rooted in simplicity: eat real, seasonal food, honour your body's rhythm, and remain consistent.

KAREENA'S wellness secrets

MUMBAI: For nearly 20 years, Kareena Kapoor Khan has remained a fitness inspiration from her size-zero transformation in *Tashan* to her radiant post-pregnancy glow. Now, her longtime nutritionist Rujuta Diwekar has offered insight into the actress's enduring wellness routine, revealing that Kareena has followed a simple consistent meal plan for over 15 years.

Her day begins with a handful of almonds, raisins, or figs followed by breakfast staples like poha or paratha. Lunch is usually dal and rice or cheese toast, while evenings are reserved for a mango or mango milkshake. Dinner is light yet comforting — often khichdi or pulao with a generous spoon of ghee. In fact, Kareena eats khichdi up to five times a week. “I can be really happy eating khichdi five times a week. It works,” she once shared, adding that her cook often jokes about making the same meals

Vidyut to make Hollywood debut

LOS ANGELES: Actor Vidyut Jammwal is set to make his Hollywood debut with *Street Fighter*, an adaptation of a popular video game of the same name from studio Legendary.

The 44-year-old actor, best known for headlining action movies such as *Commando*, *Khuda Hafiz* and *Baadshaho*, will feature alongside a star-studded cast of Andrew Koji, Noah Centineo, Jason Momoa, Callina Liang, Roman Reigns, Orville Peck, Cody Rhodes, Andrew Schulz, Curtis “50 Cent” Jackson and David Dastmalchian, reported entertainment news outlet *Deadline*.

Street Fighter began as an arcade game from Japanese company Capcom in 1987 and reached a pop culture high with 1991's *Street Fighter II*, which revolutionised one-on-one playing.

It is a one-on-one fighting game where players select a character, a martial artist or fighter with a unique fighting style and battle opponents using punches, kicks, special moves and combos.

The most recent edition of the game, *Street Fighter 6*, was released in June 2023 and won the award for best fighting game at the 2023 Game Awards.

In the movie, Jammwal will essay the role of Dalsim, a yogi with fire-spitting abilities, a fundamentally peaceful man who fights to support his family.

MUMBAI: Hrithik Roshan and Tripti Dimri are grabbing all the right attention! As they gear up for the release of their much-awaited films — *War 2* and *Dhadak 2*, respectively — a recent viral video featuring the two dancing together has sent fans into a frenzy. The video, which showcases their effortless, electrifying moves and sizzling chemistry, has sparked widespread curiosity.

Dressed in cool street-style casuals, Hrithik and Triptii lit up the dance floor, leaving fans speculating whether this is a teaser for an upcoming collaboration — perhaps a free-form dance video or even a big-screen project.

The energy between the two actors is undeniable, and audiences are already eager to see them share more screen space. While details remain under wraps, the video has certainly raised expectations and added to the buzz surrounding both their upcoming films.

On the work front, Hrithik will return to the action-packed world of *War* 2, releasing August 14, while Triptii will star opposite Siddhant Chaturvedi in *Dhadak* 2, hitting theatres August 15. The film explores themes of love, caste, and identity. Triptii's impressive slate also includes *Spirit*, Arjun Utara, *Animal Park*, and an untitled project with Imtiaz Ali — cementing her rise as a versatile star to watch.

FROM *PAKEEZAH* TO POETRY

Heartbreak that defined Meena Kumari's legacy

MUMBAI: Meena Kumari, revered as Bollywood's Tragedy Queen, lived a life that echoed the heartbreak of her on-screen roles. Beneath the glamour and critical acclaim was a woman grappling with profound loneliness, depression, and emotional isolation—often remarking that her life resembled a never-ending tragic screenplay.

Beyond her cinematic brilliance, Meena Kumari was also a gifted Urdu poet who wrote under the pseudonym *Naaz*. Through her verses, she poured out her innermost struggles, heartbreaks, and sorrow. Much of her poetry was published posthumously, revealing the depth of pain fame had long concealed.

Her marriage to filmmaker Kamal Amrohi was both creatively enriching and emotionally damaging. While their professional collaborations flourished, their personal bond deteriorated. Reports suggest the relationship was marred by control, distance, and neglect. Despite her enduring love for Amrohi, the emotional strain led to their eventual separation—marking the beginning of her spiral into alcoholism.

Ironically, Meena Kumari passed away just weeks after the release of her magnum opus, *Pakeezah*, a film that took over a decade to complete. Though it became a box office success, she did not live to witness its full glory. March 31, 1972, she succumbed to liver cirrhosis at just 39, her fragile health a reflection of years spent battling inner demons. 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.

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SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

FM victim’s dad blames ICC; BJD for judicial probe

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar/Balasure, July 15: The father of the 20-year-old deceased student of FM (Autonomous) College Tuesday held members of her college’s internal complaint committee (ICC) ‘solely responsible’ for his daughter’s death by self-immolation, even as Opposition Biju Janata Dal (BJD) demanded a judicial inquiry into the ‘planned injustice’.

He alleged that the ICC members prepared a “biased report” following her complaint of sexual harassment by a professor, prompting her to set herself on fire on the campus July 12. She suffered 95 per cent burns and succumbed at AIIMS Bhubaneswar Tuesday.

“The ICC members are real culprits who created a biased report for which my daughter died by suicide. They have not been fair in the inquiry and blamed my daughter, instead of the accused teacher who indulged in sexual and mental harassment of my daughter,” the father said.

He claimed that based on the ICC report, the principal told my daughter that she was at fault and may be punished for making a false allegation against the teacher who is the head of the Education department.

“Let the ICC members come under the purview of the investigation,” her father said.

He complained against the ICC to Balasure Collector Suryawanshi Mayur Vikas and Superintendent of Police Raj Prasad, who visited the deceased student’s residence to hand over the state government’s ex-gratia.

Balasure MP Pratap Sarangi also expressed his concern over the ICC report on her allegation of sexual and mental harassment.

“I have seen the ICC report. It was prepared to shield the accused teacher,” Sarangi said, claiming that it glorified the Education department head, the main accused.

The principal and the accused teacher were both suspended and subsequently arrested.

Meanwhile, the college remained closed for the day, and there was heavy deployment of police force on the campus.

Several student organisations held demonstrations in different parts of Balasure town and demand-



Members of the women wing of the state Congress take out a candlelight rally seeking justice for the FM (Autonomous) College victim, at Master Canteen Square in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

CM announces ₹20L ex gratia

BHUBANESWAR: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday announced ex gratia of Rs 20 lakh for the family of the college student who died by setting herself on fire over alleged inaction on her sexual harassment complaint. Majhi directed officers concerned to conduct a proper investigation into the incident so that all guilty are punished in accordance with the law, according to a statement issued by the CMO. Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati also expressed grief over the death of the student. “Shattered to learn of the untimely loss of a young student from Fakir Mohan Autonomous College. Her passing is not just a tragedy—it is a stark reminder of the urgent need to safeguard our campuses,” he said in a post on X. “The law will take its toughest course. Those responsible will face uncompromising punishment. My heart goes out to the grieving family. May they find strength in this hour of unbearable pain,” he added.

8-hr 'Balasure Bandh' today

BALASURE: The Balasure district unit of the BJD has called for a Balasure Bandh from 6am to 2pm Wednesday in protest against the tragic death of 20-year-old FM (Autonomous) College student. The BJD alleged that apathy and inaction on the part of the college authorities, the district administration, and political leadership contributed to the death of the student, who set herself on fire after repeatedly seeking justice against a professor she accused of mental harassment and demands for sexual favours. Senior BJD leader and former MP RK Jena said that all educational institutions, business establishments, and public transport services — except for essential services — will remain suspended during the bandh. He added that train services are also likely to be disrupted. Jena condemned the failure of various government agencies in delivering justice to the student, who was reportedly traumatised by continuous harassment and a lack of response from authorities. He further stated that the student had been approaching authorities from June 30, but when no action was taken, she resorted to the extreme step of self-immolation.

'ICC had sought Sahoo's removal'

The coordinator of FM College's ICC Tuesday said the panel had recommended removal of Samira Kumar Sahoo, accused of sexually harassing the female student, leading to her death by self-immolation, from the post of HoD, Integrated BED. However, the reason for seeking his removal was his “strict approach” and not sexually harassing students, ICC coordinator Jayashree Mishra said. Mishra said the ICC had also advised Sahoo to modify his behaviour and teaching methods to better align with the students' needs. Minati Sethi, an ICC member, said they discussed with around 60 students of the integrated BED course. “Most of the students said Sahoo was very strict and used to ask students to stand outside classrooms for even slight mistakes. Sahoo had also once asked the complainant to do the same for 45 minutes for coming late. She had taken it seriously,” Sethi said.

Cong doing cheap politics: Pradhan

BHUBANESWAR: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Tuesday attacked Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, accusing him of indulging in “cheap politics” over the death of FM (Autonomous) College student. Pradhan claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP have always taken concrete steps for women's safety and justice, while the Congress has consistently sought opportunities in every tragedy. The statement came after Gandhi said the country was seeking answers and not the PM's “silence” over the incident. “The cheap politics played by Rahul Gandhi and Congress on the tragic incident involving Odisha's daughter is extremely unfortunate. Turning a serious and sensitive matter into a political weapon reflects @RahulGandhi's petty mindset,” Pradhan posted on X. “The incident in Odisha has shaken the entire nation, but Congress has seized this opportunity to bake its political bread,” he said. Pradhan said the BJP government in Odisha stands with the victim's family, and the strictest action will be taken against the culprits.

ed justice for the deceased.

The student's father, however, urged all not to politicise the matter.

“My daughter is gone. I appeal to all—please don't use her for political gain. However, I will keep fighting so that she gets justice,” he said.

The father said he received a message from Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi.

“Sir (the CM) sent me an SMS and assured me of a proper investigation. I have faith in the government, administration, and the rule of law,”

following the death of my daughter,” she said.

The BJD, meanwhile, demanded a judicial inquiry into the ‘planned injustice’ which led to the death of the student.

The demand was made at a press conference in Bhubaneswar addressed by BJD senior vice-president Debi Prasad Mishra and other senior leaders including Sanjay Das Burma and Pratap Jena.

“We demand a judicial probe, headed by a sitting judge of the Oris-

sa High Court, into the incident. The people whom the deceased girl had approached through digital platform should come under the purview of the inquiry,” Mishra told reporters.

Stating that the self-immolation death of the 20-year-old student for denial of justice has shocked the entire country, Mishra said that the BJD student and youth wing workers are already on the streets.

“The party has also planned to gherao the Lok Seva Bhawan (state secretariat) Wednesday,” Mishra

said, adding that the entire state is shocked that none of the persons in position came to rescue a woman who was fighting for justice, against the teacher who allegedly sexually and mentally harassed her for months together.

Das Burma sought the resignation of the Chief Minister and the Higher Education Minister on moral grounds till a judicial inquiry is completed.

“Who gave her the petrol for self-immolation? Who was recording videos at the time? Who were present in the principal's chamber during the incident? The BJD will continue its agitation till the government announces a judicial probe into the matter,” Das Burma said.

Jena said, “The law and order has completely collapsed in Odisha. The crimes against women have increased and girl students are not safe on campus.”

He demanded strong action against everyone responsible - from the CM to the Balasure MLA and the SP. Ahead of the BJD's proposed gherao of the Lok Seva Bhawan Wednesday, the state government heightened security arrangements at key government buildings in Bhubaneswar like Lok Seva Bhawan, Kharavela Bhawan, Rajiv Bhawan, Krushi Bhawan and the Heads of Department Building.

Earlier in the day, BJD president and Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Naveen Patnaik said the death of the college student who set herself ablaze following alleged sexual harassment by a professor was due to ‘failure of the system’.

Expressing his grief, Patnaik, in a long social media post, said, “It is even more disturbing to think how a failed system can take someone's life. The most painful part is that this was not an accident, but rather the result of a system that remained silent instead of helping. Struggling for justice, the girl ultimately closed her eyes.”

With great courage, Patnaik said the student had written to the college principal, informing them about the sexual harassment she had faced. “Even after being ignored by the college authorities, she did not give up. To seek justice, she reached out to the Higher Education minister, the Chief Minister's Office, and even a Union minister,” Patnaik said.

WORLD SNAKE DAY TODAY

Snakes are critical to environmental health

Hiss...Most of us get scared hearing this sound the snakes produce, but this is primarily a defensive mechanism the reptiles use to deter potential threats. People have deadly fear towards snakes, as a single bite can end life in hours, and for this, snakes often fall prey to human grudge. As the conflict continues till date, let us know the importance of this reptile to our environment, even as this year's theme “Respect, Don't Fear: Protecting Nature's Silent Guardians” is perfectly coined. The theme focuses on compassion and conservation.

Speaking to Orissa POST, experts have called for larger awareness on snakebites and protection of the beautiful species.

Sathee Parivar, an organisation dedicated to rescue and conservation of snakes, has been continuously working to bridge the gap between snakes and humans by spreading awareness. Shedding light on the contribution of snakes to maintain the process of food chain, the organisation's president **Siddharth Pradhan** said, “When people hear about the word snake, they fear for life. But in reality, they are friends of humans, particularly farmers. As we all know, mouse and shrews eat crops, but rat snakes prevent this. They play a key role in neutralising the rodent population by eating them from farmlands.”

Pradhan stated that a lot of lives are lost to snakebites due to practice of superstitious methods and lack of awareness. “People living in remote areas resort to superstitious practices, instead of taking snakebite



PIC: SRIKRISHNA DAS

India is home to at least 367 taxa of snakes of which 81 are considered potentially dangerous. In Odisha, 76 species have been identified and recorded so far, with 28 of them being venomous

patients to hospitals. If proper and timely treatment is given to such patients, many lives can be saved. The government must ensure running more awareness programmes in these areas.

Aditya Behera, a snake rescuer said, “People are not scared of tiger as much the fear snake in India. Snakes are definitely not our enemies rather er we are to them. Snakes are never the first to attack humans; they do it by sensing danger.”

Behera further said, “There are people who kill snakes considering them as dangerous creatures, but this needs to stop. If snake population drops, it will damage the natural ecosystem. Most signifi-

cantly, snake venom is used to prepare medicines for many critical diseases like cancer and others.” Urging people not to kill snakes, Behera said, “Due to urbanisation, these reptiles are unable to live in their natural habitats and sometimes they enter our homes. Rather than killing them, people should alert the snake helpline organisations or Forest department for their rescue and relocation.”

Senior Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) scientist and snake expert **Pratyush Mohapatra** said, “India is home to at least 367 taxa of snakes of which 81 are considered potentially dangerous. In Odisha, 76 species have been identified

and recorded so far, with 28 of them being venomous. However, it is important to note that only five-six species are responsible for the maximum number of snakebite deaths. These include the spectacled cobra, monocellate cobra, common krait, and Russell's viper. Interestingly, monocellate cobra is restricted to north-eastern parts of Odisha – Balasure, Bhadrak, and Jajpur. Similarly, the saw-scaled viper, which is among India's “Big Four” venomous snakes, shows a patchy distribution in Odisha and can be considered uncommon.”

Mohapatra stressed on developing a mechanism— “One Nation, One Compensation” —for snakebite victims. “It is high time the “Payment of Compensation to Victims of Natural Calamities and Snake Bite Act, 2014” effectively implemented across all states. This would ensure that any

victim can avail free treatment and receive financial assistance for snakebite. Similarly, under the Small and Marginal Farmers' (Welfare) Act, 2014, small or marginal farmers who suffer from snakebite or any other animal attack during agricultural operations are entitled to compensation. The compensation amount for injury resulting in disability is not less than Rs 50,000 for partial disability and Rs 1,00,000 in case of permanent disability or death.

Doctor Kumar Soumyakanta Bisoi, consultant physician at Angul district headquarters hospital, said, “As snakes are cold-blooded animals, they are attracted to heat. During rains, they get attracted to heat produced by humans and take shelter near human habitations. Though people in rural areas mostly sleep on the floors, their movement alerts snakes. Considering it as a danger, they can bite people merely as an act of defence.”

Stating that it is highly recommended to sleep on bed, Bisoi said it is important to keep the surroundings clean. Using mosquito nets can also prevent snakebites, he said, adding, “If you are going to collect forest produce, you should wear proper high-ankle shoes.”

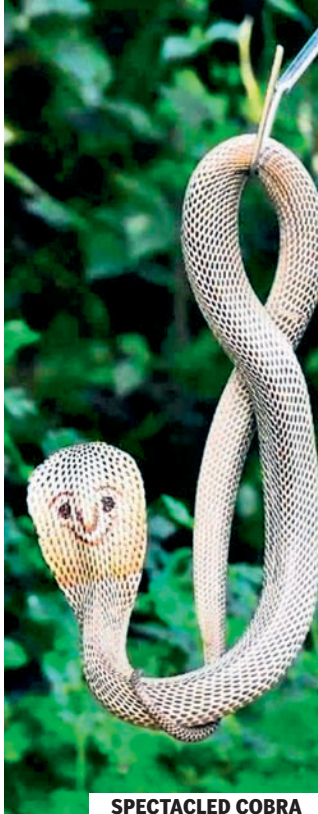
Highlighting the importance of snake venom in preparation of medicines for numerous diseases, Bisoi said the venom is also used as an antivenom. “If a person gets bitten by a cobra, the venom from the same species is used as antivenom. Snakebites are treated with antivenom which is made from snake venom. There is no other medicine for snakebite.”



RUSSELL'S VIPER



MONOCELLATE COBRA



SPECTACLED COBRA



COMMON KRAIT

Archarya Vihar-DayalAgency-9437135727, **A.P. Tours and Travel**, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, **Aurobindo Market**-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, **Airport Road**-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, **Anish Infotech**- Tankapani Road-9861341488, **Bapuji Nagar**- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, **Baramunda Rental Colony**-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, **Baramunda Housing Board Colony**-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, **Cuttack Road**-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, **District Center (Chandrasekharpur)**-Sai Google Mat-9776056507, **Forest Park**-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381021456, **IRC Village**-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decor Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, **Janpath**-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, **Jaydev Vihar**-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, **Jagannath Mobile Point**- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, **Kanan Vihar**-Auro Electronics-8260697560, **Khandagiri**- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, **KIIT Road**-Jugad Jn-9338545031, **Laxmi Sagar**-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, **Lewis Road**-Spider Web-7809186415, **Metro Satellite City**-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, **Madhusudan Nagar**-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, **Maa Santoshi travels**-Gajapati Nagar- 977675867, **Nayapalli**- The Cake Room- 7873660137, **Near Rayfair Lagoon**-Cookiemann-9439491273, **Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels**-9668284823, **Net Cosmopolis Main Gate**- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, **Net Square**- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, **Priyadarshini Market**-Astro Point-9938134346, **R.N. General Store**-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, **Sahid Nagar**-Maa Communication- 9437353424, **Sahini General Store**- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, **Satya Nagar**-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, **Samantapur**- Download Point-7504557743, **Sailashree Vihar**-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, **Saheed Nagar**-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, **Siripur**-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, **Sushree fashion**- Jagma-9938714347, **Shree Vision**- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, **Unit-3**-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, **Unit-7**- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, **VSS Nagar**-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, **XIMB Square**-LD Books-9658061373.

OIPR-10003/13/0234/2526



PUNJAB ANTI-SACRILEGE BILL

Bill sent for public feedback

The anti-sacrilege bill was introduced in the House by CM Mann Monday, saying there must be stringent punishment for those involved in the desecration of religious scriptures

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, July 15: The Punjab Assembly Tuesday unanimously decided to refer a bill proposing punishment up to life imprisonment for sacrilege acts against religious scriptures to a select committee of the House to seek public opinion on the proposed legislation. On the concluding day of the special session of the Assembly, Speaker Kultar Singh Sandhwan said the panel will submit its report on the bill within six months after taking public opinion. The move came after Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann proposed the Punjab Prevention of Offences Against Holy Scripture(s) Bill, 2025, be sent to the select committee that may include representatives of all political parties for it to seek the opinion of the people and religious bodies. The anti-sacrilege bill was introduced in the House by CM



Mann Monday, saying there must be stringent punishment for those involved in the desecration of religious scriptures. While wrapping up a discussion on the bill, he referred to the sacrilege incidents of 2015 under the SAD-BJP rule and said there cannot be a bigger crime than sacrilegious acts. "Strictest punishment be given for the sacrilege acts against religious scriptures. Those who burn them, those tear them, there cannot be a bigger crime than this," he said. Referred to the 2015 sacrilege incidents, Mann said his government has filed chargesheets in the matter. The state-specific proposed law was cleared by the cabinet in a meeting chaired by the chief minister. Assembly Speaker Sandhwan said the select committee will be formed by him to seek public opinion on the bill. Taking part in the discussion on the bill, Leader of Opposition

- The bill mandates strict punishment, extending up to life imprisonment, for the desecration of holy scriptures, including the Guru Granth Sahib, Bhagavad Gita, Bible and Quran
- According to the bill, any person found guilty of sacrilege may face imprisonment ranging from 10 years to life. The guilty shall also be liable to pay a fine of Rs 5 lakh, which may extend up to Rs 10 lakh

Partap Singh Bajwa demanded that theft of the religious scripture should also be included as an offence in the legislation. He also demanded that a time bound probe be conducted into the sacrilegious acts. The bill mandates strict punishment, extending up to life imprisonment, for the desecration of holy scriptures, including the Guru Granth Sahib, Bhagavad Gita, Bible and

Quran. According to the bill, any person found guilty of sacrilege may face imprisonment ranging from 10 years to life. The guilty shall also be liable to pay a fine of Rs 5 lakh, which may extend up to Rs 10 lakh. Those attempting to commit the offence may be sentenced to three to five years and shall also be liable to pay a fine which may extend up to Rs 3 lakh, the bill proposes. Individuals found abetting the crime will be punished in accordance with the offence committed. Under the bill, offence means any sacrilege, damage, destruction, defacing, disfiguring, de-colouring, de-filling, decomposing, burning, breaking or tearing of any holy scripture or part thereof. Once enacted, offences punishable under this legislation shall be cognizable, non-bailable, and non-compoundable and will be tried by a session court. The probe shall be conducted by a police officer not below the rank of deputy superintendent of police. Sacrilege has been an emotive issue in Punjab. There has been a demand from various quarters for stringent punishment for sacrilege after the incidents of desecration of the Guru Granth Sahib in 2015 in Faridkot. This proposed legislation aims to fill that legal void by criminalising and prescribing punishments for acts of sacrilege across all sects and faiths.

DEFAMATION CASE

LUCKNOW COURT GRANTS BAIL TO RAHUL GANDHI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, July 15: A Lucknow court Tuesday granted bail to leader of opposition and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi after he made an appearance in a defamation case filed over his purported remarks on Army personnel, his lawyer said. The case relates to alleged defamatory remarks against Indian soldiers made during his Bharat Jodo Yatra in 2022, his counsel advocate Pranshu Agarwal said. Following his appearance, the court released him on bail, the lawyer added. The bail was effected after Gandhi furnished a bail bond and sureties as directed by the court. Gandhi appeared in a courtroom full of lawyers. He was taken to the judge's chamber where the formalities of filing bond and sureties took place. Gandhi was summoned as an accused after the court took cognisance of the defamation complaint. The Congress leader had moved high court but failed to get a relief. Gandhi came to court accompanied by party's state unit president Ajay Rai and in-charge Avinash Pande. "He (Gandhi) is scheduled to attend the court hearing and would return to Delhi later in the day. He is likely to come to Uttar Pradesh again to visit his constituency Raebareli over the next few days," Rai told PTI before the hearing.



The case relates to alleged defamatory remarks against Indian soldiers made during his Bharat Jodo Yatra in 2022

Security was beefed up along the route of his travel and in and around the court premises. The defamation complaint was filed by one Uday Shankar Srivastava, a retired director of the Border Roads Organisation (equivalent to the rank of colonel in the Army).

The complaint states that December 16, 2022, Gandhi, while addressing various media personnel and the public during the Bharat Jodo Yatra, mentioned the clash between the Indian Army and the Chinese Army on the border of Arunachal Pradesh on December 9 (2022) and said that "people will ask what all about Bharat Jodo Yatra, but will not ask even once about the beating of our soldiers by Chinese soldiers". The complainant alleged his sentiments were hurt by Gandhi's statement about the alleged beating of Indian soldiers by the Chinese soldiers. The special court ordered Gandhi to be summoned on charges of defamation February 11.

MAN-ANIMAL CONFLICT

Forest teams deployed to capture tiger in Pilibhit

Experts believe that the tiger population in the PTR, established in 2014, has doubled over the years, this increase has forced them to seek new territories, leading to a rise in man-animal conflicts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pilibhit (UP), July 15: A day after a farmer was killed by a tiger in Fulhar village of Pilibhit district, forest officials said Tuesday that their team was tracking the animal and it would be captured as soon as the conditions are favourable. Dayaram, 39, was mauled to death by the tiger in his field in Bari Phulhar village, the sixth tiger attack in two months in the region. According to the forest team engaged in tracking the tiger, the animal also attempted to attack its personnel, though fortunately no serious injuries occurred. The tiger was last spotted near Auraiya village, located alongside the Pilibhit-Tanakpur highway under Neuria police station area, the officials said. Divisional Forest Officer (Social Forestry), Bharat Kumar, said a trained team has been deployed at the spot following official approval for the tiger's capture. "As soon as conditions are favourable, the tiger will be rescued and shifted to a safe location," he added. To monitor the tiger and ensure public safety, police teams from two stations and personnel from the reserve police lines have also been deployed

in the village. The forest department has appealed to locals to remain alert while its teams keep a close watch on the tiger's movements. Meanwhile, locals expressed concern over the forest department's handling of the situation. "The tiger is moving dangerously close to human settlements along the highway," said Suresh Yadav, a villager. "While the forest department carries out monitoring during the day, it appears unprepared at night, when the tiger is most active. Villagers are living in fear and spending sleepless nights," he said. Villagers said that they had told forest and police personnel about regular tiger sightings in the region and multiple complaints had been filed with the forest department, but to no avail. Forest officials maintain that all necessary measures are being taken. A tiger killed a farmer named Hansraj May 14 while he was irrigating his field in Nazirganj village. Four days later, Ram Prasad was fatally attacked while peeling sugarcane in Chatipur. A woman named Laungshree was killed May 25 while she was weeding a field in Khirkia Bargadia village. People in Pilibhit have been facing the issue of man-animal conflict. They routinely encounter big cats that stray into their farms from the adjoining Pilibhit Tiger Reserve (PTR), a bustling habitat for the Bengal Tiger. Experts believe that the tiger population in the PTR, established in 2014, has doubled over the years. This increase has forced them to seek new territories, leading to a rise in man-animal conflicts.



Boats float in water of the swollen Ganga river inundating Manikarnika Ghat, in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

Akal Takht, Takht Patna Sahib resolve standoff

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amritsar, July 15: The standoff between the Akal Takht and Takht Sri Patna Sahib was resolved Monday after Akal Takht officiating Jathedar Giani Kuldeep Singh Gargaj held a meeting with the five Sikh high priests. Takht Sri Patna Sahib in Bihar has now withdrawn all previous edicts that had declared Shiromani Akali Dal president Sukhbir Singh Badal and the jathedars (high priests) of the Akal Takht and Takht Damdama Sahib guilty of religious misconduct. Takht Sri Patna Sahib is one of the five temporal seats of Sikhism. The Akal Takht in Amritsar is the supreme temporal seat. After the meeting, a letter was sent by Takht Sri Patna Sahib withdrawing all previous edicts, and was accepted by the Akal Takht. Subsequently, the Akal Takht here also withdrew edicts declaring three members of the Takht Patna Sahib 'tankhaiya' (guilty of religious misconduct).

Noon, Pili rivers revived in Uttar Pradesh

The renaissance of the Noon River has become an inspirational model not only for Kanpur city but for the entire Uttar Pradesh, crediting the achievement to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's 'One District - One River' initiative

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow/Kanpur (UP), July 15: Kanpur city's Noon River, which had disappeared due to silt deposition and encroachment, has started flowing again due to the UP government's initiative to revive dying rivers. This renaissance of the Noon River has become an inspirational model not only for Kanpur city but for the entire Uttar Pradesh, the state government said in a statement Tuesday, crediting the achievement to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's "One District - One River" initiative. Similarly, the Pili River, a tributary of the River Gomti in Jaunpur district, has been revived through collective efforts of the public, it said. The Noon River, which once irrigated the fields of Bilhaur,

Shivrajpur and Chaubepur and was an integral part of rural culture, had become a victim of neglect. Encroachments and silt had completely blocked the flow of water, it said. Chief Minister Adityanath's idea was to revive rivers that were once an integral part of people's lives. The "One District - One River" scheme was launched with this aim and the Noon River was selected as a model case. Led by Kanpur District Magistrate Jitendra Pratap Singh and Chief Development Officer Diksha Jain, the campaign to revive the river lay emphasis on public participation. Revenue records, accounts from villagers, drone surveys and satellite images were used to find the old route of the 48-km-long Noon River. After this, the work of cleaning, digging, silt removal and em-



bankment construction started under the MGNREGA scheme. Under this, about 6,000 workers from 58 gram panchayats did the work of digging and cleaning a stretch of about 23 km. Manual labour was used instead of machines. About Rs 57 lakh was spent in this entire process and more than 23,000 man-days were created. The cooperation of local public representatives, villagers, private companies and indus-

tries was also taken in reviving the river. Many factories that were draining polluted water into the river were closed after being given notice. The river, which had completely dried up, has come back to life with significant waterflow. Recently, under the plantation campaign, more than 40,000 saplings have been planted on the banks of the river. "Local people are very excited to see the progress of the

revival of the river," Jain said. Once choked and forgotten, the Pili River has also been revived with similar efforts. The 61.2 km-long river, with 43 km flowing through Jaunpur, originates from Dehuna village in Badlapur tehsil and meanders through villages such as Bhalua, Khanpur, Bahur, Sirikna, and Rampur before merging into the Gomti River near Belwan. From a cultural perspective, the Pili River holds a deep connection with Jaunpur's identity. As part of the revival campaign held from June 11 to July 2, a 25-km stretch of the river was rejuvenated through community participation and awareness. A key highlight of the campaign was the restoration of the ancient Shiva temple in Deoria village, located on the river's banks. District Magistrate of Jaunpur Dinesh Chandra Singh said that in line with the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign, 11,000 saplings have already been planted along both sides of the river, with a target of 51,000 to be completed by August 15, the statement said.



of the day **note**

It is sad-
dening to
note that
drug addiction is
increasing rapidly
among the youth.
The government is
fully determined to save young-
sters who are the future of India,
and pull them out from this quag-
mire (of addiction)

MOHAN YADAV | MP CM

Some media
have reported
that appar-
ently samosas/
jalebis cannot be
consumed from
now on, based
on instructions from the Health
Ministry. This is not a notification
from the Government of West
Bengal. We are not interfering in
every matter

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

Assam has
been waging a
relentless
war against illegal
infiltration of
Bangladeshi Mus-
lims for several
decades

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA |
ASSAM CHIEF MINISTER

**POST
OF THE DAY**

Praja, an NGO,
released a report
on Mumbai's public
toilets.
It said there is one
public toilet seat
for 752 male users,
but when it comes
to women, the ratio is one seat for
1,820 users.
Minister Uday Samat acted swiftly.
He ordered a probe....against the
NGO.
Slow claps

@parthpunter

SHORT TAKES

**4 bodies recovered in
Kota's Chambal river**

Kota: Authorities here Tuesday
recovered the bodies of two
men who were swept away
during a surge in the Chambal
River. Six people on a picnic
were swept away Monday
afternoon, when the water
level suddenly rose following
the release of water from 12
gates of the Kota Barrage. The
number of missing was earlier
said to be five. Police identified
the missing as Pachulal
Meghwal, 40, Ashu Meghwal,
18, Ramesh Meghwal, 35,
Sanjay Meghwal, 38, Dharmraj
Koli, 22, and Devkinand Koli,
19 — all of them natives of a
village in Kota district.

**Woman gives birth on
bus, throws baby out**

Mumbai: A 19-year-old woman
gave birth to a baby on board
a running sleeper coach bus
in Maharashtra's Parbhani
Tuesday, but she and a man
claiming to be her husband
threw the newborn out of the
window, leading to the child's
death, police said. The incident
occurred around 6.30 am on
the Pathri-Selu Road and came
to light after an alert citizen
spotted that something was
thrown out of the bus in a
wrapped cloth, an official said.

**About 200 roads
closed in Himachal**

Shimla: The Met office Tuesday
forecast heavy rainfall in two
to nine districts of Himachal
Pradesh this week and issued
yellow warning in the state,
where a total of 199 roads are
closed following rains. Since
the onset of monsoon on June
20 till July 14, about 105 people
lost their lives, 61 in rain-related
incidents and 44 in road accidents
and 184 have been injured, while
35 are missing, according to
the State Emergency Operation
Centre (SEOC).



The BJP gov-
ernment has
broken all previous
records of corruption.
From construction
projects to public
services, every sector
is plagued with com-
mission-taking and
looting

AKHILESH YADAV | SP CHIEF

**BIHAR CABINET APPROVES
PROPOSAL TO CREATE 1CR JOBS**

The Bihar Cabinet Tues-
day cleared a proposal to
create 'one crore jobs and
employment opportuni-
ties' in the next five years



**Top court grants protection to
cartoonist over PM, RSS posts**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 15: The Su-
preme Court Tuesday granted
protection from coercive ac-
tion to a cartoonist accused of
sharing alleged objectionable
cartoons of Prime Minister Na-
rendra Modi and RSS workers
on social media.

A bench of Justices Sudhans-
hu Dhulia and Aravind Kumar,
however, cautioned if he con-
tinued to share offensive posts
on social media, the state was
free to take action against him
under law. "We will have to do
something about it," the bench
said as it mulled passing orders
on abusive social media posts.

Miffed over the alleged abu-
sive online posts, it added, "Log
kisi ko bhi, kuch bhi keh dete
hain (People say anything to
anyone)."

Cartoonist Hemant Malviya
challenged in the apex court a
Madhya Pradesh High Court
order passed July 3 refusing to
grant him anticipatory bail.

He was booked by Lasudiya
police station in Indore in May

on a complaint filed by lawyer
and RSS worker Vinay Joshi.

Malviya hurt religious senti-
ments of Hindus and disturbed
communal harmony by upload-
ing objectionable material on
social media, Joshi alleged.

Advocate Vrinda Grover,
representing Malviya, on Ju-
ly 14 argued the issue related
a cartoon made in 2021 during
the Covid-19 pandemic.

"It may be unpalatable. Let
me say it is in poor taste. Let
me go to that extent. But is it
an offence? My lords have said,
it can be offensive but it is not
an offence. I am simply on law.
I am not trying to justify any-
thing," she said.

Grover agreed to delete the
alleged offensive post.

"Whatever we may do with
this case, but this is definite-
ly the case that the freedom
of speech and expression is
being abused," Justice Dhu-
lia then observed. Additional
solicitor general K M Na-
taraj, appearing for Madhya
Pradesh, said such "things"
were repeatedly done.

**UIDAI urges parents
to update children's
Aadhaar biometrics**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 15: Children
who obtained Aadhaar when
they were below the age of five,
need to mandatorily update
their biometrics after crossing
age of seven, else they will have
to face risk of deactivation of
their unique id, according to an
official statement.

The Unique Identification
Authority of India (UIDAI)
has started sending SMS mes-
sages to the mobile numbers
registered in the Aadhaar of
children for completing the
MBU (Mandatory Biometric
Update) exercise.

"Timely completion of MBU
is an essential requirement for
maintaining the accuracy and
reliability of biometric data of
children. If the MBU is not com-
pleted even after seven years of
age, the Aadhaar number may
be deactivated, as per the exist-
ing rules," the statement said.

A UIDAI official said that
children may face problems in
getting access to various Aad-
haar-linked programs if they
don't update their biometrics.
"A child under the age of five
enrols for Aadhaar by provid-
ing the photograph, name, date
of birth, gender, address and
documents of proof. The finger-
prints and iris biometrics of
a child are not captured for
Aadhaar enrolment below the
age of five." "As per existing
rules, therefore, fingerprints
iris and photo are mandatorily
required to be updated in his/
her Aadhaar when the child
reaches the age of five years.
This is called the first Manda-
tory Biometric Update (MBU),"
the statement said.

If the child performs the
MBU between the age of five
and seven years, it is free of
cost but after seven years of
age, there is a prescribed fee of
Rs 100 only for the update.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 15: The Su-
preme Court Tuesday acquitted
a man on death row in a mur-
der case, outlining the gaps in
forensic evidence and issued
countrywide directions on han-
dling of DNA samples.

A bench of Justices Vikram
Nath, Sanjay Karol and Sand-
eep Mehta directed from now
in all such cases having foren-
sic evidence, the collection of
DNA samples after due care
and compliance of all necessary
procedures, including swift and
appropriate packaging, ought
to be documented.

In the case at hand, the apex
court granted relief to the ac-
cused highlighting the investi-
gation as "faulty" and under-
lined the shortcomings in DNA
evidence collected in the case.

The bench was hearing an
appeal of the convict against
an order of the Madras High
Court passed in March, 2019.
The high court had confirmed
the death penalty in the murder
and rape case.

The convict was arrested in
the case May 28, 2011. When it
came to ironing out issues over

collection of DNA samples, the
court said, "The document
recording the collection shall
have the signatures and des-
ignations of the medical pro-
fessional present, the investi-
gating officer and independent
witnesses."

The absence of independent
witnesses should not be said
to have compromised the col-
lection of such evidence, the
court said, but the efforts to
bring such witnesses and the
inability to bring them should
be recorded.

The order entrusted the
case's investigating officer for
the transportation of the DNA
evidence to the police station
or hospital concerned and
ensure samples reached the
designated forensic science
laboratory within 48-hour from
collection.

"Should any extraneous cir-
cumstance present itself and
the 48-hours timeline cannot
be complied with, the reason
for the delay shall be duly re-
corded in the case diary," it
said. Throughout the process
requisite efforts were ordered
to be made to preserve samples
according to the requirements.



Security personnel keep vigil amid heightened security during the ongoing Amarnath Yatra, in Srinagar

PTI PHOTO

**EAM raises Pahalgam
attack at SCO meet**



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tianjin, July 15: The Shang-
hai Cooperation Organisation
(SCO) needs to remain true to
its founding objective of com-
bating terrorism and extrem-
ism and take an "uncomprom-
ising" position on combating
the challenges, External Affairs
Minister S Jaishankar said at
a conclave of the grouping on
Tuesday while strongly just-
ifying India's response to the
Pahalgam terror attack.

With his counterparts from
Pakistan, China and other SCO
member nations listening, Jais-
hankar said the Pahalgam at-
tack was "deliberately conduct-
ed" to undermine the tourism
economy of Jammu and Kash-
mir and sow a religious divide,
asserting that India will remain
firm in its response to confront
terrorism.

In an address at the SCO
foreign ministers meeting in
this Chinese city, Jaishankar
said India will continue to po-
sitively approach new ideas and
proposals, asserting that such
cooperation must be based on
"mutual respect", "sovereign
equality" and in accordance

with "territorial integrity and
sovereignty" of member states.

The remarks came against
the backdrop of growing global
criticism of China's mega
connectivity project -- the Belt
and Road Initiative (BRI) -- on
the ground that it showed dis-
regard for the sovereignty of
the nations and lacked trans-
parency.

The external affairs minis-
ter's comments calling for SCO
to adopt an "uncompromising"
position to combat terrorism
amid some disquiet in New Del-
hi over Beijing's tacit support
to Islamabad during Operation
Sindoor as well as instances of
China blocking efforts at the
UN Security Council to sanc-
tion Pakistan-based terrorists.

In his address, Jaishankar
also flagged concerns over
"conflicts, competition and
coercion" as well as economic
instability and underlined the
need to stabilise the global or-
der and address longstanding
challenges that "threaten our
collective interests".

The major focus of the exter-
nal affairs minister's address
was his call to effectively deal
with terrorism.

Jaishankar said the UN Secu-
rity Council condemned the at-
tack and underlined the need to
hold perpetrators, organisers,
financiers and sponsors of the
reprehensible act and bring
them to justice. The external
affairs minister said India has
done "exactly that" and it will
continue doing so.

"The three evils that SCO
was founded to combat were
terrorism, separatism and ex-
tremism. Not surprisingly, they
often occur together. Recently,
we in India witnessed a graphic
example in the terrorist attack
in Pahalgam on April 22," Jais-
hankar said.

"The UN Security Council, of
which some of us are current-
ly members, issued a statement
that condemned it in the stron-
gest terms and 'underlined the
need to hold perpetrators, or-
ganisers, financiers and spon-
sors of this reprehensible act
of terrorism accountable and
bring them to justice'," he said.

India launched Operation
Sindoor May 7, targeting ter-
rorist infrastructure in terri-
tories controlled by Pakistan
in response to the Pahalgam
terror attack. The strikes
triggered four days of intense
clashes that ended with an un-
derstanding on stopping the
military actions May 10.

The external affairs minister
also listed India's initiatives in
the SCO in various domains
ranging from startup and inno-
vation to traditional medicine
and digital public infrastruc-
ture.

"We will continue to posi-
tively approach new ideas and
proposals that are genuinely for
our collective good," he said.

No warning labels on samosa & jalebi, govt clarifies

*The ministry has urged all ministries and departments
to install displays of boards mentioning the sugar and
oil content in snacks such as samosa, kachori, pizza,
burger, french fries, soft drinks, gulab jamun and
vadapav to promote healthy lifestyles and combat
obesity and non-communicable diseases*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 15: The
Union Health Ministry Tuesday
termed reports claiming it has
directed vendors to put warn-
ing labels on food items such
as samosas, jalebis and laddos
as "misleading, incorrect, and
baseless".

It clarified that its adviso-
ry on health messaging about
hidden fats and excess sugar in
various food items is not a di-
rective for vendors to put warn-

ing labels on their products,
and underlined that it does not
target India's rich street food
culture.

The general advisory is a be-
havioural nudge to make people
aware of hidden fats and excess
sugar in all food products, and
not specifically to any particu-
lar food product, the ministry
said in a statement.

The advisory mentions oth-
er messages promoting healthy
food such as fruits, vegetables
and low-fat options and mak-



ing suggestions for people to
opt for physical activity, such
as the use of stairs and short
exercises.

The ministry had separately

issued an advisory, which is
an initiative towards making
healthier choices at workplac-
es. It advises displaying boards
in workplaces to raise aware-

ness on the harmful consump-
tion of hidden fats and excess
sugar in various food items.

These boards are meant to
serve as daily reminders on
fighting obesity, the burden of
which is sharply rising in the
country, the statement said.

"The health ministry adviso-
ry does not direct warning
labels on food products sold by
vendors, and has not been se-
lective towards Indian snacks.
It does not target India's rich
street food culture," it clarified.

The initiative is part of the
ministry's flagship initiatives
under the National Programme
for Prevention and Control of
Non-Communicable Diseases.

Excessive consumption of oil
and sugar is a key contributor
to the rising rate of obesity, di-
abetes, hypertension and other
lifestyle-related diseases.

The ministry has urged all
ministries and departments
to install displays of boards
mentioning the sugar and oil
content in snacks such as sa-
mosa, kachori, pizza, burger,
french fries, soft drinks, gulab
jamun and vadapav to promote
healthy lifestyles and combat
obesity and non-communicable
diseases.

It has also called for printing
health messages on all official
stationery such as letterheads,
envelopes, notepads, folders
and publications to reinforce
daily reminders on fighting
obesity.

While the oil board men-
tioned snacks such as French
fries, burgers, pizza, samosa,
pakodas and vadapav, the sug-
ar board included items such
as soft drinks, gulab jamun and
chocolate pastries.

of the day

quote

We have reached a common understanding with Israel to really improve the situation on the ground, but it's not about the paper, but actually implementation of the paper

KAJA KALLAS | EUROPEAN UNION'S FOREIGN POLICY CHIEF

The multilateral system is being tested, and our collective ability to respond will shape the pace of our recovery, but also the prospects for inclusive and sustainable development. As the G20, we have the responsibility to demonstrate leadership

DR DUNCAN PIETERSE | DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL TREASURY OF SOUTH AFRICA

All the accusations are false. I never violated democracy or the constitution

JAIR BOLSONARO | FORMER BRAZIL PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

SIA checks Boeing 787 fuel switches

Singapore: Singapore Airlines Tuesday said all fuel switches on its Boeing 787 aircraft -- as well as those belonging to its subsidiary Scoot -- are functioning properly in compliance with regulatory requirements. "As a precautionary measure, SIA and Scoot have carried out and completed checks on the fuel switches of the Boeing 787 aircraft in our fleet," the Channel News Asia quoted SIA as saying. SIA has 26 B787 planes in its fleet, while its low-cost, wholly owned subsidiary Scoot has 23. "The safety of our customers and staff is our top priority," said SIA, which is a 25.1 per cent partner of Air India and operator of daily SIA-Scoot flights to India. The Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) is also working with SIA and Scoot to conduct inspections of the fuel control switches of all active Singapore-registered Boeing 737, 787 and 747-400F aircraft, according to the Channel report. "There have been no findings from the inspections to date," CAAS said. India, South Korea, and Japan had reported similar moves after a preliminary report on last month's Air India crash showed that the controls of the Boeing 787 Dreamliner were moved from the "run" to "cutoff" position, starving the engines of fuel, according to media reports.

HK to regulate ride-hailing apps

Hong Kong: The Hong Kong government Tuesday unveiled proposals to regulate online ride-hailing services provided by tech companies like Uber, requiring platforms, cars, and drivers to be licensed before hitting the road. In a document sent to the legislature, transport officials said those companies applying for a license would need to have business registration and an office in the city. They also said the platforms would have to fulfil certain conditions on operating experience, proof of financial capability and capital investment, in addition to ensuring the cars and drivers working for them had already purchased the required insurance. Under the licensing plans, eligible drivers must have held a private car driving license for at least one year and have no serious traffic convictions within five years. The drivers also need to pass a test and complete training. Officials plan to set a quota on the number of vehicles allowed to be run under the policy, adding that the cars cannot be over seven years old and have to pass an annual inspection.

Putin, unfazed by Trump, to fight on

Kremlin believes Russia's economy and its military are strong enough to weather any additional Western measures

REUTERS

Moscow, July 15: President Vladimir Putin intends to keep fighting in Ukraine until the West engages on his terms for peace, unfazed by Donald Trump's threats of tougher sanctions, and his territorial demands may widen as Russian forces advance, three sources close to the Kremlin said.

Putin, who ordered Russian troops into Ukraine in February 2022 after eight years of fighting in country's east between Russian-backed separatists and Ukrainian troops, believes Russia's economy and its military are strong enough to weather any additional Western measures, the sources said.

Trump Monday expressed frustration with Putin's refusal to agree a ceasefire and announced a wave of weapons supplies to Ukraine, including Patriot surface-to-air missile systems. He also threatened further sanctions on Russia unless a peace deal was reached within 50 days.

The three Russian sources, familiar with top-level Kremlin thinking, said Putin will not stop the war under pressure from the West and believes Russia - which has survived the toughest sanctions imposed by the West- can endure further economic hardship, including

Netanyahu under pressure after religious party quits coalition



REUTERS

Jerusalem, July 15: A religious party has quit Israel's ruling coalition in a dispute over military service, leaving Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with a razor-thin majority in parliament but still enough political support to secure a potential Gaza ceasefire.

Six members of United Torah Judaism (UTJ) handed in resignation letters overnight from posts in parliamentary committees and government ministries, in protest against lawmakers' failure to guarantee future exemption from military conscription for ultra-Orthodox religious students.

Shas, a second ultra-Orthodox party closely allied with UTJ, may follow and leave the government with no parliament majority.

The UTJ lawmakers said their walkout would come into effect after 48 hours, giving Netanyahu two days to try and resolve the crisis which has dogged his coalition for months.

Even if that fails, parliament goes on summer break at the end of July, which would give the prime minister a further three months to seek a solution before any loss of his majority could threaten his position.

Netanyahu is also facing pressure from far-right parties in his coalition over ceasefire talks underway in Qatar.

The indirect negotiations between Israel and Palestinian militant group Hamas aim to halt fighting in Gaza for 60 days to allow half of remaining hostages held by Hamas to be released and aid to flow into the battered enclave.

It would also open a further phase of talks on ending the war entirely.

National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich want Israel to press on with the war, but Netanyahu would still be likely to have enough cabinet votes to secure a ceasefire without them.



threatened US tariffs targeting buyers of Russian oil.

"Putin thinks no one has seriously engaged with him on the details of peace in Ukraine - including the Americans - so he will continue until he gets what he wants," one of the sources told Reuters on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the situation.

Despite several telephone calls between Trump and Putin, and visits to Russia by US special envoy Steve Witkoff, the Russian leader believes there have not been detailed discussions of the basis for a peace plan, the source said.

"Putin values the relationship with Trump and had good dis-

cussions with Witkoff, but the interests of Russia come above all else," the person added.

The White House did not respond to a request for comment for this story.

Putin's conditions for peace include a legally binding pledge that NATO will not expand eastwards, Ukrainian neutrality and limits on its armed forces, protection for Russian speakers who live there, and acceptance of Russia's territorial gains, the sources said.

He is also willing to discuss a security guarantee for Ukraine involving major powers, though it is far from clear how this would work, the sources said.

Thousands of Afghans resettled in UK under secret programme

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, July 15: Thousands of Afghans including many who worked with British forces have been secretly resettled in the UK after a leak of data on their identities raised fears that they could be targeted by the Taliban, the British government revealed Tuesday.

The government now plans to close the secret route.

Defence Secretary John Healey said a dataset containing the personal information of nearly 19,000 Afghans who had applied to come to Britain after the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan was released in error in 2022, and extracts were later published online.

That prompted the then-Conservative government to set up a secret programme to resettle



the Afghans. The government obtained a court order known as a super injunction that barred anyone from revealing its existence.

The injunction was lifted Tuesday in conjunction with a decision by Britain's current Labour Party government to make the programme public. It said an independent review had found little evidence that the leaked data would expose Afghans to greater risk of retribution from the Taliban.

"I have felt deeply concerned

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said Ukraine will never recognise Russia's sovereignty over its conquered regions and that Kyiv retains the sovereign right to decide whether it wants to join NATO. His office did not respond to a request for comment for this story.

However, a second source familiar with Kremlin thinking said that Putin considered Moscow's goals far more important than any potential economic losses from Western pressure, and he was not concerned by US threats to impose tariffs on China and India for buying Russian oil.

Two of the sources said that Russia has the upper hand on the battlefield and its economy, geared towards war, is exceeding the production of the US-led NATO alliance in key munitions, like artillery shells.

Russia, which already controls nearly one-fifth of Ukrainian territory, has advanced some 1,415 square km (546 square miles) in the past three months, according to data from the DeepStateMap, an open-source intelligence map of the conflict.

"Appetite comes with eating," the first source said, meaning that Putin could seek more territory unless the war was stopped. The two other sources independently confirmed the same.

about the lack of transparency to Parliament and the public," Healey told lawmakers in the House of Commons.

About 4,500 people – 900 applicants and approximately 3,600 family members — have been brought to Britain under the secret programme, and about 6,900 people are expected to be relocated by the time it closes, at a total cost of 850 million pounds (\$1.1 billion).

About 36,000 more Afghans have been relocated to the UK under other resettlement routes. British troops were sent to Afghanistan as part of a deployment against al-Qaida and Taliban forces in the wake of the Sept 11, 2001, attacks. At the peak of the operation there were almost 10,000 British troops in the country, mostly in Helmand province in the south.

IRAQI OIL FIELD ON FIRE AFTER DRONE STRIKE

An oil field in Iraq's Dohuk province was set ablaze Tuesday after being struck by a drone. It is the latest in a series of similar attacks launched recently against oil facilities in northern Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdish region.



Israel strikes military tanks in southern Syria



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Busra-Al Harir, July 15: Israel's army has said it struck military tanks in southern Syria, where government forces and Bedouin tribes clashed with Druze militias in the latest escalation in the Middle East country struggling for stability after a 13-year civil war.

Dozens of people have been killed in the fighting between local militias and clans in Syria's Sweida province. Government security forces that were sent to restore order on Monday also clashed with local armed groups.

Syria's Interior Ministry has said more than 30 people have died and nearly 100 others have been injured. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a UK-based war monitor, reported at least 99 dead, including two children, two women and 14 members of the security forces.

The clashes in Syria initially broke out between armed groups from the Druze and Sunni Bedouin clans, the observatory said, with some members of the government security forces "actively participating" in support of the Bedouins.

Syrian Interior Ministry spokesperson Nouredine al-Baba said government forces entered Sweida in the early morning to restore order.

"Some clashes occurred with outlawed armed groups, but our forces are doing their best to prevent any civilian casualties," he told the state-run Al-Ikhbariya TV.

Al-Baba told The Associated Press that the "clashes are fundamentally not sectarian in nature."

"The real conflict is between the state and bandits and criminals, not between the state and any Syrian community," he said. "On the contrary, the state views the Druze community in

Sweida as a partner in advancing the national unity project."

Rami Abdurrahman, who heads the observatory, said the conflict started with the kidnapping and robbery of a Druze vegetable seller by members of a Bedouin tribe who set up a checkpoint, leading to tit-for-tat attacks and kidnappings.

The Interior Ministry described the situation as a dangerous escalation that "comes in the absence of the relevant official institutions, which has led to an exacerbation of the state of chaos, the deterioration of the security situation, and the inability of the local community to contain the situation."

UN Deputy Special Envoy for Syria Najat Rochdi expressed "deep concern" over the violence and urged the government and local groups to "take immediate steps to protect civilians, restore calm, and prevent incitement."

She said in a statement that the clashes underscored the "urgent need for genuine inclusion, trust-building, and meaningful dialogue to advance a credible and inclusive political transition in Syria."

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said in a statement that the Israeli military "attacked targets in Syria as a message and a clear warning to the Syrian regime — we will not allow harm to the Druze in Syria."

In Israel, the Druze are seen as a loyal minority and often serve in the armed forces.

While many Druze in Syria have said they do not want Israel to intervene on their behalf, factions from the Druze minority have also been suspicious of the new authorities in Damascus after former President Bashar Assad fled the country in December during a rebel offensive led by Sunni Islamist insurgent groups.

B'desh struggles to contain fallout of last year's uprising

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dhaka, July 15: Bangladesh was on the cusp of charting a new beginning last year after its former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was removed from power in a student-led uprising, ending her 15-year rule and forcing her to flee to India. As the head of a new interim government, Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus promised to hold a credible election to return to democracy, initiate electoral and constitutional reforms and restore peace on the streets after hundreds were killed in weeks of violence that began on July 15, 2024.

A year later, the Yunus-led administration has struggled to contain the fallout of the uprising. Bangladesh finds itself mired in a growing political uncertainty, religious polarisation and a challenging law-and-order situation.

Chaotic political landscape

Uncertainty about the future of democracy looms large in Bangladesh. The student protesters who toppled Hasina formed a new political party, promising to break the overwhelming influence of two major dynastic political parties — the Bangladesh Nationalists Party, or BNP, and Hasina's Awami League.

But the party's opponents have accused it of being close to the Yunus-led administration and creating chaos for political



mileage by using state institutions.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh's political landscape has further fragmented after the country's largest Islamist party, the Jamaat-e-Islami, returned to politics more than a decade after it was suppressed by Hasina's government.

Aligned with the student-led party, it's trying to fill the vacuum left by the Awami League, which was banned in May. Its leader, Hasina, is facing trial for crimes against humanity. The strength of Jamaat-e-Islami, which opposed Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan in 1971, is unknown.

Both BNP and the Jamaat-e-Islami party are now at loggerheads over establishing supremacy within the administration and judiciary, and even

university campuses.

Yunus wants reforms before election

Yunus has delayed an election because he wants reforms — from changes to the constitution and elections to the judiciary and police. Discussions with political parties, except Hasina's Awami League, are ongoing.

Some of the reforms include putting a limit on how many times a person can become the prime minister, introduction of a two-tier parliament, and appointment of a chief justice. There appears to be little consensus over some basic reforms. While both the BNP and the Jamaat-e-Islami parties have agreed to some of them with conditions, other proposals for basic constitutional reforms have become a

sticking point.

The Jamaat-e-Islami also wants to give the interim government more time to complete reforms before heading into polls, while BNP has been calling for an early election. The student-led party mostly follows the pattern of the Jamaat-e-Islami party.

"There's a divide between those that want to see through reforms and give them more time, and those that feel it's time to wrap things up and focus on elections," he says.

Human rights and the rise of Islamists

Human rights in Bangladesh have remained a serious concern under Yunus.

Minority groups, especially Hindus, have blamed his administration for failing to protect them adequately. The Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council says minority Hindus and others have been targeted in hundreds of attacks over the last year. Hasina's party has also blamed the interim government for arresting tens of thousands of its supporters.

The Yunus-led administration denies these allegations.

Meenakshi Ganguly, deputy Asia director for Human Rights Watch, says while the interim government has stopped enforced disappearances and extrajudicial executions that had occurred under the Hasina government, "there has been little progress on lasting security

sector reforms or to deliver on the pledge to create robust, independent institutions."

Meanwhile, Islamist factions — some of whom have proposed changes to women's rights and demanded introduction of Sharia law — are vying for power. Many of them are planning to build alliances with bigger parties like the BNP or the Jamaat-e-Islami.

Such factions have historically struggled to gain significant electoral support despite Bangladesh being a Muslim majority, and their rise is expected to further fragment the country's political landscape.

Diplomatic pivot and balancing with global powers

During Hasina's 15-year rule, Bangladesh was India's closest partner in South Asia. After her ouster, the Yunus-led administration has moved closer to China.

Yunus' first state visit was to China in March, a trip that saw him secure investments, loans and grants.

Globally, Yunus seems to have strong backing from the West and the United Nations, and it appears Bangladesh will continue its foreign policy, which has long tried to find a balance between multiple foreign powers.

In January, the Trump administration suspended USAID funds to Bangladesh, which had sought significant levels of US support during a critical rebuild period post Hasina's ouster.

business

of the day quote

India's ethanol production capacity has grown by over 140 per cent since 2018, with investments exceeding ₹40,000 crore

DEEPAK BALLANI | DIRECTOR GENERAL, ISMA

This Joint venture with Chongqing will focus on manufacturing precision mechanical & metal parts and components for a wide range of applications including laptops, mobiles, IOT, automotive and supporting the Make in India initiative

ATUL B LALL | VC, DIXON TECHNOLOGIES (INDIA)

The Reserve Bank of India has been guarding the rupee at the ₹60.00 level and on Tuesday also ensured that the rupee opens a tad higher than ₹66. For tomorrow (Wednesday), we expect the rupee to be in the range of ₹65.50-₹66.10 with expectations of more flows

ANIL KUMAR BHANSALI | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FINREX TREASURY ADVISORS LLP

SHORT TAKES

BoM Q1 profit rises

New Delhi: State-owned Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) Tuesday reported 23 per cent increase in net profit to ₹1,593 crore during the first quarter, helped by decline in bad loans and improvement in interest income. The Pune-based lender had posted a net profit of ₹1,293 crore in the April-June period of the previous year. Total income in the quarter under review rose to ₹7,879 crore from ₹6,769 crore in the same period a year ago, BoM said in a regulatory filing. Interest earned by the bank grew to ₹7,054 crore as compared to ₹5,875 crore in June quarter FY25. The bank's asset quality showed improvement as gross non-performing assets (NPAs) declined to 1.74 per cent of gross advances at the end of June quarter FY26 from 1.85 per cent a year ago.

Kia expands EV lineup

New Delhi: Kia India Tuesday expanded its electric vehicle portfolio in the country with the launch of its first locally produced electric vehicle Carens Clavis EV. The automaker will roll out the model from its Anantapur-based manufacturing plant in Andhra Pradesh. Kia already sells two imported electric vehicles -- EV6 and EV9 -- in the country. The Carens Clavis EV comes with two battery options: 42kWh with ARAI-certified 404 km range and 51.4 kWh with ARAI-certified 490 km range, prices from ₹17.99 lakh to ₹24.49 lakh (ex-showroom).

ICICI Pru Life Q1 net profit jumps

New Delhi: ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Tuesday reported a 34 per cent growth in net profit at ₹302 crore for the June quarter of 2025-26 fiscal. The private sector insurer had a net profit of ₹225 crore in the April-June period of FY25. Net premium income of the insurance firm rose to ₹8,503 crore at the end of June quarter of FY26, from ₹7,875 crore in the corresponding period of FY25.

HDB Fin Services Q1 net profit dips

New Delhi: HDB Financial Services Tuesday reported a 2.4 per cent decline in net profit at ₹568 crore for the first quarter of this financial year. Its net profit was at ₹582 crore during April-June quarter of 2024-15. HDB Financial Services, a subsidiary of HDFC Bank, said in a regulatory filing. The company said its net total income was at ₹2,726 crore.



As India undertakes its green transition, the role of capital markets and particularly alternative investment funds (AIFs) will be critical

RUCHI CHOJER | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SEBI

RBI LAUNCHES QUARTERLY INDUSTRIAL OUTLOOK SURVEY

The Reserve Bank Tuesday said it has launched the quarterly industrial outlook survey of the Indian manufacturing sector to assess business sentiments. It has also launched the 46th round of the quarterly Services and Infrastructure Outlook Survey (SIOS). The 111th round of the quarterly IOS of the Indian manufacturing sector will assess business sentiments for the current quarter (Q2:2025-26) and expectations for the ensuing quarter (Q3:2025-26), based on responses on a set of indicators



Trade deficit narrows to \$18.78bn

India's June merchandise trade deficit stood at \$18.78 billion, lower than economists' expectations. Despite trade tensions, government is actively pursuing structural reforms, negotiating FTAs to boost exports

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 15: India's exports remained flat at \$35.14 billion in June due to global economic uncertainties, while trade deficit narrowed to a four-month low of \$18.78 billion during the month, the government data showed Tuesday. Exports in June last year were at \$35.16 billion. Imports declined 3.71 per cent year-on-year to \$53.92 billion during the month due to fall in the inbound shipments of crude oil and gold. Key export sectors, including petroleum, fabrics, gems and jewellery, leather,



iron ore, oil seeds, cashew, spices, tobacco, and coffee, recorded negative growth during the month under review. The shipments of petroleum products dipped 15.92 per cent to \$4.61 billion in June, and 15.63 per cent to \$17.4 billion during the first quarter. However, exports of engineering, tea, rice, ready-made garments of all textiles, chemicals, marine products, and pharma have registered positive growth. Electronic goods' shipments rose 46.93 per cent to \$4.14 billion in June. It was up 47.11 per cent to \$12.4 billion during the

April-June quarter this fiscal year. During April-June 2025-26, exports increased 1.92 per cent to \$112.17 billion, while imports rose 4.24 per cent to \$179.44 billion, according to the data. Merchandise trade deficit during April-June 2025 widened to \$67.26 billion as compared to \$62.10 billion in same quarter last fiscal year. Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said the country's goods and services exports during the first quarter on 2025-26 is estimated at \$210 billion, which is an increase of about 6 per cent year-on-year.

Sensex rises 317 pts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 15: Stock markets snapped the four-day falling streak Tuesday with the benchmark Sensex rebounding by 317 points on buying in auto and pharma shares amid a decline in retail inflation to a more than six-year low, nearing the RBI's comfort zone. The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 317.45 points or 0.39 per cent to settle at 82,570.91. The 50-share NSE Nifty edged higher by 113.50 points or 0.45 per cent to 25,195.80. In the last four trading days, the Sensex dropped 1,459.05 points or 1.74 per cent and the Nifty declined by 440 points or 1.72 per cent. Among Sensex firms, Sun Pharma, Trent, Tata Motors, Bajaj Finserv, Mahindra & Mahindra and Bajaj Finance were the major gainers.

However, HCL Tech declined 3.31 per cent after the IT services firm reported a 9.7 per cent drop in consolidated net profit for the June quarter, hurt by higher expenses and the one-time impact of a client bankruptcy. Eternal, Tata Steel, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Axis Bank were also the laggards. The BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.95 per cent and midcap index went up by 0.83 per cent. Among BSE sectoral indices, auto (1.48 per cent), healthcare (1.14 per cent), consumer discretionary (0.89 per cent), FMCG (0.80 per cent), realty (0.77 per cent) and services (0.58 per cent) were the gainers. Utilities emerged as the only laggard. As many as 2,576 stocks advanced while 1,479 declined and 160 remained unchanged on the BSE. In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225 index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng settled in the positive territory while Shanghai's SSE Composite index ended lower.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 15: Artificial Intelligence, the disruptive tech force reshaping industries and daily life, will create far more opportunities than it eliminates, Deloitte South Asia CEO Romal Shetty said emphasising that critical thinking and ethical oversight must stay central as society adapts to this new era. Weighing in on the ongoing debate over whether or not AI may cause a lowering of human cognitive abilities overtime, Shetty told that developing independent and crit-

PV sales drop in April-June

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 15: Domestic passenger vehicle sales declined 1.4 per cent to 10,11,882 units in the first quarter of this fiscal from 10,26,006 in the corresponding quarter of last fiscal, Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) said Tuesday. Total two-wheelers sales also fell by 6.2 per cent to 46,74,562 units during the April-June quarter compared to 49,85,631 units in the period a year earlier. The commercial vehicle (CV) saw a marginal 0.6 per

cent fall in sales to 2,23,215 units in the June quarter of the current fiscal from 2,24,575 units in the first quarter of the previous fiscal. The three-wheeler segment, however, logged a marginal growth of 0.1 per cent at 1,65,211 units in the first quarter of FY26 against 1,65,081 units in the April-June period of last fiscal, SIAM said at a media briefing here. "Passenger vehicle sales in Q1 of 2025-26 de-grew by (-) 1.4 per cent, posting sales of 1.01 million units as compared to Q1 of the previous year. Sales

of three-wheelers in the first quarter grew marginally by 0.1 per cent compared to last year, with 1.65 Lakh units, which is the highest ever in Q1," said Rajesh Menon, Director General at SIAM. Passenger vehicle sales have crossed the 1-million mark in the first quarter for the second time in the last two years; the automobile industry body said and added that due to lower sales in the later part of the quarter, the Q1 volumes were lower by a negative 1.4 per cent as compared to Q1 of 2024-25.

SPAM ALERT

Telcos roll out suffix on SMS headers to identify spam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 15: Mobile users will now be able to differentiate between genuine and spam SMS as telecom operators have rolled out suffixes that will appear before the sender's name or header, industry body the Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), said Tuesday. COAI, which represents telecom operators like Reliance Jio, Airtel, Vodafone Idea, expressed concern over spammers taking the route of over-the-top or internet messaging apps which defeats the purpose of enforcing stringent measures to check spam and fraud messages. "All telecom service providers (TSPs) have implemented the promotional ('P'), service-related ('S'), transactional ('T') and government ('G') communications suffix system on SMS headers, as mandated by the Telecom Commercial Communication Customer Preference

Regulations (TCCCPR) vide its Amendment to the TCCCP Regulation dated 12th February 2025," COAI Director General, SP Kochhar said in a statement. He said that the implementation has enhanced transparency and consumer protection as such categorization enables subscribers to easily identify the nature of incoming messages, reducing spam, strengthening compliance and improving overall trust and convenience for users. "Users can easily identify and differentiate promotional, service-related, transactional and government messages at a glance. Clearly marking promotional messages ('P') and thus, helping subscribers avoid unwanted marketing communication, effectively reducing spam. Customers can readily identify genuine transactional ('T') and service-related ('S') messages, reducing the likelihood of fraud or scams," Kochhar said.

Tesla debuts in India with pricey Model Y



REUTERS

Mumbai, July 15: Tesla Tuesday launched its Model Y at about \$70,000 in India, the highest price among major markets. With deliveries estimated to start from the third quarter, Tesla is targeting a niche electric vehicle segment in India that accounts for just 4 per cent of overall sales in the world's third-largest car market. It will compete mainly with German luxury giants such as BMW and Mercedes-Benz rather than domestic mass-market EV players such as Tata Motors and Mahindra.

Tesla opened its first showroom in Mumbai Tuesday and began taking Model Y orders on its website, marking its long-awaited entry into the market where Musk once had plans to open a factory. For now, Tesla will import cars into a country where tariffs and related duties can exceed 100 per cent, driving up the price for consumers. Grappling with excess capacity in global factories and declining sales, Tesla has adopted a strategy of selling imported vehicles in India, despite the duties and levies.

US EV maker has long lobbied India for lower import tariffs on cars, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's officials remain in talks with US President Donald Trump's administration to lower the levies under a bilateral trade deal. But the cars Tesla displayed in Mumbai were made in China, and its US factories do not currently make the right-hand drive vehicles that are used in India. Tesla's Model Y rear-wheel drive is priced at about 6 million rupees (\$70,000), while its Model Y long-range rear-wheel drive costs 6.8 million rupees. That compares with a starting price from \$44,990 in America, 263,500 yuan (\$36,700) in China, and 45,970 euros (\$53,700) in Germany. The firm's Full Self-Driving (FSD) capability is on offer at an additional cost of 600,000 rupees, with future updates promised to enable operation with minimal driver intervention. "In the future we wish to see R&D and manufacturing done in India, and I am sure at an appropriate stage Tesla will think about it," Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said.

BIZ BUZZ

Listenlights, KIIT to build Center of Excellence

Bhubaneswar: Listenlights Engineering and Construction, India's Largest MEP GC service provider for Data Centers (in terms of completed capacity) has partnered with the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) to help Mechanical, Electrical and Civil engineering students get real-world experience and become industry ready. This new partnership brings together classroom learnings and on-site training that enables students to build a strong career from day one. Memorandum of understanding (MOU) to this effect was signed last week. This partnership brings Work Integrated Learning Program (WILP). It allows Junior Engineer Trainees (JETs) and Graduate Engineer Trainees (GETs) of Listenlights, can earn B.Tech or M.Tech degrees from KIIT while continuing their jobs.

TPWODL to complete two new Feeder lines

Sundergarh: TP Western Odisha Distribution Limited (TPWODL), a joint venture between Tata Power and the Government of Odisha, is nearing completion of two major 33KV feeder line projects in Sundergarh district. Project Subdega Feeder Line, under Sundergarh Electrical Division, connects Karamdihhi PSS to Subdega PSS through a newly constructed 16 circuit-kilometre (ckm) line. It replaces an overloaded 55 sq.mm ACSR line with a more robust 232 sq.mm AACR line and includes 13-meter RS Joist poles. Simultaneously, another project is underway to link Lindra PSS to Nuagaon Megalift under the Hatibari section of Rajgangpur Electrical Division. This 9 ckm line is designed to create an N-1 redundancy by connecting the 33/11KV PSSs at Koel Nagar, Lindra, and Nuagaon. It will also support the proposed 3.3 MVA load of the upcoming industrial park. "These two projects mark a major step toward building resilient and future-ready infrastructure for both rural and industrial needs," said Parveen Verma, CEO, TPWODL. "

Vedanta illuminates rural Odisha

Bhubaneswar: Vedanta Aluminium, has installed 96 solar-powered streetlights across 21 villages in the Kalahandi and Rayagada districts of Odisha. The streetlights serve as the sole source of illumination in previously unlit areas within the community. This green initiative will provide reliable, energy-efficient lighting to over 5,000 residents while contributing to the reduction of approximately 22 tonnes of CO2 equivalent emissions annually. This is part of an initiative to install 150 solar-powered streetlights in the region targeting key locations such as marketplaces, village entrances, bus stands, community centres, schools, and main roads. The intervention is set to improve the overall quality of life for locals. Besides, it also reinforces the company's commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 7 (Affordable & Clean Energy), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities & Communities), and SDG 13 (Climate Action).Rajiv Kumar, CEO, Vedanta Aluminium, said, "At Vedanta Aluminium, our community development programs are tailored to the specific needs of the regions we serve." Jagannath Naik Nayab, Sarpanch, SungenGram Panchayat - Kashipur Block, said, "Vedanta's solar-lighting initiative has not only brightened our villages but also made them safer for everyone."

Critical thinking, ethical oversight must in AI era

At advanced stages, AI can serve as an extremely helpful and a must-have tool, aiding, not replacing, human ingenuity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 15: Artificial Intelligence, the disruptive tech force reshaping industries and daily life, will create far more opportunities than it eliminates, Deloitte South Asia CEO Romal Shetty said emphasising that critical thinking and ethical oversight must stay central as society adapts to this new era. Weighing in on the ongoing debate over whether or not AI may cause a lowering of human cognitive abilities overtime, Shetty told that developing independent and crit-

ical thinking is crucial when it comes to young minds. That said, at more advanced stages, AI can serve as an extremely helpful and a must-have tool, aiding, not replacing, human ingenuity. His comments assume significance against the backdrop of a new study from researchers at MIT's Media Lab on impact of GenAI on critical thinking abilities. It revealed that although AI tools can improve efficiency, in the study those who relied excessively on GenAI, overtime remembered less. Highlighting the rise of innovations such as drone deliver-



ies to generative AI architects, Shetty cited a recent study that projected that for every one job lost, nearly two new jobs are ex-

pected to be created, a pattern he said confirms to trends even in the past tech revolutions. "AI is probably the most

disruptive thing that has happened in our lifetime...in this decade at least it is the biggest disruption. And it is both. It can disrupt but it can also create many more things," Shetty said. Over the past 100 to 200 years, whether during the Industrial Revolution or other major transformations, unemployment did not rise significantly, in fact, it generally declined. "Newer jobs will get created compared to the past. The old specific jobs could probably go out but newer jobs will be created," he stressed. Citing real-world examples of AI's transformative impact,

he said while the food delivery platforms, or other apps deliver items in a conventional way today, drones could soon handle such tasks at scale. Managing such complexities would demand advanced air traffic control systems powered by AI, he said highlighting how new technologies will create entirely new job categories and roles that didn't exist before. Drone are also beginning to be used extensively in conflict zones, he noted and added that all of these scenarios are driving requirement for AI-driven air traffic management, with human oversight and controls.

Jadeja's experience, skillset rare: Gill

AGENCIES

London, July 15: India skipper Shubman Gill lauded senior allrounder Ravindra Jadeja and the team's lower order for keeping the contest alive and pushing the Lord's Test into the final session, with India coming close to a remarkable victory before falling short by 22 runs.

Resuming from 58/4, England's fast bowlers were right on the money as India were eight down when lunch break came. But Ravindra Jadeja refused to buckle in, hitting a gritty and magnificent 61 not out off 181 balls, stitching patient and resolute stands of 30, 35 and 23 with Nitish Reddy, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj, respectively, to drag India close.

Despite Jadeja and the lower-order giving it their all, India were so close yet so far to registering a miraculous victory by being bowled out for 170 in 74.5 overs.

Gill reserved special praise for the standout all-rounder, who notched up his fourth consecutive half-century of the series and played a crucial role on the final day, scoring 61 of the team's 99 runs while facing 30 of the 55 overs during his gritty stay at the crease.

"He (Jadeja) is one of the most valuable players in India. I think the experience that he brings in, the skill set that he brings with his bowling, batting and fielding is something that is very rare and hard to find. And



the kind of composure that he showed today, it was just tremendous to watch," Gill said.

"I think batting with the lower order of the tail has been one of the things that we spoke about in the previous two matches, that our lower order of the tail hasn't been contributing as much. But I think the character and the courage that they showed was tremendous," he said.

"The way we were in the game till the end, it felt like we could go very close if a partnership had added another 10 runs. And I think it's a very proud effort from the team," he added.

win when Stokes and Archer picked three wickets, including of Rishabh Pant and KL Rahul, in the first hour, before Woakes took out Nitish Kumar Reddy at the stroke of lunch.

"I think we didn't play as well yesterday and today. I think in the top order, it was important that if we had a partnership of one or two (pairs) worth 50 runs, then we would have seen that after 30-40 overs, it would have been easier to bat. So, that was our effort. But unfortunately, I think this is the first time that we didn't perform as well as we have done in the series. But it happens sometimes," Gill admitted.

"We thought 193 was still chaseable at the end of the day. We had to play 20-25 overs well. We had to try to have a 50-run partnership or two 50-run partnerships. The deeper the match, the easier it would have been for us," he said.

England were put on course for a memorable

INDIA MEN, WOMEN TEAMS MEET KING CHARLES III

London: A day after the dramatic conclusion of the third Test at Lord's, the Indian men's and women's cricket team met King Charles III at St James's Palace in London. The visit came a day after the men's side narrowly lost to England by 22 runs in a gripping match that left the hosts 2-1 ahead in the five-match Test series. After sealing the first-ever T20 series win against England on their home soil, the Indian women's team are all set to take on the hosts in the three-match ODI series, starting from Wednesday. Led by captain Shubman Gill, the Indian squad included vice-captain Rishabh Pant, Jasprit Bumrah, KL Rahul, and head coach Gautam Gambhir. The team, dressed in formal attire, was introduced to the British monarch in the serene surroundings of Clarence House Garden. King Charles spent a few moments with the players, exchanging pleasantries and sharing light-hearted conversations. Despite the recent defeat, the atmosphere during the meeting was cheerful. The players, who had fought hard in the Test match, welcomed the opportunity to unwind and enjoy a rare royal interaction.

HERE . NOW

OrissaPOST

MEETLE MEET 2025

QUIZ Extravaganza

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

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

TODAY'S QUESTION

July 16: In 1945, this day marked the successful test detonation of the first atomic bomb, codenamed 'Trinity' by J. Robert Oppenheimer as part of what top-secret project?

ANSWER TO TUESDAY'S QUESTION

Twitter (now X)

RULES & REGULATIONS

- Everyone will have to mail their answers to **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

PRASANT BARIK

PRATYUSH SATAPATHY

Others who answered correctly are

Niranjan Nayak, Bishnu Prasada Dash, Bhumiika Subhalaxmi, Tapan Kumar Mohanty, Tanishna Bisoi, Parameswar Dalai, Pratyush Dhal, Debadatta Tripathy, Dr Joseph John , Abha Priyadarshini, Om Prakash Rath, Megha Satapathy, Anjubala Mohanty, Divyanshu Mohanty, R Sekhar Rao, Aslesha Satapathy, Chandrasekhara Patnaik, Tushar Kanti Sasmal, Ayushi Pradhan, Jigyansa Priyadarshini, Jitendra Nath Pradhan, Abinash Das, Omm Prakash Sahoo, Priyanka Nahak, Sourav Nayak, Alok Ranjan Sahoo, Sai Priya Nahak, Mahesh Prasad Dalabehera, Ronan Slade Toppo

Women in Blue eye ODI after historic T20 triumph

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Southampton, July 15: Riding high on confidence after scripting a historic T20I series win over England, the Indian women's team will aim to carry the momentum into the three-match ODI series, beginning here Wednesday.

The 'Women in Blue' made history by clinching their first-ever T20I series against England, taking the five-match series 3-2. Now, with the ODI World Cup on home soil later this year, Harmanpreet Kaur and her team will be keen to fine-tune their 50-over game.

India have tweaked their approach in recent years, placing greater emphasis on posting totals in excess of

300. In the Tri-series they had scores of 276, 275, 337 and 342.

"In the ODI cricket we've been playing for the last couple of years, we've always focused on scoring more than 300 with the bat," skipper Harmanpreet said.

"It gives the bowlers some cushioning. Earlier we had five bowling options, and it becomes slightly tough if we have only so many runs on the board. Recently, like in the T20Is, we went for four spin options. I think somewhere that has helped," she added.

With a power-packed batting line-up featuring skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, vice-captain Smriti Mandhana, finisher Richa Ghosh, and dependable anchors Jemimah Rodrigues

and Harleen Deol, India's top and middle order looks formidable.

Add to that the lower-order hitting prowess of Deepti Sharma and Amanjot Kaur, and India have the firepower to out-bat most sides.

However, the bowling unit will once again be tested in the absence of frontline pacers Titas Sadhu, Renuka Singh, and Pooja Vastrakar – all sidelined due to injuries.

TEAMS

India: Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana (vc), Pratika Rawal, Harleen Deol, Jemimah Rodrigues, Richa Ghosh (wk), Yastika Bhatia (wk), Tejal Hasabnis, Deepthi Sharma, Sneha Rana, Sree Charani, Shuchi Upadhyay, Amanjot Kaur, Arundhati Reddy, Kranti Gaud, Sayali Satghare.

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

AGENCIES

Jamaica, July 15: Australia pacer Mitchell Starc scripted history in the third Test against the West Indies as he claimed a five-wicket haul in just 15 balls, the quickest in Test history, as the visitors bundled out the West Indies for 27, which is the second-lowest Test total ever.

The total of 27 is just one more run than the lowest Test total ever, when England bowled New Zealand out for 26 in 1955.

Fifteen balls taken by Starc to get his five-fer makes it the quickest in the history of Tests, beating the previous quickest of 19 balls each by Ernie Toshack against India in Brisbane in 1947, Stuart Broad against Australia in Trent Bridge in 2015, and Scott Boland against England at the MCG in 2021.

The 35-year-old's sixth wrapped up a thumping 176-run win that saw Australia sweep West Indies in a three-match series or more for the first time in the Caribbean, with the hosts' seven ducks in their second innings a new record in a Test innings.

Starc finished with figures

Mitchell Starc and Australia celebrate after defeating West Indies during the day three of the third Test at Sabina Park

of 6/9, the best innings figures of any player in their 100th Test, bettering Muthiah Muralidaran's 6/54 for Sri Lanka against Bangladesh in 2006.

Meanwhile, Scott Boland, who holds the record for best bowling average in the last 110 years of Test cricket,

again underlined his qualities as he claimed a hat-trick to leave the hosts reeling at 26/9.

Boland removed Justin Greaves, Shamar Joseph and Jomel Warrican with consecutive deliveries to start his second over to become the 10th Australian to

take a Test hat-trick.

With his 3-34 and 3-2 at Sabina Park in Australia's Test victory against the West Indies, Boland's Test bowling average now stands at 16.53, the best of any bowler in the last 110 years of Test cricket (minimum 2000 balls bowled).

Of tragedies and tenacity: The Fauja Singh story

It's never too late to start over, goes the old adage and if ever there was proof needed that it actually isn't, one could always marvel at the life of Fauja Singh.

The widely-admired 114-year-old, whose career as a marathon runner began when he was 89 and propelled him to the status of a global icon, died Monday night.

It was a heartbreakingly abrupt end despite his age. He was hit by a yet-to-be-identified vehicle while out for a walk at Beas Pind, his native village in Jalandhar.

The frail man, who weathered many a personal storms with his resilience and "nonchalance", had spent a better part of his running career in Britain

and returned to his roots just about three years ago after retiring.

"We would always tell him that someone his age running in India would always run the risk of being hit given how reckless the driving here is. This is what ultimately happened unfortunately," said his biographer Khushwant Singh, whose book 'The Turbaned Tornado' documents the celebrated runner's life.

Fauja's story of strength began long after time slows down for most, especially those who have been mauled by the life's many tragedies. He too was battling demons of his own.

Overwhelmed by the loss of his youngest son in the mid '90s, Fauja found solace in running with a local club

in Essex after moving out of India following the death of his wife and daughter.

"The villagers would tell one of his sons to take him to the UK because he would keep visiting the cremation ground and sit there for hours. So, eventually he moved to Ilford (a town in east London)," said Khushwant.

Once there, Fauja endured another loss before he chanced upon a running club. And what started as a hobby to take his mind off the circumstances that threatened to consume him, became the driving force of his life.

He went on to run marathons, including the famed ones in London, New York and Hong Kong, and inspire awe for clocking

some brilliant timings for a 90-plus man born with weak legs.

In the process, he also became a torch-bearer at the 2012 London Olympics and was honoured by the late Queen Elizabeth II for his contribution to sport and charity.

"Before that meeting with the Queen we had to repeatedly counsel him 'Baba, Queen naal sirf hath milana hai, japphi ni paani jinwein baccheyan nu tussi paande ho' (Baba, you have to only shake hands with the Queen, don't hug her like you hug kids when you meet them)," Khushwant, whose long association with the centenarian started in 2005, recalled.

But he was also a disciplined runner who would train vigorously before his

paces.

Among the most memorable of his runs was in 2011 when he turned 100. The invitational meet in Toronto was named in his honour and he broke several world records for his age group.

But none of them were taken into consideration by Guinness World Records as he did not have a birth certificate to prove his age.

"He was not bothered by any of that. He just enjoyed the attention that he got. I once asked him 'Baba, maran ton darr lagda? (Baba, are you afraid of death?)'. He said 'haan, bilkul lagda. Haje te mele shuru hoye ne' (Yes, of course. The fun has only started for me)," Khushwant said, remembering one of their conversations on mortality.

THE WIDELY-ADMIRED 114-YEAR-OLD, WHOSE CAREER AS A MARATHON RUNNER BEGAN WHEN HE WAS 89 AND PROPELLED HIM TO THE STATUS OF A GLOBAL ICON, DIED MONDAY NIGHT

FAUJA SINGH (1911-2025)

Alexandersson eyes victorious ending to Uzbekistan tour

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 15: After holding Uzbekistan to a 1-1 draw in the first U20 women's friendly match Monday, India are gearing up to face the hosts again in the second and final game Wednesday at the Do'stlik Stadium.

Like the first match, this one will also be played behind closed doors as per the mutual agreement between the teams, who are preparing for next month's AFC U20 Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers.

Sulanjana Raul's 79th-minute equaliser rescued a draw for the Young Tigrisses after Uzbekistan took a 1-0 lead before the half-time whistle.

Reflecting on the result India head coach Joakim Alexandersson said that his side deserved a victory, but a slow start hampered the chances.

"It was a good game for our side. We struggled with our high press in the first 15-20 minutes. We were not aggressive enough. But with time, we improved and also started to create chances after good build-ups and movements."

"We dominated them in the second half, even though we conceded a couple of chances because of individual mistakes. But we created many more chances than they did, and, for sure, deserved a win. But you have to score goals with these chances," said the Swedish tactician.

The match was originally supposed to be played Sunday but was postponed by over 24 hours due to operational challenges at the Do'stlik Stadium.

"The feeling was a bit negative for a short moment after we reached the venue on Sunday and learned that we wouldn't be able to play. But we are a tight group who have been together for a few months, so the girls handled it very well. We are staying at a very good hotel with good food and facilities. I must commend the attitude of the girls," said Alexandersson.

Printed and published by Adyasha Satpathy on behalf of Navajati Printers and Media Pvt. Ltd. and printed at Navajati Printers, B-15 Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar -751010, Odisha;Phone:7894447142 (Marketing). Editor: Tathagata Satpathy, RNI No. ODIENG/2011/37159