

Actor Nushrratt Bharuccha highlights the persistent gender disparities that exist both on and off the sets in the industry

LEISURE | P2



Defence milestone

DRDO successfully test-fires a drone-launched precision in Andhra Pradesh

NATIONAL | P8



Border battle expands

Thailand and Cambodia second day as border



Joe Root makes 150, Stokes unbeaten on 77 as England take 186-run lead over India on day 3 of

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BHUBANESWAR | SATURDAY | JULY 26, 2025

₹1.44CR, 1.5KG GOLD IN FOREST OFFICER'S **'SECRET TREASURY'**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 25: Vigilance sleuths Friday found ₹1.43 crore in cash, 1.5 kg gold and over 4.6 kg silver from a 'secret treasury' at the residence of a deputy forest ranger in Koraput district, an official statement said.

This apart, the Vigilance teams also located "a multi-storey building, three flats, two high-value plots, bank deposits worth ₹1.33 crore, two cars and other household articles worth over ₹15 lakh" during the search, Korapur Vigilance SP Rabinda Kumar Panda said.

The Vigilance department launched a search operation at six locations of Rama Chandra Nepak, currently serving as deputy ranger-cum-in-charge ranger of Jeypore Forest Range, based on an allegation of possession of disproportionate assets to his known sources of income.

As many as six DSPs, five Inspectors, nine ASIs, and other supporting staff conducted raids on the strength of search warrants issued by special judge, Vigilance, Jeypore, the department said in a statement.

It said the officer draws a gross monthly salary of ₹76,880 (net ₹69,680). Nepak began his career March 9, 1989, as a village



forestry division in Koraput. Following the merger of social

forestry with the territorial forest division, he was transferred to Jeypore (Territorial) Forest Division. "In the ongoing DA searches against Nepak, ₹1.4 crore (approx) concealed in a secret treasury in his Flat No 510, Golden Height Residential Apartment, Jeypore

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I asked them for SIR results and they gave me upcoming election results instead, sir!

guided missile at a test range



exchange artillery fire for clashes intensify

INTERNATIONAL | P10



England pile misery

fourth Test at Old Trafford Friday

SPORTS | P12

School building collapse claims 7 kids



FRANTIC SEARCH: Locals during the rescue work after a government school building collapsed in Jhalawar district, Rajasthan, Friday

Administrative negligence taking a toll on human lives has become all too common in India with incidents such as bridge and building collapses or commuters falling into open drains occurring every now and then. In Rajasthan, a portion of a dilapidated school building caved in when the students were assembled for the morning prayers, burying about 35 and instantly killing seven of them. Tree branches had grown into the walls of the school and there was persistent water seepage. Locals had informed the tehsildar and sub-divisional magistrate about the condition of the building, but to no avail. Had the authorities acted upon these complaints, precious lives could have been saved

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jhalawar, July 25: A regular morning alive with the chatter of students assembling for prayers quickly turned into tragedy Friday when a portion of their government school building collapsed, killing seven children and injuring 27, some of them critically.

The youngest of those who died was only six years old. Minutes into the morning at the Piplodi Government School in Rajasthan's Jhalawar district, a part of the middle school building housing Classes VI and VII gave way, burying about 35 children, police said.

Slabs of concrete, bricks and stones were piled up high and scores of people, including frantic parents and teachers, helped in the rescue effort, searching through the mounds of debris to pull out the children.

Police officials said they were informed of the tragedy in Piplodi village around 7.45 am.

"Seven children have died so far," Nand Kishore Verma, SHO of Manoharthana police station, about 80 km from the Jhalawar district headquarters, told PTI. Those killed were identified as Payal (12), Harish (8), Priyanka (12), Kundan (12), Kartik as well as a brother and sister -- Meena (12) and her brother Kanha (6).

The injured were taken to the Jhalawar hospital and the Manoharthana health centre A doctor at the district hospi tal said nine of the injured were in the Intensive Care Unit.

Five staffers of the school were suspended and a high-level inquiry into the matter or dered. For the villagers of Piplodi, that was scant consolation. Tempers ran high as locals

protested, accusing the administration of ignoring their warnings that the building was dilapidated with tree branches growing into its walls.

Protesters blocked an arterial road and burnt tyres, demanding action against all guilty officials and compensation to the families who lost their children.

Angry locals said they had in formed the tehsildar and sub-divisional magistrate about the condition of the school building but no action was taken. "This happened due to negligence of the administration," Balkishan, a local resident, told reporters

Among those who condoled the death of the children were President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi

The Rajasthan Human Rights Commission took suo motu cognisance and issued notices to the local administration, and police. It sought factual reports and appropriate legal action against the guilty persons and compensation to the families of

Human deaths in elephant attacks: Odisha tops nation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: More than 2,800 people lost their lives in elephant attacks in India from 2019 to 2023, with Odisha, Jharkhand and West Bengal among the worst-affected states, the Rajya Sabha was informed Friday.

According to data shared by Minister of State for Environment Kirti Vardhan Singh in response to a question by CPI(M) MP John Brittas, between 2019-20 and 2023-24, a total of 2,869 people were killed in elephant attacks.

Odisha reported the highest deaths in the country at 624, followed by Jharkhand (474), West Bengal (436), Assam (383) and Chhattisgarh (303), according to the data. The annual toll from elephant attacks has been rising

steadily, increasing from 595 in 2019-20 to 629 in 2023-24. Tamil Nadu and Karnataka recorded 256 and 160 human deaths due to elephant attacks, respectively. over the five years.

In contrast, tiger attacks claimed the lives of 378 people between 2020 and 2024. Maharashtra reported the highest number of deaths during this period at 218, followed by Uttar Pradesh (61) and Madhya Pradesh (32).

As many as 110 deaths were reported from tiger attacks in 2022, most of them from Maharashtra (82). The number declined slightly to 85 in 2023 and 73 in 2024.

The minister also said that the environment ministry does not compile data on livestock and crop losses caused by wild animals at the national level.

'State to emerge as textile hub of East'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: Odisha is set to emerge as the textile hub of Eastern India, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi announced Friday while inaugurating Odisha TEX 2025. Eastern India's largest textile and apparel industry event.

"Odisha TEX 2025 is not just an event: it is a declaration that Odisha is ready to lead the textile revolution in Eastern India, backed by world-class infrastructure, progressive policies, and a highly-skilled

workforce," Majhi said. The CM also announced that the employment cost subsidies under Odisha Technical Textile & Apparel Policy 2022 will be increased from ₹5,000 to ₹6,000 per month per male worker and from ₹6000 to ₹7000 per month



per female worker.

A total of 33 MoUs were signed in the event, unlocking investments worth ₹7,808 crore with the potential to generate employment for over 53,300 people. More than 160 companies, including Page Industries, First Step Baby Wear, KPR Mills,

Sportking, Adarsh Knitwear, Anubhay Apparels, Bon & Co., and B.L. International, partic-

ipated in the summit. Announcing a dedicated task force under the Industries department, the Chief Minister assured investors of fast-track implementation and full government support. He empha sised Odisha's ambitious vision to create over one lakh jobs in textiles and apparel by 2030, while expanding new textile clusters in Bolangir Keonjhar, Sambalpur, Jagats inghpur, Ganjam, and Cuttack

Noting that the textile indus try of the state is very old, he said the traditional cloth-making process of western Odisha silk of Berhampur, tsar of Gajapati and Keonjhar, and Ma niabandh fine art have special recognition across the country.

"Our government is making efforts to make Odisha a textile hub through the promotion of all these fabrics. Our govern ment is also planning to create more than 5 lakh jobs in the textile sector and develop five textile and apparel parks over the next decade." Maihi said.

How gaming apps aid terror groups in communication

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, July 25: Online war games akin to PUBG requiring chats with partners anonymous or otherwise have emerged as a key communication channel for terror groups and Pakistan's ISI to convey messages to their recruits in Jammu and Kashmir, officials here said.

As terror groups operating across the border seek to bypass social media and conventional channels of communication and escape scrutiny by security agencies, it is a virtual battleground and in some cases a real one too. Four cases have been identified, the

In one case, an underage boy was being radicalised by his gaming partner sitting across the border. The boy was handed over to parents after proper counselling of the entire family. The gaming chat applications

allow players to communicate with each other in real time in the guise of playing online games, the officials explained without going into details of which game and how.

These applications, which facilitate voice, video, and text-based communication to enhance teamwork, strategy discussions and social interaction among players, are being used for different purposes, they said.

The prospective recruits are

identified during playing. The gaming applications have been increasingly incorporating encryption to protect user communications but the level of security varies widely. So, some games use basic



encryption for in-game voice chat and others offer more robust end-to-end encryption for text and voice. There are also applications that allow for self-destructing messages.

Though several of these gaming applications are banned in India, they are downloaded using Virtual Private Network illegally.

In the past, messaging plat-

forms like WhatsApp were delinked by terror groups and their handlers from Pakistan and they switched to other applications to communicate with each other. The included one developed by a Turkish company that is being used by terror group handlers and their prospective recruits in the Valley, the officials said.

The new applications have the ability to work with the slowest internet connections where Enhanced Data for Global Evolution, used in the late 2000s, or 2G is in operation.

All encryption and decryption happen directly on the devices, therefore reducing third party intervention at any point. These new apps use encryption algorithm RSA-2048 which was adopted as the most secure encrypted platform, officials said.

RSA is an American Network Security and Authentication company founded in 1982 by US-born Ron Rivest and Leonard Adleman and Israeli-born Adi Shamir. The acronym RSA is used worldwide as the foundation key in the cryptosystem.

The latest challenge in tracking terror activity comes just as security agencies in the Valley are fighting the menace of virtual SIM cards. Terror groups have been increasingly using these to connect with their handlers in Pakistan. Virtual SIM cards are generated by a service provider based in a for-

eign country. In this technology, the computer generates a telephone number and the user needs to download an application from the service provider on his or her smartphone to use it.

25 OTT apps banned for obscene content

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: The government has ordered the blocking of websites and apps of 25 OTT platforms, including Ullu ALTT, and Desiflix, for having obscene, vulgar and in some cases, pornographic content.

Among the apps identified for violating various laws are ALTT, ULLU, Big Shots App Desiflix, Boomex, Navarasa Lite, Gulab App, Kangan App, Bull App, Jalva App, ShowHit Wow Entertainment, Look Entertainment, Hitprime, Feneo ShowX, Sol Talkies, Adda TV, HotX VIP, Hulchul App MoodX, NeonX VIP, Fugi, Moj flix, and Triflicks, officials said

Notifications have been is sued to various intermediaries to ensure that access to the concerned apps is disabled. P9

Isure

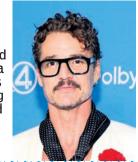


ED SHEERAN PRAISES ARIJIT SINGH'S VOICE

Ed Sheeran and Arijit Singh have released a special version of *Sapphire*. The Grammy winner said that he loves this version of the song and it's the one he listens to every morning with his daughters because he loves the Bollywood singer's voice.

PEDRO PASCAL CALLED OUT OVER 'ANXIETY' CLAIM

Pedro Pascal faces criticism after videos surfaced showing him frequently touching co-star Vanessa Kirby during *The Fantastic Four: First Steps* press events. Netizens found the interactions, including touching Kirby's baby bump, 'uncomfortable' and 'creepy'. While some fans cited Pascal's anxiety as a reason, others raised concerns about consent and professionalism post-#MeToo.





Joining a yoga class will be a good decision. You should try ayurvedic foodstuffs too. You may expect a lot of new things to happen today. Ganesha advises you not to worry as there is a good amount of money coming up for you.

TAURUS

Ganesha sees you getting very impatient and restless this day. Thank the stars; in spite of that you will remain adequately steady and focussed on your work, and perform suitably and commendably as expected. During the latter part of the day, your colleagues and superiors are likely to be more helpful and responsive. The day, in spite of your moods, promises to turn out to be very positive, very eventful and very pleasing.

GEMINI

A fruitful day loaded with opportunities awaits you. You will be able to complete all your tasks easily at the work-front. However, you will need to put in extra effort to satisfy others. You will be engaged in discussions with your family members and neighbours later on, says Ganesha

CANCER

You will make a strong impact with whatever you do today. Ganesha says that you will feel joy in a romantic interlude. Ties with life partner will be stronger and you will enjoy domestic bliss. A situation might arise where you have to draw lines and take side with a circle of friends. That will be a time for caution

Your day will start off very ordinarily. The later half of the day too should prove to be uneventful. However, events occuring in the afternoon will win you the praise of your colleagues. You will try to improve your self today. You will be inspired to take on some challenging projects, says Ganesha

You will be inclined towards

increasing your fitness, and hence will switch to a better diet and exercise regimen. However, you may savour some delicious food today. Ganesha foretells that later today, you may find yourself at a turning point in life. A healthy bank balance will make you feel secure about the future.

Ganesha says that today you will pay more attention to your family and family matters, keeping aside all other things. You will want to change the decor of your nome and for that you may buy antique artifacts or new furniture to decorate in your home. You may go to visit a religious place or temple today. You may also try to arrange for a short trip to a nearby place.

SCORPIO

You may be at your creative best today. You may help out your siblings in all the creative activities and even solve your troubles with much ease. Personally, you are a good soul and may help someone in the evening by a doing a good deed.

SAGITTARIUS

Today will be a day when you are inclined not only to being upbeat but also firm, says Ganesha. In your line of work, you may get passionate about your views. But compromise is on the cards and that too without any harm to your dignity. Your better half will keep you occupied, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN

You'll be over-emotional during the first half of the day. You've been quiet for a long period now, and it will be emotionally and physically exhausting for you to express your tensions, fears, dreams regrets and sorrows, feels Ganesha, The other half will be different as you'll feel energetic and go out of the way to be with others in their tough times.

AQUARIUS

Today, you will feel inclination towards antiques and arts, foretells Ganesha. You appre ciate the beauty of life, but often forget to bring these emotions to the surface. You will be very sensitive today and probably the smallest of disputes may hurt your feelings badly, foresees Ganesha

PISCES

You will become the cynosure of all eyes owing to your kind and generous nature. You will prove the worth of the old adage that a friend in need is a friend indeed. People living far away from you will also seek your advice. You will try to help others to the best of your abilities, says Ganesha.



Mumbai: Actress Ananya Panday with the help of her initiative So Positive in partnership with an NGO, has launched a Kindness Curriculum designed for schools across India and said that she feels if kindness is instilled in children from a young age, it becomes second nature to them.

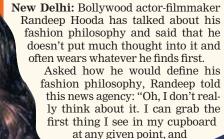
Ananya said, "Kindness has always been at the heart of everything we do at So Positive. It's something I deeply believe in—not just as an idea, but as a way of life. I truly feel that if we can instill kindness in kids from a young age, it becomes second nature to them as they grow up."
She added: "That's why the Kind-

ness Curriculum is so close to my heart. With everything going on in the world, I feel an even stronger need to help build a generation that's more empathetic, emotionally aware, and simply... kind."

Ananya's initiative So Positive, in partnership with the inspiring NGO Slam Out Loud.

The curriculum will be distributed and practised in schools through Slam Out Loud's Jijivisha Fellowship and Arts for All Program in cities across

Over 2.5 lakh children will benefit from this curriculum through various programs. It's also available on So Positive's YouTube channel, making it accessible to parents and educators globally.



it might be the same thing I the day before. So all that doesn't mat-

Mumbai: Despite es-

tablishing herself in Bollywood, Nushrratt

Bharuccha continues

to face the challenges

of being a woman in a male-dominated indus-

try. In a candid chat,

the Chhorii 2 actor

spoke about the persis-

tent gender disparities

she's endured — from

unequal professional

opportunities to basic on-set amen-

ities. "When a male actor delivers

a hit, he instantly gets five new of-

fers. But women have to keep prov-

ing themselves, again and again,"

she said, reflecting on her journey

Nushrratt also highlighted the

unfair treatment female actors face

off-screen. She recalled instances

where she had to request access to

the male lead's vanity van just to use

a better washroom. Rather than voice

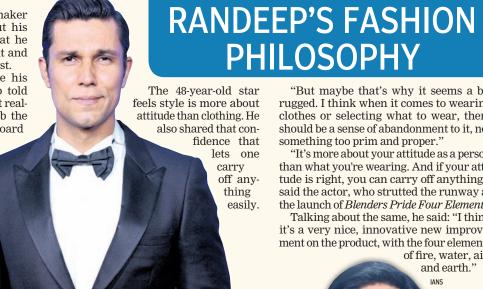
her frustrations, she vowed to reach a

position where such privileges would

The actor recounted turning down a

business class seat offered by friends,

since Pyaar Ka Punchnama.



revealed

PHILOSOPHY "But maybe that's why it seems a bit rugged. I think when it comes to wearing clothes or selecting what to wear, there should be a sense of abandonment to it, not

> something too prim and proper." 'It's more about your attitude as a person than what you're wearing. And if your attitude is right, you can carry off anything,' said the actor, who strutted the runway at the launch of Blenders Pride Four Elements.

Talking about the same, he said: "I think it's a very nice, innovative new improvement on the product, with the four elements of fire, water, air,

and earth.



Curtains down on FSB's children's film festival

be naturally granted.

The final day featured screenings of 'The Steamroller and the Violin' by Russian master Andrei Tarkovsky and 'The Cave of the Yellow Dog' by Mongolian director Byambasuren Davaa

Bhubaneswar, July 26: The third edition of the Children's Film Festival, organised by the Film Society of Bhubaneswar (FSB), concluded Friday here at the GKCM Odissi Research Centre, leaving a lasting impact on young participants through cinema, creativity, and collaboration.

Over three days, students

from Loyola Odia School and KIIT International School (Class VI-VII), explored a vibrant selection of children's films. hands-on workshops, and interactive activities. The final day featured screenings of The Steamroller and the Violin (1961) by Russian master Andrei Tarkovsky and The Cave of the Yellow Dog (2005) by



Mongolian director Byambas-

The festival culminated with

performances, created by students during a two-day workshop led by FSB volunteers. Using paper cutouts, backlit projection, and voiceovers, ten groups presented original stories that drew enthusiastic applause.

I really enjoyed the puppetry show. All three days were fun, but my favourite was the Japanese animated movie The Secret World of Arrietty," said SaiadvityaSamal from KIIT International School.

"I had never done shadow puppetry before. Watching The Gold Rush by Charlie Chaplin and participating in the workshop was amazing,' added Saibesh Kumar Majhi, Class VI, Loyola Odia School.

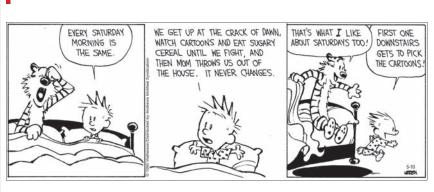
AnushkaKanar, another Loyola student, shared, "It was great collaborating with students from other schools. I was in Group 3 and really loved the work of Groups 1, 2, and 4."

Mohanty said, "Our aim is to

PEANUTS



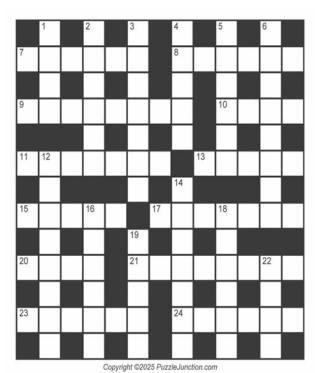
CALVIN AND HOBBES



BREVITY



FUN **CROSSWORD**



20 "Tosca" tune

- Across 7 Some like it hot
- 8 Ballet company
- 9 Kennel
- 10 Cookbook
- direction
- 11 Affluent
- 13 Dish

- 15 Pile up
- 17 Gambling game
- 23 Heavy
 - overcoat

21 Promised land

- 24 Peers
- Down
- 1 Goose egg
- 2 Deadly 3 Detectives

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

- 14 Excursion 16 Maps 18 Ennui

5 Tidbit

runner

12 Completely

4 Have the helm

6 Short distance

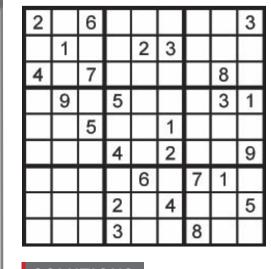
- 19 Not together
- 22 Peddle

FSB executive Sankalp

expose children to meaningful cinema and help them differentiate good content in the digital age. This festival is a space where young minds can learn, create, and express." PNN

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.



SOLUTIONS

H O S T S H A N S O M P A I I CROSSWORD MURALLAIRS

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

SUDOKU

downtown

UTKAL VC IN-CHARGE'S TENURE EXTENDED

The Governor who is the Chancellor of Utkal University has extended the tenure of Prof Jagneshwar Dandapat as the in-charge Vice-Chancellor of the university. The decision has been made under the Odisha Universities (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025. Prof Dandapat, a senior faculty member in the Department of Biotechnology, will continue to serve in the role until a new Vice-Chancellor is appointed, or until further notice



Nod to solar, wind power projects worth ₹870 crore



Bhubaneswar, July 25: In a significant push towards clean energy, the state government gave approval to solar and wind projects of 178 mw, to be developed at an investment of Rs 869.8 crore, a statement said.

The decision was taken during the 12th meeting of the Single Window Committee (SWC) which was chaired by Principal Secretary of Energy department, Vishal Kumar Dev, official informed Friday.

The new approvals include three solar projects and one wind energy project spread across four districts.

Among the approved projects is a 69.5 mw solar park to be developed by Prozeal Green

The new approvals include 3 solar projects and one wind energy project spread

Energy Limited at Biramaharajpur in Subarnapur district, and INOX Solar Limited's 49.5 mw solar project at Telkoi in Keonjhar.

across 4 districts

The Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) was also given approval for a 10 mw solar project at Lakhanpur in Jharsuguda, while NLC India Renewables Limited got the nod for setting up a wind power project at Papadahandi in Nabarangpur district.

With the latest round of ap-

energy capacity approved by the committee has now reached 1,844.86 mw, attracting cumulative investment commitstatement said.

The meeting was attended by senior officials, including the Managing Director and Directors of GRIDCO and OHPC, the EIC (Electricity)-cum-PCEI, and the Chief Project Manager of the Renewable Energy Nodal Agency (RENA), who presented the proposals.

Officials noted that the approved projects will help the state meet its Renewable Purchase Obligations (RPO) and contribute to India's broader climate goals. Beyond environmental benefits, the projects are expected to drive local employment and spur infrastructure development in the respective districts, the statement added.

Meanwhile, the Energy department reiterated its commitment to promoting green investments and ensuring faster clearances through coordinated efforts among all

HEAVY RAIN TILL JULY 28: IMD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 25: The IMD forecast heavy rainfall across the state over the next few days, as the low-pressure area over the Bay of Bengal intensified into a depression, officials said.

Under its influence, Odisha will experience light to moderate rainfall at most places. with extremely heavy rainfall (above 21cm) at isolated places Friday they said

Heavy to very heavy rainfall is also expected at isolated places in the state during July 26 to 28, the IMD said in a bulletin.

Depression is a weather system that is typically marked by cloudy, wet and windy conditions, according to climate experts. The well-marked low-pressure area over north Bay of Bengal concentrated into a depression, the bulletin said.

"It is very likely to move west-northwestwards and cross West Bengal and adjoining Bangladesh coasts during forenoon of July 25. Thereafter, it is likely to continue to move west-northwestwards across Gangetic West Bengal and adjoining North Odisha and Jharkhand during subse-

Regional Meteorological Centre here Friday issued a 'red warning' of extreme-

quent 24 hours," it said.

ly heavy rainfall at isolated places in Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts, and 'orange warning' of very heavy

rainfall in 10 other districts. In a letter, the Special Relief Commissioner's office urged district collectors to keep the administrative machinery ready to face any eventuality.

Fishermen have been advised not to venture into the sea of north Odisha coast till July 28, it added.

Celebrating nature's coastal guardians



orld Mangrove Day. lights the vital role mangrove forests play in protecting coastlines, sustaining biodiversity, and combating climate change. Mangroves are unique ecosystems found along tropical and subtropical coasts, where saltwater and freshwater meet. These resilient trees grow in challenging conditions, anchoring themselves in soft, waterlogged soils and thriving where few plants can survive.

Mangroves are often called 'nature's buffer zones'. They shield coastal communities from storm surges, tsunamis, and erosion by absorbing wave energy. Their complex root systems trap sediments

and help build land, making them a natural defense

Beyond their protective role, mangroves are biodiversity hotspots. They provide nurseries for countless marine species, shelter for birds and animals, and livelihoods for millions of people through fishing, tourism, and honey collection. They also store vast amounts of carbon, playing a crucial part in climate regulation. However, mangroves are

under severe threat. Over the past few decades, urban development, aquaculture, pollution, and deforestation have caused the loss of nearly half of the world's mangrove cover. This not only endangers wildlife but also increases the vulnerability of coastal populations.

'World Mangrove Day' serves as a reminder of the urgent need to conserve, restore, and sustainably manage these ecosystems. From community-led conservation in Odisha's coastal belt to reforestation efforts in Indonesia, actions around the world are demonstrating that recovery is possible.

On this day, let us recognise the silent strength of mangroves and take steps-big or small—to protect them. Whether it's participating in a tree-planting drive, supporting policies that protect coastal habitats, or simply learning more about these remarkable trees, every action counts.

Mangroves are not just trees—they are lifelines. Let's stand for them as they stand

CREA flags serious environmental risks

Bhubaneswar, July 25: The Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) has raised serious concerns over the blanket exemption granted to nearly all coal-fired power plants in the state from installing Flue Gas Desulfurisation (FGD) systems — a critical technology designed to reduce Sulfur Dioxide (SO2), particulate matter, and mercury emissions.

Under the revised emission norms notified by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF-CC) in July 2025, Category C power plants - which include 16 of Odisha's 19 thermal power units (totaling 8,290 $M\overline{W}$) are completely exempted from installing FGDs. The remaining three units (1,050 MW) classified as Category B, will be considered for exemption on case-bycase basis. None of the state's coal-fired plants fall under Category A which still has a compliance deadline for pollution control. "This decision effectively allows 100 per cent of Odisha's coal power capacity to operate without SO₂ control equipment," said CREA analyst Manoj Kumar. It's a major rollback of India's air pollution commitments and a threat to public health, he added.

Early detection of students' vision issues can happen in classroom: Guv

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: Raising concern over the increasing vision problems among school children, Governor Dr Hari Babu Kambhampati said early detection can happen right in the classroom "If teachers are trained to

conduct basic eyesight tests using affordable screening tools, early detection can happen right in the classroom," the Governor said, adding, "Once identified, parents can be guided to seek timely medical attention for their children.'

The Governor said this during a visit to the National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) corporate office at NALCO Bhawan here Friday where he urged the public sector giant to take proactive measures under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme to improve the health of school and college students across the state. The Governor laid particular emphasis on the need for targeted interventions to address issues such as low hemoglobin levels among girls and women, and the growing incidence of vision problems

Epigraphic findings throw new light on southwest Odisha's history



ing Director Brijendra Pratap Singh, Directors, and senior officials of the company during Highlighting the low par-

ticipation of women in blood donation drives, the Governor said the issue is not about willingness but health constraints. "Many girls and women are unable to donate blood due to low hemoglobin levels," he said.

As a possible solution, he suggested incorporating simple and nutritious items like beetroot juice and jaggery chikki into students' daily diets. He also stressed the need for regular follow-up tests to measure the effectiveness of such interventions. The Governor urged NALCO to support health screenings and nutritional supplementation institutions as part of its CSF

Dr Kambhampati said he plans to convene a meeting involving PSUs, government departments, and civil society organizations to explore collaborative efforts for improving student health. He stressed that adopting schools and colleges under such initiatives could lead to meaningful outcomes, and encouraged NALCO to take the lead.

Appreciating consistent profitability and contribution to national development, the Governor al so urged the company to ex pand its use of solar energy During the visit, he planted a sapling under the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign, reaffirming his commitment to environmental sustainability

India-UK FTA to boost Odisha's seafood, handicraft exports

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: The recently signed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between India and the United Kingdom has opened new avenues for Odisha's coastal economy, particularly in the seafood and handicraft sectors.

With the removal of duties on 99 per cent of Indian goods under the comprehensive agreement, Odisha is poised to benefit significantly. Officials stated that seafood exports from key ports like Paradip and Balasore are expected to surge, especially in prawn exports, which previously faced tariffs ranging from 4.2 per cent to 8.5 per cent. In 2024-25, India exported seafood worth \$104.43 million to the UK, with prawns alone accounting for 77 per cent of the total.

The duty-free access granted under the FTA is expected to not only double India's maritime exports but also enhance incomes for Odisha's fishermen and aquaculture farmers. Employment opportunities, especially for women engaged in seafood processing,



are likely to increase as export volumes grow, a PIB release stated.

In addition to seafood, Odisha's traditional handicrafts and handlooms are also expected to see a significant boost in exports. The UK had earlier imposed a 16 per cent duty on GI-certified handicraft products, but the FTA has completely removed this tariff, providing a competitive edge to Odisha's artisan community. With a special demand for Odisha's handlooms and crafts in the international market, the agreement is anticipated to open up new export channels, increase profitability, and generate employment, particularly in rural areas.

Experts believe the state's rich heritage products, including items like Sambalpuri sarees and Pattachitra paintings. can now access the UK market more freely and at better prices.

from the Bhairabsinghpur-Kumli-Kamta region in the Indravati valley POST NEWS NETWORK

Researchers crack ancient Chindaka Naga

dynasty inscription on a fragmented pillar at

Jeypore Museum which was originally brought

Bhubaneswar/Jeypore, July 25: A groundbreaking discovery by epigraphist Bishnu Mohan Adhikari is set to transform the historical understanding of the Chindaka Naga dynasty, a dominant 11th-century ruling clan.

During a visit to the Jeypore Museum recently, Adhikari, accompanied by Sarat Routray and Himansu Sekhar Sadangi, deciphered a previously undocumented inscription on a stone pillar. This finding offers fresh insights into the history of southwestern Odisha and the broader Chakrakota (Bastar) region in present-day Chhat-

Adhikari, a renowned epigraphist with 124 decipherments to his name, spotted the inscribed pillar in the museum's verandah which remained unnoticed since the museum's founding in 1976 by IAS officer Jiban Pani.

After gaining permission from the museum authorities, the team took an estampage of the 16-line inscription.

According to Adhikari, the stone is a fragmented pillar bearing the inscription. The pillar, measuring approximately 7 feet 4 inches in base with a height of 26 by 7 inches, was originally brought from the Bhairabsinghpur-Kumli-Kamta region in the Indravati valley.

Interestingly, it also features an engraved erotic picture of an ass and a pig on its left side – an artistic motif Adhikari noted is also found in other inscriptions and copper plates of the same dynasty. The inscription itself contains the 'Raja Prasasti' (royal eulogy) of a Chindaka Naga king, identified by the title 'Madana Nrpa kula kamala bhaskara tilaka'. While some lines (5, 9, 10, and 16) are illegible, Adhikari suspects more lines lie beneath the concrete plinth, as the existing inscrip-



tion provides incomplete information at its conclusion.

Adhikari said the inscription belongs to the Nagavanshi rul-

ers of Chakrakota (present-day Bastar region of Chhattisgarh), who held sway over the Indravati river valley, encompassing parts of Kalahandi and Koraput during the 11th century. He drew parallels with similar inscriptions of Someswara Deva (1069-1110), son of Dharavarsha and Gunda Mahadevi, found in the Kuruspal region of Chhattisgarh.

Adhikari highlighted that the inscription is in corrupt Sanskrit form with Odra Nagari characters, closely resembling the evolving Odia script. He pointed out words like 'Bikantha Sri Karana', 'Kasa Dasa', and 'Damodara', which exhibit typical Odishan writing peculiarities. This suggests the Jeypore inscription could be considered one of the early examples of evolving Odia script from the Koraput region.

Further enhancing the inscription's historical value, Adhikari revealed that it contains identical names that connect to other inscriptions of King Someswara, strengthening the narrative of this dynastic relations.

Meanwhile, the significance of the findings has resonated within the historical community. Dr Raj Kumar Rate, a history lecturer at Khariar Autonomous College, hailed it as a 'monumental finding for Odisha'. He emphasized that this is the first Chindaka Naga dynasty inscription discovered in Odisha, and it will be consid ered the oldest inscription from present-day Koraput district, predating the Khechela copper plate grant of Raghunath Krushna Deva of the Surya Sankara dynasty.

The Naga dynasty rulers are considered an early age ruling clan in India. In Koraput the Chindaka Nagas rose to prominence after the Nala dy nasty. Their establishment in Chakrakota was supported by the Somavanshi rulers Janmejaya and Udyotakeshari. Historically, during conflicts be tween the Eastern Gangas and the Kalachuris of Ratnapur, the Chindaka Nagas allied with the Eastern Gangas.

This newly deciphered inscription, therefore, promises to shed new light on the history of the tribal-dominated regions of Koraput district and Bastan region of Chhattisgarh, offering crucial insights into the political and cultural landscape of 11th-century India.

OrissaPOST

NHRC seeks report on Angul septic tank deaths

Bhubaneswar, July 25: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Friday directed the Labour and ESI department principal secretary, and the District Magistrate (DM) of Angul to submit a report regarding the death of two workers while 'cleaning' a septic tank in the district last year.

The NHRC move came while hearing a plea filed by rights activist Akhand. The petitioner had informed the apex rights body that Raghu Hansdah, 28, and Medha Nag, 31, both residents of Redham village in Mavurbhani district, died while cleaning a septic tank in Nuahata village under Banarpal police limits in Angul district September 13, 2024.

The petitioner had cited the Supreme Court's landmark judgement in Safai Karamchari Andolan vs Union of India (2014) that outlawed manual scavenging and mandated compensation of Rs 10 lakh for each death occurring during



The rights panel asked the principal secretary of **Labour and ESI** department and **Angul DM to submit** a comprehensive report by September 1 this year

such hazardous work

However, the Angul DM, in his December 3, 2024 report, informed that the deceased were not manual scavengers.

"They were engaged as masons for private house construc-

given Rs 10,000 from the Red Cross and Rs 3.000 under the Harishchandra Sahayata Yojana as immediate assistance, the DM's report said.

Later, the NHRC observed that the DM's report is incomplete as it has nothing on action taken under the Odisha Build ing and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board's accidental death benefit scheme.

The commission reminded the authorities that the scheme provides financial assistance to registered construction workers in the event of both natural and accidental deaths.

The NHRC asked the principal secretary of Labour and ESI department and Angul DM to submit a comprehensive report by September 1 this year addressing key issues, including whether the deceased workers were registered with the Odisha Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board and whether their families have been provided or considered for any such benefits.

BJD questions state govt's metro rail project approach

Bhubaneswar, July 25: The BJD Friday raised concerns over the state government's 'ambiguous' approach to the implementation of the Bhubaneswar Metro Rail project.

In a statement, BJD spokes person Lenin Mohanty said the BJP-led state government's stance on the Metro project remains unclear, leading to a 13-month-long stalemate since it assumed office.

He pointed out that the DPR for the Metro was already prepared and the foundation stone laid during the previous BJD government. However, no significant progress has been made under the current administration, he alleged.

Mohanty also referred to a recent statement in the Lok Sabha by the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister, who said the Centre has not received any proposal for a Metro project in Odisha. In response, Urban Development Minister KC Mahapatra said a new DPR will be prepared and sent to the Centre for approval. Refuting this, Mohanty asserted that central approval was not required as the previous BJD government had committed to executing the project using state funds.

SAIMUN sets new record



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: SAI International Education Group Friday inaugurated the 13th edition of its flagship diplomacy event, the SAI Model United Nations (SAIMUN), with over 750 student delegates representing 23 nations and 26 premier schools across the globe.

Gracing the inaugural cere mony as Chief Guest, Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo lauded the vision of SAI's late founder Bijava Kumar Sahoo. "When Bijaya first shared his dream of SAI, asked him, 'Are you sure about this?' Today. I stand here with deep admiration for what he built," he remarked. Encour aging students, he said, "Speak

with confidence, and use this platform to grow into thoughtful, responsible global citizens."

Chairperson Silpi Sahoo. in her welcome address, said, "SAIMUN is a celebration of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam— One World, One Family. It fosters cross-cultural dialogue and nurtures internationally responsible leaders.

SAIMUN 2025 features a total of 10 intellectually engaging committees that offer students a platform to deliberate on critical global issues through simulated diplomatic dialogue. The committees include the United Nations General Assembly - Disarmament and International Security Committee (UNGA-DISEC), United Nations Security Council (UNSC), United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and more, offer ing a hands-on experience in diplomacy, negotiation, and global governance. A unique highlight was a service project involving international dele gates and SAI students at a school for mentally challenged children, promoting empathy

and inclusion. The event also saw the fe licitation of academic toppers with the Bijaya Kumar Sahoo Global SAIoneer Award and the Bijaya Kumar Sahoo Emerging Entrepreneur Award, honour ing excellence in academics and

RCM hosts job fair POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: Regional College of Management (RCM), in collaboration with Board of Practical Training (Eastern Region) under Ministry of Education, and supported by NHRD Bhubaneswar Chapter, hosted an apprenticeship-cum-job fair at its auditorium Friday. The walk-in interview witnessed participation from students across institutions, far exceeding expectations

"We expected around 1,500 candidates, but the turnout was even higher. Students from various institutes joined the fair, and 49 companies participated. It's a golden opportunity for students to receive both guidance and job opportunities under one roof," said RCM Deputy Director Shradha Padhi.

FETED: Delhi Public School, Kalinga Pro Vice Chairperson Mala Mishra, Principal Suvabrata Mukherjee and KIIT University Director General (R&D and innovation) Professor Mrutyunjay Suar with meritorious students of the school in Bhubaneswar, Friday. Over 150 students of the premier school were felicitated on the occasion for their commendable performance in CBSE Class X and XII board examinations

RPF launches campaign against child trafficking

Bhubaneswar: The Railway Protection Force (RPF) in Khurda Road Division has launched a fortnight-long awareness campaign against child trafficking across various railway stations under its jurisdiction. The initiative aims to educate passengers, railway personnel and the general public about the perils of human trafficking, with a special emphasis on the protection of children and vulnerable groups, said railway officials. The awareness drive is being carried out at key stations including Bhubaneswar, Khurda Road, Cuttack, Puri, Talcher, Bhadrak, Jajpur Keonjhar Road, Kendujhargarh, Angul, Brahmapur and Palasa.

ED dy director walks out of jail

PNN & AGENCIES

Cuttack, July 25: A day after Orissa High Court granted him bail, Enforcement Directorate Raghuvanshi, who was arrested by CBI in May for bribery, walked out of Jharapada jail in Bhubaneswar Friday evening.

The HC also granted bail to Raghuvanshi's associate Bhak ti Binod Behera, from whose vehicle the CBI sleuths had re covered the bribe money.

Justice Gourishankar Satap athy allowed their separate bail pleas through a common order, imposing stringent conditions.

Raghuvanshi and Behera were arrested from two loca tions in Bhubaneswar after CBI caught them red-handed while accepting bribe from a citybased mining businessman.

According to the agency, Raghuvanshi had placed a bribe demand of Rs 5 crore, which was reduced to Rs 2 crore, and Rs 20 lakh was received as an installment.

Raghuvanshi had reportedly demanded the amount from the businessman with a promise not to arrest him or attach his property in the 12 cases of financial irregularities pending against him with the ED.

Earlier this month, Raghuvanshi was granted an interim bail for 10 days by the HC to visit his ailing wife and their newborn. He returned to jail as soon as his interim protection was over. "The IRS officer was released from the jail Friday evening after relevant documents from the HC and lower court were produced to the jail authorities," his lawyer Lalitendu Mishra said.

Besides Mishra, senior advo cates Ashok Kumar Parija and Soura Chandra Mohapatra also represented Raghuvanshi.

Observing that the investigation has made significant progress and that the trial is unlikely to commence soon, the HC stated that bail is the rule and jail is the exception.

"The bail applications of Raghuvanshi and Behera are allowed and both are allowed on furnishing bail bonds of Rs 1 lakh with two solvent sureties for the like amount to the satisfaction of the trial court." the HC said.

Min discusses CDP for Baripada devpt

Bhubaneswar, July 25: A crucial meeting on Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) for Baripada was held at Lok Seva Bhawan here Bhubaneswar Friday, chaired by Housing & Urban Development Minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra. The session aimed at laying the foundation for structured, inclusive urban development in Baripada — a culturally and economically significant town in northern Odisha.

Principal Secretary Usha Padhee emphasised the urgency of a well-structured Master Plan and called for strong inter-departmental coordination. A key outcome of the meeting was the formation of a joint technical committee tasked with preparing the Master Plan. focusing on spatial mapping, infrastructure integration, and alignment with regional and state-level goals under the Vision-2036 framework.

Kev focus areas taken ur for discussion included land use planning to manage pop ulation growth, enhancing ur ban mobility and connectivity (railways & highways), infra structure development (water supply, waste management housing), heritage conservation and eco-sensitive zoning.

Various stakeholders from Indian Railways, NHAI, Panchavati Rai & Drinking Water department, and other relevant agencies participated in the meeting. The H&UD minister underscored the need for public participation, transparency, and a time-bound action plan. ensuring that the CDP reflects local aspirations while simulta neously addressing challenges posed by urbanisation.

CURRENCY BOURSES INDEX VARIATION INDEX VARIATION **INDEX VARIATION** DOLLAR **86.52** \$\(\text{0.11}\) SENSEX **81463.09** \$\(\text{721.08}\) GOLD ₹97,918 **†** ₹808 **101.47 ♦** 0.00 NIFTY **24837.00 ♦** 225.10 SILVER ₹**113,670** ₹1467



WEATHER				
	BBSR	СТС	FORECAST	
/lax Temp	30.2°	31.2°	Generally cloudy	
/lin Temp	26.1°	24.2°	sky with pos- sibility of rain or	
lumidity	90%	8.4%	thundershower.	
tainfall	2.7mm	Nil		

CLASSIFIED

I, Smt. Sabita Brahma, W/o- Late Ajit Kumar Branma, Aadnaai No.- XXXX XXXX 7409, Date of Birth 19.4.1977, resident of Gayatri Lane, P.O./P.S.-Gunupur, Dt.- Rayagada sworn an affidavit before Executive Magistrate, Gunupur, dt.21.07.2025. That now onwards I known as Sabita Brahma instead Sabita Kumari Padhy for all future purpose.

By virtue of an affidavit swearing in the Court of Executive Magistrate, Jharsuguda, I, Brajesh Kumar Singh, S/o-Rajendra Thakur hereby declare that in my all records my name has been mentioned as Brajesh Kumar Singh. But my Matriculation Certificate my name has been mentioned as Brajesh Kumar Thakur. Henceforth, I shall be known as Brajesh Kumar Singh for all purpose.

7TH WORLD SUMMIT ON ETHICS AND LEADERSHIP IN SPORTS

We must learn to celebrate both victory & defeat: Sri Sri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru, July 25: Raising concern over ethical violations in pursuit of records in today's sports, spiritual guru Sri Sri Ravi Shankar has recently said that one must learn to celebrate both victory as well as defeat.

He said this in his keynote address at the 7th World Summit on Ethics and Leadership in Sports, organised by World Forum for Ethics in Business in Switzerland. The event drew global voices from sports, politics, business, academia, voluntary organisations, and think tanks, in a thoughtful exchange of ideas on whether success can truly endure if values are compromised; and what it takes to win with integrity in

a high-pressure world. The summit hosted compelling discussions on sports as a tool for peace-building, gender parity, mental health, peak performance and longevity, and what it takes to be the best not just in sports but in life and leadership. It also explored how lessons from the field, like fair play, team spirit, and endurance, can shape ethical leadership in politics and business.

"In sports, you either win or



you make others win," Sri Sri Ravi Shankar said. "We must learn to celebrate both. The very act of playing brings joy, he shared. "When we understand this, we remain ethical in sports naturally; otherwise, we find sporting arenas turn violent.

About role of mental health, he said, "A baby starts playing before it even starts to walk. Sports being so natural to us, where have we gone wrong today?"

Pointing to the fact that despite sports and music, onethird of the world's population is feeling lonely, depressed, and unhappy, and this is something to think about, he mentioned.

"If we can take the whole life as a sport," the spiritual guru further said, "there will be no war in the world, no heart-

burns, and no mistrust. The other distinguished speakers included Kaamya

Karthikeyan, the 17-year-old mountaineering prodigy, who has summited the highest peaks on all seven continents; Kevin Young, Olympic gold medalist and former 400m hurdles world record holder; Svyatoslav Yurash, Member of Parliament, Ukraine; Honey Thaljieh, Palestinian football pioneer; Thomas Helmer, Euro '96 champion and TV personality; and Divyakriti Singh, India's first female equestrian to win a gold at the Asian Games.

"Performance without purpose is hollow. Success without ethics is fragile. And power without responsibility is dangerous. True success is not just about the trophies we lift, but the lives we lift along the way... Because sport does not exist in isolation. It reflects the society," Honey Thaljieh, the first captain of Palestinian women's football team, said.

OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur-9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488

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

Rampant quarrying in Similipal foothills rings ecocide alarm

Baripada, July 25: Illegal stone in the foothills of ecologically sensitive Similipal National Park in Mayurbhanj district, causing widespread concern over its environmental toll on the much-cel-

Operations involving drilling and blasting are reportedly being carried out during the night, while transportation of the mined stone takes place during the day.

However, authorities are accused of sitting pretty, not taking substantial steps to rein in the illegal mining. Local residents allege that the administration unauthorised operators to loot natural resources at will. Wildlife inside the national park and villagers living in nearby areas are reportedly bearing the brunt of the insatiable greed of some unscrupulous individuals.

Sources said quarrying is rampant in and around Kendua panchayat — particularly in Saratchandrapur and Bankasahi villages under Shamakhunta tehsil. Large-scale drilling by machines and blasting with explosives such as gelatine sticks are being carried out at night sans official permission. The tremors from the loud blasts have caused visible damage to several houses, especially mud structures. and put concrete buildings at risk of structural compromise.

Villagers said they are too frightened to speak out against the powerful stone mafia. "Nightfall brings fear. We suffer from sleeplessness and fear for our lives as stones might fall on our houses at any moment," Budhia Soren of Bankasahi said. "We know everything but remain silent out of fear.'

Sadhu Majhi, another villager, said, "Lack of action by the authorities has emboldened these illegal miners. The number of trucks transporting stones

Elderly brothers held

for rape of minor girl

rested two elderly brothers for allegedly gangraping a 15-year-old

girl for over a year and attempting to bury her alive after she became

pregnant in Jagatsinghpur, an

to the complaint lodged by the

victim's father at Kujang police

station, the two brothers, identi-

fied as Bhagyadhar Das (60) and

Panchanan Das (58), had allegedly

year, and now she is seven months

pregnant. The accused brothers

were working at a mutt (ashram).

visits, the officer said. The father

also alleged that although he

initially reported the matter to a

local panchayat functionary, the

functionary offered him money to

threatened him if he reported the

matter to the police. A case was

registered against three persons

Act. The siblings were arrested

under sections of rape and POCSO

Thursday, while the third accused

was absconding, said Tirtol SDPO

to light barely four days after the

in Jagatsinghour district. The vic-

the district headquarters hospital

2 Class X girls found

pregnant in state-run

hostel; probe begins

Tumudibandh: A shocking case

has emerged from Kandhamal dis

trict where two minor girls study-

ing in Class X at a government-run

residential girls' high school were found to be pregnant. The incident

came to light during routine

health checks conducted after

the summer vacation. The girls.

residents of Kotagarh and Belghar

police limits, had returned to the

nostel along with other students.

A month later, school authorities

conducted routine monitoring of

the girls' menstrual health. When

the reports showed irregularities,

were carried out on the directive

further medical examinations

of senior officials. The tests

gangrape of an 18-year-old woman

suppress the incident and even



is increasing by the day and pedestrians are terrified of the speeding heavy vehicles.'

It is estimated that more than 50 trucks carry illegally quarried stones every day; yet officials at the Forest, Revenue, Mining, and Transport departments as well as the police appear to be either unaware or deliberately avoiding action.

Environmentalists warn that deforestation and hill-cutting by illegal quarries are leaving behind massive craters, severely impacting the region's ecology and microclimate. The situation has sparked growing resentment in the villages, with locals warning of mass protests if immediate action is not taken.

Meanwhile, Udavbhanu Sahu, Deputy Director of Mines, Mayurbhanj said that of the district's 24 licenced stone quarries, only 11 are operational. He clarified that no new licence has been issued in the areas near Similipal, which fall under the eco-sensitive zone. "Operations in such zones are prohibited. The rest of the leases will be reviewed once necessary documentation and payments are submitted," he added.

Baripada Divisional Forest Officer A Uma Mahesh confirmed that surveillance is ongoing in the eco-sensitive zone. "Our teams are camping in these areas and keeping round the clock vigil. We are planning a major crackdown on illegal crushers and quarries in the coming days," he said.

Man gets life term for wife's murder

Keonjhar, July 25: Keonjhar District and Sessions Judge GC Behera Thursday sentenced Sukura Munda, 32, of Parjanpur village to life imprisonment after convicting him for murdering his wife in 2021. The judge also imposed a penalty of ₹10,000 on the convict.

Sukura was found guilty of killing his wife, Subhasini Munda, 22, during a domestic dispute. Sukura's alcohol abuse led to frequent arguments and physical assault, according to Subhasini's father, Prabhakar Munda.

2021, during Laxmi Puja festivities, Sukura called his in-laws, claiming Subhasini was unwell. When they arrived, they found her unconscious and bleeding from a head injury, with a bloodstained shovel-like tool nearby. She was already dead.

An FIR was filed the next day under IPC Sections 498(A) and 302. He was arrested and a chargesheet was filed December 4. Relying on police reports and testimony from 14 witnesses, the court convicted Munda.

Prez to honour 2 Subarnapur weavers

Sonepur, July 25: Two master weavers from Subarnapur district will receive prestigious handloom awards from President Droupadi Murmu during a special ceremony at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi August 7. The event, organised by the Union Ministry of Textiles, will mark the celebration of National Handloom Day. Union Textiles Minister Giriraj Singh will also be present.

Arindra Meher, 53, of Sagarapali village in Sonepur block, has been selected for the Sant Kabir Handloom Award for his Sant Kabir Tie and Dye Silk Saree. A veteran with over 32 years of weaving experience, Arindra spent nearly five months designing and weaving the intricate piece. He



receive awards from President **Droupadi Murmu** during a special ceremony at in New Delhi

will receive ₹3.5 lakh in cash, a copper plaque, a shawl, and a certificate of recognition. He has earlier been felicitated with both state and national honours for his craftsmanship.

Similarly, Geetanjali Meher, 33, of Nimna village in Ullunda block, will be conferred with a National Handloom Award for her Chitrakayya Bandhodya Tie and Dye Silk Saree, which artistically interprets a romantic verse by poet Upendra Bhanja. A noted designer and weaver with two decades of experience, she spent four months creating the saree. Her award will include ₹2 lakh in cash, a copper plaque, a shawl, and a certificate of recognition.

Both weavers were mentored by renowned Bandha designer Prafulla Meher. The announcement has led to celebration in their communities.

burn injuries in the acid attack that took place in Gandhi Nagar, they said. "We have registered a case against the accused person under different sections of the BNS and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act," said

police said Friday.

Ganjam man

booked for acid

attack on cows

Berhampur, July 25: A man

was booked in Ganjam dis-

trict for allegedly throwing

acid at four cows that were

grazing outside his house,

The cows suffered serious

POST NEWS NETWORK

hampur Town police station. The accused person has been served with a notice, he said.

Saubhagya Kumar Swain, the

inspector-in-charge of the Ber-

The owner of the cows al leged that the accused had earlier threatened him not to free his animals, as they were destroying the green fencing of his house.

The injured cows are undergoing treatment at the veteri nary hospital here.

Soumyashree death: Judicial custody of accused HoD extended Balasore: A court in Balasore district Friday extended the judicial custody of the accused professor, Head of the

Education Department, accused of sexually harassing a student who died by setting herself on fire on the college campus, by 14 days. The judicial custody of Fakir Mohan (Autonomous) College's Assistant Professor Samira Kumar Sahoo, arrested on charges of sexual harassment and abetment of suicide, was ending Friday. He was arrested July 12, hours after the 20-year-old female student set herself on fire, allegedly following inaction over her complaint against Sahoo. She died at AIIMS-Bhubaneswar July 14. Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate Kishore Kumar Nath extended the judicial custody of the professor as he did not apply for bail.

Panchayat official held for coercing SHG women to show and film moles

Kendrapara, July 25: A 25-year-old employee of a gram panchayat in Kendrapara district was arrested Friday for allegedly coercing around a dozen women members of selfhelp groups (SHGs) to expose and allow video recording of pigmented nevi or moles on sensitive parts of their bodies, under the pretext of paying ₹ 1.000 per mole.

Pigmented nevi (moles) are growths on the skin that usually are flesh-coloured, brown

The accused, Somyaranjan Samal, a master bookkeeper (MBK), reportedly told the women that the videos were part of a medical documentation scheme.

In the SHG system, an MBK is responsible for maintaining



financial records and is appointed by the gram panchayat.

An FIR was lodged June 7 by Kalpana Samal, president of the Ma Budhi Kankei SHG in Tentulikoli village, under Rajkanika police station limits.

Following the complaint, police registered a case against Samal under Section 79 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), which pertains to acts intended to insult a woman's

He reportedly fled the village soon after the complaint was

After more than a month, Samal was arrested Friday from Chandanpur village in Cuttack district, under Nemal police station limits.

He was produced in court, which rejected his bail plea, and was subsequently sent to jail, said Inspector-In-Charge Saniav Kumar Mallick of Rajkanika police station.



Gopabandhu Square, Bhubaneswar-751003, Ph. No.: 0674-2397551, 2397199

INVITATION OF BIDS/OFFERS FOR PREMISES ON LEASE Central Bank of India requires premises admeasuring 74.32 to

92.90 sq.m (800-1000 Sq.ft) (±15%) carpet area in ready possession / ready for possession within 3 months at Binjharpur, Dist.: Jajpur preferably on the ground floor with adequate parking space, beside Main Road for their Binjharpur Branch. There should be a provision for an on-site ATM with an area of 5.94 to 9.29 Sq.m (64 to 100 Sq.ft). No brokers of intermediaries please. Priority will be accorded to Government Semi Govt. bodies or public sector undertakings. Kindly download the formats /terms and conditions from the website http://www.centralbankofindia.co.in or collect the same from Central Bank of India, Binjharpur Branch, At/PO Binjharpur, Dist.: Jajpur, PIN-755004 / Regional Office at 108-B, 1st Floor, Unit-VII, Suryanagar, Gopabandhu Square, Bhubaneswar - 751003 during office hours. The last date for submission of offers is 16.08.2025 upto 4.00 p.m. The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the proposals without assigning any reason thereof.

Date: 25.07.2025

Sd/- Chief Manager

THE PURI URBAN CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD, PURI HEAD OFFICE: KACHERI ROAD, PURI-752001

powers conferred on him u/s 13 (12) of securitization and reconstruction of financial Assets and Enforcement

(Symbolic Possession Notice) (For Immoveable Property) The undersigned being the authorized office of the Puri Urban Co-operative Bank, Ltd. Puri had in exercise of

of Security interest Act 2002 and under rule 9 of security interest (Enforcement) Rule 2002, served demand notice on the loanees to pay arrear amount mentioned there in the notice within 60 (sixty) days from the date of receipt. The loanees / guarantors / mortgagers, if failed to pay off their loan dues, the loanees / guarantor mortgagers in particular and the public in general are informed though this notice that the undersigned exercising the powers conferred on him u/s 13 (4) of the Act r/w Rules (8) of the Said Act has taken the Possession of the below mentioned properties on "as is where is whatever there is basis on this day date Therefore the loanees / Mortgagers in particulars and the public in general are hereby informed not to make

any deal in respect of those properties shall be subject to the charge of the Puri Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd

Name of the lone / Guarantors Date And Amount of Description of Property Sri. Kishori Padhi W/o Lt. Parikhita Rs. 5,20,717.00 Dist- Puri, S.R.O-Puri, Tahasil - Puri P.S-Padhi. At- Balighat Chhaka, Puri-2 Dt. - 30.09.2014 Kumbharapada, Thana-Puri, P.S No-32. 1-Sri Pradeep Kumar Padhi. S/o Lt incidental expense Khata no - 29, Hal Plot. no- 297, Area-Ac 0.012 decimals. Corresponding to Parikhita Padhi. At- Balighat Chhaka, thereon. Puri-2 Sabak Mouza - Balukhanda Sabak Khata no - 265, Sabak Plot no-343, Mortgagei

incidental

2-Sri Ramakrushna Reddy, Parsuram Reddy. At-Dhoba Sahi, Puri Smt. Basanti Prusty, W/o Lt. Nrusingha Rs.3,99,313.00 Charan Prusty, At-Khuntia Bagicha, Dt. - 31.08.2022 Chudanga Sahi, Puri

Guarantors name -(1) Smt. Manju Dalai, W/o-Krushna thereon. Chandra Dalai, At-Markandeswa

Sahi, Puri (2) Sri Rabinarayan Panda, S/o

At-Dhanakoth Jagannath

Sahi, Puri Sri Bijay Kumar Mishra S/o Lt. Iswar Rs. 10,89,579.00 Mishra, Chandra

At-ChakraTirtha Dt. - 30.04.2018

Guarantors name :-

 Sri. Rajasekhar Padhi. S/o-thereon. Braiamohan Padhi. , At-Dadamath

Lane, Gundicha Ghara, Puri (2) Sri Surendra Kumar Dash. S/o Purna Chandra Dash, At- Nagamath lane, Harachandi Sahi, Puri. Kumari Gita Mohapatra, D/o Gobinda Rs. 34,58,245.00

Dist-Puri S.R.O.-Puri Tahasil - Puri PS-Sea beach, Thana No-27, Mouza-Interest, costs and Balukhanda, Khata No-165, Plot Noincidental expense 395/540, Corresponding to Sabak khata No-73/3, Sabak plot No-1139, Area -Ac

(s) Smt. Kishore Padhi.

+ Interest, costs and Sahi, Puri, Hal Khata no-64, Hal Plot

expense no-704/1240, Area-Ac.0.019 Decimal.

Mortgager-(s) Smt. Basanti Prusty.

Dist-Puri, S.R.O-Puri, Tahasil-Puri, P.S.

Town Thana No-19, Mouza-Markandeswa

0.040 Decimal, Mortgager - (s) Sri Bijay Kumar Mishra.

Mohapatra, At- Tiadi Sahi, Bali Sahi, Dt. - 30.04.2018 1-Smt.Manjulata Dash. 2-Ku.Sagnika Rs.10,50,831.00

Dist - Puri, S.O.R & Tahasil-Puri, P.S. Town Thana, Puri No-11, Mouza-Bali Sahi, Ha Khata No-775, Plot.No-165, Area-A0.036. Interest, costs and incidental expense Mortgager - (s): Sri Gobinda Mohapatra

Mohanty.

incidental expense Plot.No-615, Area-Ac.0.036 decimal

+ Interest, costs and Kumbharapada, Hal

Dash. 3-Ku.Subhashree Dash. 4-Sri. Dt. - 31.05.2024 Ch Dash, S/o- Lt. Gobinda Dash, At- thereon. Sidha Mahabir Patana, Puri.

W/o-Sri Rs.10,90,526.00 Amulya Mohanty At- Near Gundicha Dt. - 31.12.2023 + Interest, costs and Pada, Hal Khata No-310 / Ka, Hal Plot. Noincidental expense 677/1222, Corresponding to Sabak Khata

P.S-Kumbharpada, Sakti Sambit Dash,1-W/o.2,3,-D/o + Interest, costs and Sidhamahabir, Hal Khata No-260, Plot 4-S/o Krushna Ch Dash.5-Sri Krushna|incidental expense|No-135/344, Area-Ac.0.025 decimal Mortgager-(s) Smt.Manjulata Dash.

Dist. Puri, S.R.O-Puri, Tahasil - Puri

P.S-Kumbharpada, No-31, Mouza-Matia

Area-Ac.0.030 decimal, Mortgager - (s)

(1) Sri Amulya Mohanty (2) Smt. Sulava

P.S-Kumbharpada, P.S No-30, Mouza

Khata.No-163

Dist. Puri, S.R.O-Puri, Tahasil

Mortgager- (s) Sri. Sadasiba Nayak.

Ghara Puri. Guarantors name :-1)Smt - Sulava Mohanty. (2) Sri thereon. mulya Mohanty. 1-W/o, S/o Lt.Bamdev Mohanty. At- Near Gundichaghar, Puri

Sri.Sadasiba Nayak. S/o Lt. Mohan Rs.4,31,857.00 Nayak. At - Kumbhara Pada, Puri

Sri.Dhadu Mohanty. S/o Sri Somanath Mohanty, At-Hatigurudeb lane, Baseli Dt.31.05.2024+ Baseli Sahi, No-03, Mouza-Mangalaghat,

Behera

S/o-Lt. Arjun Behera. At- Gokha sahi, thereon.

thereon 2-Sri Rs.6,24,348.00 Balavadra Behera. 3-Sri Meghanath Dt. - 31.05.2024

Dt. - 31.08.2023

thereon

Interest, costs and Hal Khata No-403, Plot.No-599, Areaincidental expense Ac.0.010 decimal, Mortgager-(s) Sr Dhadu Mohanty. Dist-Puri, S.R.O-Puri, Tahasil- Puri, P.S Behera.1-W/o,2-3,S/oJogendra|+Interest, costs and|Markandeswar Sahi, Puri, Khata no-45.

Baseli Sahi, Thana, No- 02, Mouza Behera. 4 - Sri Jogendra Behera incidental expense Plot no-302, Area-Ac.0.028 Decimal Mortgager - (s) Smt. Taramani Behera

> Sd./- Authorised Officer The Puri Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd, Puri

TATA MEMORIAL CENTRE ADVANCED CENTRE FOR TREATMENT, **RESEARCH AND EDUCATION IN CANCER (ACTREC)**

SECTOR-22, KHARGHAR, NAVI MUMBAI 410 210

Grant-In-Aid Institution of Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India **POSITIONS AVAILABLE**

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competent authority Sr. Name of the post

Assistant Professor 'E' (Pathology) (1-UR) Consultant 'D' (Pathology) (2-UR)
Scientific Officer 'E' (Transplant Immunology and immunogentics

_aboratory) (1-UR) Scientific Officer 'C' (Center for Cancer Epidemiology) (1-OBC)
Scientific Officer 'C' (Information Technology - Networking) (1-OBC)
Scientific Assistant B (Nuclear Medicine) (1-UR, 1-SC, 1-OBC)

Scientific Assistant 'B' (Cancer Cytogenetic Lab) (1-OBC) Scientific Assistant B (Animal Sciences) (1-UR)

Co-ordinator B (Medical Purchase/Stores) (1-OBC) Co-ordinator B (Medical Administration) (1-SC) 11 Technician 'A' (CRI Labs) (4-UR)

Online registration of applications made available from 22.07.2025 to Last date for online application is 22.08.2025 up to 05.30 p.m. (Indian

Standard Time). For more details please visit our website https://actrec.gov.in It is mandatory to submit ONLINE application.

Any addendum or corrigendum to this advertisement will be uploaded cbc48160/12/0001/2526 Chief Administrative Officer, ACTREC

22/07/2025

1. Applications are invited from retd. offrs. of the Armed Forces for the post of Manager for CSD of NCC Gp HQs, Cuttack 2. Qualifications & Terms of Employment.

NCC GROUP HEADOUARTERS. CUTTACI

- Retd. Lt. Col. / Col (a) Rk

(b) Age - Max 60 vrs.

(c) Min. 5 yrs experience in handling Type 'F' Cat | CSD.

(d) Knowledge of IT & Accts.

(e) Experience in HR mat.

(f) Residing within 30 kms around Cuttack.

Well versed with labour laws and policies/guidelines on (h) Consolidated monthly pay of Rupees Sixty Thousand only

(Rs 60.000/-) (Negotiable) Not emp in any Govt/ Semi Govt/Pvt Org.

(k) 11 months on contractual basis (Max four tenures can be

3. Interested retd offrs to send their resume along with copy of PPO, Discharge Book & self certificate (No recordable discp

OIC CSD NCC Gp HQs, Cuttack SO-15, Cantonment Road Near Senior Police Officers' Mess

award in career) to the address below:-

Cuttack-753001 e mail: gphqcuttack@nccorissa.org

Mob:7893123452 Last date for submission of applications is 25 Aug. 2025.

सं./No. 18-24/2023-DD-III/NF

भारत सरकार/Government of India

सामाजिक न्याय और अधिकारिता मंत्रालय/Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment दिब्यांगजन सशक्तिकरण विभाग

Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divayangjan) Subject: Engagement of Accountant in the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities

(Divyangjan) on Contract basis-regarding. Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) invites applications from eligible individuals for contractual appointment in the Department as under:

Details of Post	Essential Qualifications	Experience	Monthly Remuneration
Accountant (01 Post)	Retired Government Servant with experience in Administration and Finance Or Professionals from Open Market: a. Having Graduate Degree in Commerce or related courses from recognised University Institution. b. Having knowledge of accounting software such as tally etc. c. Having knowledge of MS Word, Excel and Power Point	Employees: Minimum 10 years experience in Programme division or Finance Division of a Ministry/Department/ Government organization. For Professionals from Open Market: Relevant experiences in related field for at least two years. Preference will be given for working	For Retired Government Employees: Remuneration as per guidelines laid down in Department of Expenditure's OM No. 3-25/2020-E.III A dated 09th December, 2020 i.e. fixed monthly amount arrived at by deducting basic pension from the pay drawn at the time of retirement. For Professionals from Open Market: Consolidated monthly remuneration of Rs.45,000/- including TA Rs.3000/

2. Detailed information regarding eligibility criteria and other terms and conditions may be seen at Department's website: www.depwd.gov.in. Interested and eligible candidates may send their application in the prescribed proforma within 21 days from the date of publication of the advertisement in the Employment News to nfdepwd@gmail.com.

Under Secretary to the Government of India cbc-38117/11/0009/2526 Email: sultan.meena@nic.in

confirmed that both girls were pregnant, Following the confirmafiled separate complaints with the respective local police stations. Based on these, two cases were registered-103/25 at Kotagarh police station and 64/25 at Belghar police are monitoring a suspect in connection with the case, Belghar police have already detained a youth for questioning. Investigations are ongoing.













Markandeswar Sahi, Puri

1-Smt.Taramani





To smile at an enemy is to disarm him

THE MOTHER



Honeytrap Alarm

f your password is still "1234" and you think a luxury hotel room is a safe space, you're probably not ready for the digital age, let alone high office.

It's hard to decide what's more staggering, the number of people $\,$ allegedly trapped, or the sheer ease with which it apparently happened. At least 72 public figures, including IAS and IPS officers, as well as ministers, reportedly walked into hotel rooms, seduced by charm, only to discover (later, presumably) that hidden cameras had been recording their own events.

The women, we're told, were young and attractive. The hotels were well-furnished with surveillance. And the outcome? Blackmail, attempted suicide, hushed panic. Some officers are believed to have paid up to ₹3 crore to keep things quiet, although now, with the arrest of a woman from Thane and murmurs reaching the Chief Minister's and Opposition leader's desks, "quiet" may no longer be an option. CM Devendra Fadnavis and Opposition Leader Nana Patole have broken their silence, but the scandal requires more than soundbites.

This isn't just about personal conduct. It's about vulnerability at the highest levels of governance. Officials with access to sensitive information fell prey not just to emotional manipulation, but to basic operational traps. That's a national security problem, not just a

What's also troubling is the lack of transparency. No official has stepped forward. The silence is deafening and dangerous. If public

BABUDOM

BYTES

Dilip Cherian

servants can be compromised this easily and still shield themselves behind rank and protocol, who's

to say what else is being quietly buried? Let's skip the moral outrage. But it's high time

governments took internal security and digital literacy far more seriously. Not every scandal needs to go viral before someone acts.

Why vacant PSU boardrooms should worry us

For a country chasing trillion-dollar dreams, we seem oddly comfortable running key institutions on half a leadership bench.

Consider PSU banks. There are currently more than 70 board-level openings across 12 public sector lenders, ranging from MDs and Executive Directors to non-official directors. This is a governance gap rather than merely an HR one, and it has practical implications for risk management, credit flow, and strategic decision-making. The economy, as a whole, suffers when Union Bank of India is without an MD or CEO for more than a month.

 $It is not just banks, either. \ Numerous important leadership positions$ are open at CPSEs in a variety of industries, including energy (NTPC, IOCL) and infrastructure (SAIL, BHEL, IRCON). Posts have been advertised, search-cum-selection panels have been established, and updated guidelines have been distributed by the Public Enterprises Selection Board, However, it still feels more like a marathon than a relay sprint to go from vacancy to appointment.

This is important since these positions are not symbolic. They are in charge of multi-crore projects, jobs, and vital national resources; they are the fulcrums of India's growth engines. Execution suffers when top-level leadership is absent or haphazard. And that can result in expensive delays or lost opportunities in industries like mining, power, and defence manufacturing.

The government may well be "in the process." But it's time to move from process to outcome. Our PSUs deserve nothing less than a full-strength leadership team.

Chandigarh gets a steady hand at the top

After months of musical chairs in the top police post, Chandigarh has finally secured a full-time DGP. Moreover, it's not just any officer, but one with both local roots and a global résumé.

Sagar Preet Hooda, a 1997-batch IPS officer of the AGMUT cadre, steps into the role at a time when Chandigarh Police could use more than just a steady hand. With recent turbulence in the force, including an SIT probe into an alleged assault involving Punjab Police personnel, Hooda's arrival brings much-needed leadership clarity. He could provide a much-needed fresh start.

What makes this appointment stand out isn't just the end of a long vacancy, but the calibre of the officer. A Harvard Edward S. Mason Fellow, with stints at Duke and LSE, and a sociology PhD from Panjab University, Hooda represents that rare mix of field experience and academic grounding. Currently helming Delhi Police's Intelligence Division, he's no stranger to high-pressure portfolios.

The hope now is that Hooda's Chandigarh connection and policy acumen will translate into better institutional morale, sharper policing, and more responsive leadership. After all, Chandigarh, with its unique UT governance structure and inter-state sensitivities, isn't the easiest beat.

Acting DGPs may keep the ship afloat, but real leadership is about course correction and long-term vision. Hooda's appointment may well mark a turning point provided he gets the autonomy and time to lead from the front.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

, When you want something, the entire universe conspires in helping you to achieve it

We always question the bonafides of the man who tells us

No one is useless in this world who lightens the burden of it

THIS DAY **IN HISTORY**

- 1775: The U.S. Postal Service was established by the Second Continental Congress, and Benjamin Franklin was named the first postmaster general.
- 1953: Fidel Castro attacked the Moncada military fortress in Santiago de Cuba, and, although unsuccessful, the event later inspired the 26th of July Movement, which culminated in the overthrow of Fulgencio Batista's regime in Cuba.
- 1956: Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser seized control of the Suez Canal and nationalized it, sparking a crisis that later resulted in French, British, and Israeli forces briefly occupying parts of Egypt
- 1965: The Republic of Maldives gained its independence from Britain.

FOCUS RESOURCES

SCRAMBLE FOR MINERALS

he world's superpowers have developed a seemingly insatiable appetite for the critical minerals that are essential to the ongoing energy and digital transitions, including rare-earth metals (for semiconductors), cobalt (for batteries), and uranium (for nuclear reactors). The International Energy Agency forecasts that demand for these minerals will more than quadruple by 2040 for use in clean-energy technologies alone. But, in their race to control these vital resources. China, Europe, and the United States risk causing serious harm to the countries that possess them.

As it stands, China is leading the pack, having gained ownership or control over an estimated 60-80% of the critical minerals that are needed for industry (such as for magnets) and the green transition. This control extends across the supply chain: China is heavily invested in mining across Africa, Central Asia, and Latin America, and has been building up its processing capabilities.

For Western powers, China's quasi-monopoly over critical minerals looks like aneconomic and national-security threat. This fear is not unfounded. In December 2024. China restricted exports of critical minerals to the US in retaliation for US restrictions on exports of advanced microchips to China.

Since then, US President Donald Trump has forced Ukraine to relinquish a significant share of its critical minerals to the US in what he presents as repayment for American support in its fight against Russia. Trump also wants US sovereignty over mineral-rich Greenland, to the dismay of Denmark. And he has suggested that Canada, with all its natural resources, become America's 51st state. The European Union, for its part, has sought its own mining contracts, such as in the Dem-



US President Donald Trump has forced Ukraine to relinquish a significant share of its critical minerals to the US in what he presents as repayment for American support in its fight against Russia

ocratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), touted as the "Saudi Arabia of critical minerals.

From the scramble for Africa in the nineteenth century to Western attempts to claim Middle Eastern oil in the twentieth, such resource grabs are hardly new. They reflect a fundamental asymmetry: less industrialized developing economies tend to consume fewer resources than they produce. whereas the opposite is true for developed economies - and, nowadays, China.

In principle, this asymmetry creates ideal conditions for mutually beneficial agreements: industrialized economies get the resources they desire, and non-industrialized economies get a windfall, which they can use to bolster their own development. But, in reality, vast natural-resource endowments have proven to be more of a curse than a blessing, with resource-rich countries often developing more slowly than their resource-poor counterparts.

A key reason for this is that developed economies have more economic clout, advanced technology, and military might -all of which they bring to bear to acquire the resources they seek. For example, European imperial powers used steam-engine technology to help them explore and exploit Africa for resources like copper, tin, rubber, timber, diamonds, and gold in the nineteenth century. This, together with more advanced weaponry and other technologies, meant that, far from offering local communities fair compensation for their valuable resources, European powers could subjugate those communities and use their labor to extract and transport what they wanted.

But even countries that are exporting their resources for a profit have often struggled to make progress on development, not only because of imbalanced deals with more powerful resource importers, but also because their governments have often mismanaged the associated bonanzas. It does not help that resource-rich countries and regions often grapple with internal and external conflicts.

But the resource curse is not inescapable, especially for countries with strong outward-facing institutions to manage the economy's external relations, including its resource sector's ability to attract investment and generate revenues for the state, and inward-facing institutions to govern how those revenues are used. If a country is to translate its resource endowments into economic development and improvements in human well-being, both have a critical role to play.

Outward-facing institutions must negotiate fair and transparent mining contracts with multinational corporations and strengthen local governments' ability to do the same. Such contracts should include local-content requirements, which keep more high-value-added processing activities at home, increase local employment, and strengthen the capacity of local suppliers and contractors. Since acquiring a 15% stake in DeBeers, Botswana has sought to ensure that diamond cutting – not just mining –occurs domestically, which requires inward-facing institutions to deliver adequate investment in these capabilities.

must also manage risks raised by resource extraction, from health and environmental damage (deforestation, biodiversity loss, pollution) to labor-rights violations (including child labor). Unfortunately, as it stands, many mineral-rich countries are falling far short, leading some to advocate boycotts of critical minerals coming from conflict zones or countries using forced labor. While such boycotts are unlikely to sway these governments, they could convince multinationals and foreign governments to demand better enforcement of environmental and social standards from countries with which they do business.

Inward-facing institutions

Ultimately, however, it is up to mineral-rich countries to defend their interests and make the most of their endowments. This starts with efforts to strengthen institutions.

Rabah Arezki is a former vice president at the African Development Bank, while Rick van der Ploeg is Professor of Economics at the University of Oxford.

SPECTRUM

Rabah Arezki and

Rick van der Ploeg

INDUSTRIALIZED

DEVELOPING

ECONOMIES

TEND TO

FEWER

CONSUME

RESOURCES

THAN THEY

WHEREAS THE

PRODUCE,

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IS TRUE FOR

DEVELOPED

ECONOMIES

LESS

GEOPOLITICS

Central Asia's new 'Great Game'



Piotr Opalinski

THE EU DOESN'T **COMPETE DIRECTLY WITH CHINA OR RUSSIA BUT PROPOSES AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL OF COOPERATION**

entral Asia, for over a century perceived as an arena of struggle between external powers, and during the Cold War confined within the structures of the USSR, is today increasingly formulating its own strategic agenda. The region's states are pursuing multi-vector policies, balancing influence and developing a network of partnerships encompassing both global players - China, the US, Russia, India, and European Union – and regional actors such as Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and the Gulf states

The contemporary version of the 'Great Game' is not only a race for raw materials and trade routes, but also for technological, digital, and institutional dominance. Alternative models of cooperation and mechanisms based on competence, systemic resilience, and a lack of political conditionality are gaining importance. A region once considered peripheral is now emerging as an autonomous actor and a hub of the new Eurasian architecture. The involvement of key global and regional geopolitical actors in Central Asia is part of a broader process of transforming Eurasia into a polycentric space.

The European Union is developing cooperation with Central Asian countries, strengthening political dialogue and development opportunities. At the Samarkand Summit in April 2025, a 12 billion investment package was announced as part of the Global Gateway strategy. The EU doesn't compete directly with China or Russia but proposes an alternative model of cooperation - based on transparency and sustainable development.

The US is conducting dialogue with Central Asian countries. In July 2025, Secretary of State Marco Rubio met with Uzbek Foreign Minister, confirming continued cooperation in key sectors: energy transformation, digitalization, supply chain security, and Afghanistan's integration into the regional trade architecture.

Central Asian nations are increasingly adopting a balancing strategy, utilizing both options and avoiding a clear commitment to either side. This multi-vector approach and pragmatism in infrastructure policy allow for the maximization of benefits from

available financing sources and cooperation.

Central Asia is becoming a significant area of global competition for strategic critical raw materials—primarily uranium and lithium—which play a key role in energy transformation and security policy.

The EU sees Central Asia as an opportunity to diversify its critical raw materials supply. Under the Critical Raw Materials Act program, it promotes investments consistent with ESG standards and is considering privileged access for Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to the European market, provided that supply stability is ensured.

Contemporary competition in the Central Asian region goes beyond the traditional struggle for raw materials and physical infrastructure to encompass issues related to data, digital standards, and technological sovereignty.

Central Asian states are increasingly consistently pursuing a multi-vector policy, consciously avoiding subordination to a single center of power.

The region is becoming a laboratory for a new multipolar order – devoid of a hegemonic center, but based on a multi-layered network of connections and partnerships. New players with their own agendas are emerging on the scene - India, UAE, and Saudi Arabia.

A long-term challenge and opportunity for the region's countries will be maintaining a balance between the interests of external powers, retaining added value in the form of knowledge, technology, and jobs, and defending decision-making autonomy in the face of growing external pressure. Increasingly, Central Asia is emerging not as an object of geopolitical games, but as an independent actor shaping its own strategic

environment. The new 'Great Game' in Central Asia does not lead to a clear-cut outcome - the direction of change is not predetermined. The region's future will depend on its ability to autonomously balance external influences, diversify investments, and translate global competition into lasting benefits for societies and local institutions. It is the agency and flexibility of regional actors that may determine the shape of the new balance of power in Eurasia.

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Troubling possibility

Sir, Since the AI 171 crash, a surge in reported defects across Boeing aircraft worldwide has raised serious concerns. While the preliminary inquiry hints at pilot error, the credibility of the final report is already under suspicion. The Pilots' Association has questioned whether Boeing, under US pressure, is scapegoating the pilots to protect its commercial interests. Could pilots, feeling unjustly blamed, be silently protesting by amplifying minor technical issues, grounding flights, or turning back mid-air-exploiting system loopholes as a form of shadow warfare? It's a troubling possibility. Investigators, potentially under corporate or political coercion, must resist compromise. Their report must reflect the unvarnished truth—guided not by profit or power, but by integrity, justice, and the sanctity of human life.

RS Narula, PATIALA

A fair deal

Sir, The UK and India's bilateral trade is set to receive a more than \$34-billion annual boost over the long term following their free-trade agreement, with the countries' leaders calling it a "historic" deal. Both sides had finalized the trade pact in May after three years of intense negotiations—marked by thorny issues such as visas, tariff reductions. and tax breaks. Talks gained momentum, and both governments accelerated efforts to seal the deal as former U.S. President Donald Trump's tariff threats sent the world into disarray. The trade agreement could strengthen both countries' positions in their respective ongoing negotiations with trading partners, and India has secured market access for key job-creating sectors such as textiles, footwear, gems and jewellery, and marine products—where the UK is set to eliminate duties of up to 20 per cent. Negotiators have also managed to push for the elimination of duties on almost 99.7 % of tariff lines in India's food sector. In most food items, the tariffs were as high as 70 %. New Delhi extracted enhanced market access in export-oriented sectors such as marine and animal products, including seafood, dairy, and meat products, with tariffs reduced to zero $\,$ from up to 20 per cent.

MR Jayanthy, NAVI MUMBAI



TWO STATES





Two Kashmirs, 26 years on: Bengal sees 25 drowning A stark divide across LoC deaths every day: Study

1999. Indian forces evicted Pakistani intruders from the icy heights of Kargil. It was a resounding military victory, but two and a half decades later, the deeper triumph lies in development and dignity

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 25: As India marks the 26th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas, the story of Kashmir is no longer just about territory and conflict.

It is about transformation one that sets apart Jammu and Kashmir from Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (Po-JK) and Gilgit-Baltistan (PoGR) like never before

In the summer of 1999, Indian forces evicted Pakistani intruders from the icy heights of Kargil. It was a resounding military victory, but two and a half decades later, the deeper triumph lies in development and dignity.

Today, the Jammu and Kashmir region stands transformed with militancy at its lowest, youth empowered, and infrastructure booming PoJK and PoGB languish in repression, poverty, and neglect.

Since the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, Jammu and



Kashmir has seen unprecedented progress. Smart city projects in Srinagar, the all-weather Zojila Tunnel, an upgraded Kargil airport, IIT and NIT campuses, new railway lines and hospitals have redefined the region.

Notably, the literacy rate stands at over 67 per cent, with a significant rise in enrolment and female education. Over 1.8 million tourists visited in 2024, and global platforms like the G20 meet in Srinagar have rebranded the Valley as a hub of opportunity. Youth from Kupwara to Pulwama are becoming entrepreneurs, athletes, and innovators.

From Olympian Arif Khan to renewable energy champion Zahoor Ahmad, new icons are emerging. Education enrolment, especially among girls, is steadily rising.

On the other side of the Line of Control, PoJK and PoGB remain trapped in infrastructure decay, blackout-ridden towns, and economic marginalisation.

The China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor (CPEC) projects, to be threatened into silence.

Civil liberties are non-exisstitutional gag orders, local languages are vanishing with languages like Balti and Shina being pushed aside in favour of Urdu and youth are lured into radicalisation in the absence

The LoC today does not just divide land — it separates two models of governance

One that builds futures; the other that buries them under geopolitics. Kargil was India's military win in 1999. In 2025, it's a moral and developmental one visible in the soaring aspirations of its people, and the stark silence across the border.

KARGIL VIJAY DIWAS

benefitted only the military

elite. Clean water, jobs, health-

care — all remain scarce. Even

state employees protested in Ju-

Army to inaugurate 3 projects to tell tales of soldiers' valour

Drass: The Army will Saturday launch three key projects, including a portal where citizens can pay 'e-shradhanjali' to martyrs, as part of the 26th Kargil Vijay Diwas to make people aware of soldiers' bravery and sacrifices. The other two projects are a QR code-based audio application on which people can listen to the stories of the battles fought during the 1999 Kargil war and the Indus Viewpoint, which will offer people a chance to go up to the Line of Control (LoC) in the Batalik sector. Kargil Vijay Diwas is observed on July 26 every year. On this day in 1999. the Indian Army announced the successful culmination of 'Operation Vijay', declaring victory after a nearly three-month-long battle in the icy heights of Kargil, including super-high-altitude locations, such as Tololing and Tiger Hill. Giving details of the 'e-shradhanjali' project, an Army official said, "The citizens can now pay e-shradhanjali to the heroes who made the supreme sacrifice for the country without visiting memorials." The project is being launched to sensitise people about the sacrifices made by the armed forces and the hardships they face while discharging their duties, he said. The third project to be inaugurated on this year's Vijay Diwas is the Indus Viewpoint, which will allow visitors to go up to the LoC in the Batalik sector. "This will give an idea to the visitors about the conditions in which soldiers serve, the difficulties and constant dangers they face on a day-to-day basis to ensure that the nation remains safe," the official said.

tent at the other side of LoC. Dissent is crushed under con-

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

being children.

data suggests.

West Bengal faced a far worse

drowning crisis than official

The survey is the largest of

its kind ever conducted in In-

dia, covering all 23 districts of

West Bengal, a population of

18 million people, the institute

George Institute for Global

Health, an independent med-

ical research institute head-

quartered in Australia with

offices in India. China and the

UK. researches non-communi-

cable diseases and large-scale

Bloomberg Philanthropies.

found that 9,191 people in West

Bengal die from drowning each

year - nearly triple the Global

Burden of Disease estimates,

exposing a massive gap in our

understanding of this prevent-

able public health emergen-

cy," a statement issued by the

George Institute on Thursday

the researchers used a low-cost

Community Knowledge Ap-

While surveying the matter,

"The survey, supported by

authorities claimed.

clinical studies.

of education and employment.



among children, famlies do not have legal

The survey, supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, found that 9,191

to report deaths to authorities. Poor reach and utilisation of healthcare infrastructure also mean deaths are missed by the system. This research uncovers the true, devastating burden plaguing rural regions of West Bengal DR MEDHAVI GUPTA | GEORGE INSTITUTE

proach, engaging over 15,000 community members to report deaths in their neighbourhoods, which were subsequent-

ly validated through household

surveys with victims' families. According to Dr Medhavi Gupta from the George Institute, the true extent of drowning deaths in West Bengal -- and likely across many parts of India -- has remained largely

"As most deaths occur among children, families do not have

legal or financial incentives to report deaths to authorities Poor reach and utilisation of healthcare infrastructure also mean deaths are missed by the system. This research uncovers the true, devastating burden plaguing rural regions of West Bengal," Gupta.

The report has suggested some measures to bring down the cases of drowning deaths in West Bengal. The sugges tions include fencing around ponds and open water sources to safeguard toddlers aged 1-2 years, especially near homes to be initiated by local civic bodies, integrating surviva swim and water safety training into school curricula for children aged between six and ten years through the state school education department, and strengthening local capacity in safe rescue and resuscitation, considering that over 90 per cent of drowning rescues are performed by family members

Amarnath Yatra draws 9 young devotees from six countries



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 25: In a remarkable fusion of faith and global spirituality, nine young devotees from six different countries — including the US. Germany, and Canada — undertook the sacred Amarnath Yatra, embracing the challenging Himalayan pilgrimage with devotion and wonder.

The Department of Information &; Public Relations, Jammu and Kashmir, shared the news on social media platform 'X,' stating: "9 young foreign devotees from 6 countries, including the US and Germany, undertook the sacred #ShriAmarnathJiYatra via the Baltal route - a beautiful blend of global faith and spiritual harmony in the Himalayas".

One young devotee from Can-

ada described her spiritual experience as overwhelming and transformative.

"I am here in Kashmir, ex-

periencing its rich biodiversity and spiritual energy. The moment I stepped into the Amarnath cave, I was in tears there was a deep sense of peace. The entire world is connected through the energies of Shiv-Shakti. This cave is special — it's where Lord Shiv revealed the secret of immortality to Parvati. The trek was tough but absolutely worth it. I urge everyone, regardless of where they are from, to come and experience this once in a

lifetime," he said. Another pilgrim echoed the sentiment, adding: "It was a truly wonderful experience. We felt safe, supported, and spiritually uplifted. We will definitely

Since this year's Amarnath Yatra started on July 3, more than 3.42 lakh Yatris have had 'Darshan' so far, while a fresh batch of 3,500 pilgrims started their journey from Jammu towards the two base camps.

Officials said that more than 3.42 lakh Yatris have performed the ongoing Amarnath Yatra during the last 21 days as the huge rush of pilgrims continues unabated.



In this image posted by @SethSanjayMP via X, Army personnel from the 8th Mountain Division, dressed in tradi-

New wolf spider species found in Sunderbans

This finding marks the first recorded instance of the

genus Piratula in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, July 25: Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) researchers have announced the discovery of a new spider species on Sagar Island in the Sundarbans, highlighting the region's remarkable yet underexplored biodiversity.

This finding marks the first recorded instance of the genus Piratula in India, a group of wolf spiders predominantly found across Asia, with limited distribution in Europe and North America, a ZSI statement

said Friday "The newly identified species, Piratula acuminata, belongs to the family Lycosidae, commonly known as wolf spiders," the statement added.

"Unlike web-building spiders, these agile predators are ground-dwelling and ambush their prey," Souvik Sen, lead researcher from ZSI, said.

He described the species as a medium-sized spider, approximately 8-10 millimeters in length, characterised by its pale creamy white coloration interspersed with brown, chalkwhite spots on its abdomen, and a pair of light brown stripes towards the rear. The distinctive structural intricacies of its genitalia were key to its identification as a novel species.

'The unique morphological features of this spider immediately indicated it was an undoc-

umented species," Sen added. "We conducted extensive



morphological analysis over several weeks to confirm our findings," he added.

The research team, comprising Souvik Sen and Sudhin PP

from ZSI, Kolkata, along with Pradeep M Sankaran from Sacred Heart College, Cochin, has published their detailed scientific account in the latest issue

Every new species we discover is a testament to the incredible natural heritage of this region. It also serves as a stark reminder of how much we stand to lose if we don't expedite our efforts to protect these habitats

DHRITI BANERJEE | DIRECTOR, ZSI

of Zootaxa, a peer-reviewed scientific journal.

This discovery on Sagar Island, the largest island within the Sundarbans deltaic complex, reinforces the ecological richness of this UNESCO World Heritage Site, Sen said.

The island's unique ecosys tems, shaped by alluvial deposits from the Ganga River, include vital mudflats and estuarine waters supporting a diverse array of flora and fauna.

Majority of industrial units quit WB in last 10 years for Maharashtra

Kolkata, July 25: A majority of industrial units that closed their shutters in West Bengal in the last ten years have relocated to Maharashtra, according to statistics available in the records of a Central organisation.

According to statistics available with the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), since the financial year of 2011-12, the first fiscal under the current Trinamool Congress regime in West Bengal, till 2024-25, the last fiscal under the same regime, a total of 6,688 industrial units closed in West Bengal and shifted to other states The maximum exodus, ac-

cording to the statistics of the same Central body, occurred during the last ten financial years, with the number being 4,751. Fiscally, the maximum ex-

odus occurred during 2016-17 and 2017-18, when a total of 1,945 industrial units closed their shutters in West Bengal and relocated to other states. Now, departmental insiders

said the maximum number of industrial units that closed in the state during the last ten years shifted to Maharashtra, with the figure being 1,308. The other states where the in-

dustrial units shifted to include Uttar Pradesh at 879, Chhattisgarh at 511, and Gujarat at 423.

Economic and political observers feel that the figures on the states benefiting the most because of the exodus of industrial units in West Bengal provide interesting review materials.

According to them, all the states that benefited most because of this factor during the period under review are BJP-

ruled states. Observers feel that the BJP can use these figures to project how the states ruled by them provide the right ambience to industrial units to relocate themselves there after being frustrated with any non-BJP-ruled state.

It had been a long-standing argument of both the BJP and the other opposition parties in West Bengal that the rampant extortion by the ruling Trinamool Congress is not only discouraging fresh investment proposals in the state but also promoting existing units in the state to shut their shutters and shift to other states.

At a political rally organised by the BJP's West Bengal unit at the industrial township of Durgapur in West Burdwan dis trict on July 18, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also stressed the issue of how extortions are discouraging investments in the state.

The Prime Minister, on that day, devoted substantial time in explaining how communal riots like the one in the minority-dominated Murshidabad district, which allegedly hap pened under the patronage of a section of Trinamool Congress leaders and individuals from the police administration, and the extortion rackets run by leaders of the ruling dispensa tion became the reasons why the industrialists are scared to invest in the state.

"In West Bengal, the police administration always acts in a biased manner in situations like that in Murshidabad. Be cause of extortion rackets run by the ruling Trinamool Congress leaders, no industrialist wants to invest in Bengal Trinamool Congress has to go Otherwise, everything in West Bengal will be in shambles,' the Prime Minister said.



national



Rahul Gandhi has alwavs practised the politics of falsehood. He and his party have consistently been against the poor, the oppressed, and marginalised sections of society HARMENDRA PRADHAN | UNION EDUCATION MINISTER

INDIA HAS TO TRIPLE ITS SATELLITES: ISRO CHIEF

ISRO Chairman V Narayanan Friday said that India has to nearly triple its number of satellites in space, from the current 55, within the next three years. Delivering 'The GP Birla Memorial Lecture on Indian Space Programme - Accomplishments, Challenges and Future Perspectives', Narayanan said by 2040 India would be on par with any other nation in terms of space technology, application area, and infrastructure





of Shanmugam, M M Abdulla and

Wilson, who will continue as an MP, and our dear friend Kamal Haasan, Salem S R Sivalingam, and poet Salma who will be our M K STALIN TN CM

We have been pursu ing our demand to save Mhadei from being diverted, before the Supreme Court and the

PRAMOD SAWANT GOA CM



externally aided projects in a financial year. which is not sufficient for the state. I have already written to the Centre to increase the upper cap of receiving loans to speed up development

MANIK SAHA | TRIPURA CM

SHORT TAKES

Convict escapes from prison, nabbed

Kannur (Kerala): Notorious criminal Govindachamy, alias Govindaswamy, a convict serving a life sentence in the sensational 2011 Soumya murder case, escaped from the high-security Kannur Central Jail Friday morning but was apprehended by police several hours later. "The 41-year-old Govindachamy, who is missing his left hand, was caught from a well near a derelict building in Thalap, within Kannur city limits," said a senior district police officer. According to visuals on TV channels, the convict was hiding inside the well near the building. Police used a sniffer dog to look for Govindachamy following his escape from prison.

Man kills wife, two kids; hangs himself

Jaipur: A man allegedly murdered his wife and two children before taking his own life by hanging himself in Udaipur, officials said. On Thursday night, Dilip Chitara (40) allegedly strangled his wife. Alka. and administered poison to their sons Khush (3) and Manveer (7) before hanging himself, Additional SP Umesh Kumar Oiha said.

Colonel assault case: CBI takes over probe

New Delhi: The CBI has taken over the investigation into the alleged assault of a colonel by Punjab Police personnel and registered two separate FIRs, officials said Friday. The alleged incident took place on the intervening night of March 13 and 14 at a roadside dhaba in Patiala, Punjab. The CBI has re-registered both the FIRs filed by the Civil Lines Police Station, Patiala, as its own separate cases on the orders of the Punjab and Haryana High Court earlier this month.

India, Namibia discuss cheetah conservation

New Delhi: India and Namibia Friday discussed ways to deepen ties in cheetah conservation and wetland protection. Union **Environment Minister** Bhupender Yadav met his Namibian counterpart Indileni Daniel on the sidelines of the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands at Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe.

After Dhankhar experience, BJP to go for tried, tested method

Several leaders of the BJP and its allies are of the view that the NDA this time is unlikely

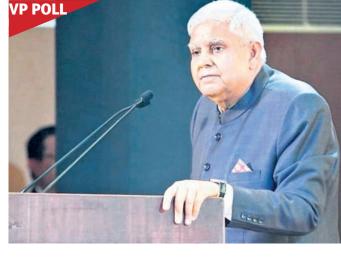
to follow the instincts that made it pick Dhankhar and will be more conventional in its search for his successor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: With the **Election Commission formally** setting in motion the process of electing the next vice president by appointing a returning officer, the BJP-led alliance is likely to start consultation on its pick for the key constitutional position amid indications that the Opposition will also join the fray.

In the electoral college that comprises members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) has a clear majority as its strength is nearly 425 out of the current total of 782 MPs, making its nominee a clear favourite to fill in the position left vacant by the abrupt resignation of Jagdeep Dhankhar.

While the brain trust of the BJP is yet to begin deliberations, there is a strong view within the party and its allies that the party leadership will prioritise organisational rootedness and political commitment over an excessive focus on experiment that has at times made them look outside their own pool of experienced talent,



as was the case with Dhankhar in the 2022 polls.

Having started his political career as a Janata Dal MP in 1991, Dhankhar later joined the Congress as parties of socialist stock declined.

He then shifted his allegiance to the BJP, where his political activities were nominal. It was as a senior advocate in the Supreme Court that he caught the attention of the BJP leadership, which led to his appointment as West Bengal Governor in 2019 and then as vice president in 2022 following a tenure that was marked by his frequent run-ins with the government led by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, a key opposition

Dhankhar's streak of outspokenness and unconventional style as vice president gradually soured his ties with the government, and the final straw came when he accepted an opposition-sponsored notice

July 21 for a motion to remove Justice Yashwant Varma. It caused dismay in the ruling alliance and almost derailed the official efforts for a bipartisan move in the Lok Sabha. He was to resign hours later.

Several leaders of the BJP and its allies are of the view that the NDA this time is unlikely to follow the instincts that made it pick Dhankhar and will be more conventional in its search for his successor.

While the prevailing view is that the BJP will pick one from its ranks, someone like Harivansh, a JD(U) MP, is also being talked about as a probable candidate for the trust he has built with the government in his nearly seven-year term as Rajya Sabha deputy chairman.

The vice president is the ex-officio Chairman of the Upper House, a key position in shaping Parliament's proceedings and thus guiding the government's agenda.

Op Sindoor still continues: CDS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Asserting that Operation Sindoor "still continues", Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan Friday said the country's military preparedness must remain at a "very high" level, roundthe-clock and throughout the

In his keynote address at a defence seminar hosted at Subroto Park here, the CDS also said the military in future will also need "information warriors, technology warriors and scholar warriors".

And, in an emerging landscape of warfare, a future soldier will need to be a mix of all three "info, tech and scholar warriors", the CDS said. The seminar on 'Aerospace Power: Preserving India's Sovereignty and Furthering National Interests' was held under the aegis of the 'No.4 Warfare and Aerospace Strategy Programme (WASP)'. The CDS said there are no runners-up in a war, and any military must be constantly alert and maintain a high degree of operational preparedness. "An example is Operation Sindoor, which still continues. Our preparedness level has to be very high, 24x7, 365 days (a vear)." Gen Chauhan said.

India launched Operation Sindoor early May 7 and decimated multiple terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied-Kashmir (PoK)

Pakistan also launched offensives against India, and all subsequent counter-offensives by India were also carried out under Operation Sindoor. The military conflict between the two nuclear-armed neighbours halted after they reached an understanding on the evening May 10.

Modi overtakes Indira to become PM with 2nd longest unbroken stint



New Delhi, July 25: Narendra Modi Friday overtook Indira Gandhi to become the second longest serving prime minister of India in consecutive terms.

Modi, officials noted, completed 4,078 days in office on Friday. Gandhi was in the office in an unbroken stint for 4,077 days, from January 24, 1966, to March 24, 1977.

The record for the unbroken stint is held by Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister. Both Modi and Nehru led their respective parties to victory in three consecutive Lok Sabha elections. Nehru, who remained at the helm from August 15, 1947, till his death May 27, 1964, had an uninterrupted tenure of 6,130 days. As an elected head of a government, in state and at the Centre, Modi already enjoys the longest stint. He became Gujarat Chief Minister in 2001 and remained in office before taking over as Prime Minister in 2014. Modi, the first prime minister born after Independence, is also the longest serving non-Congress PM. The officials noted that

the Guiarat-born leader is the only non-Congress leader to complete two full terms as the head of the central government

"Modi is the only leader in India, among all PMs and CMs, to win six consecutive elections as the leader of a party -- Gujarat assembly polls in 2002, 2007 and 2012, and the national elections in 2014, 2019, and 2024," an official said.

The BJP Friday hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tenure as "golden chapters of development" and said he came to the helm with public support while Indira Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru became Prime Minister for the first time either due to "inevitabili ty of circumstances or political manoeuvring". "Prime Minister Narendra Modi completed 4,078 days of his continuous tenure today. With this, he surpassed the record of Indira Gandhi's tenure and became the second-longest serving prime minister in consecutive terms after Jawaharlal Nehru. Every Indi an is feeling happy," BJP Rajya Sabha MP and national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi told reporters here.

DRDO successfully tests drone-launched missile

New Delhi, July 25: A dronelaunched precision guided missile has been successfully testfired by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) at a test range in Andhra Pradesh.



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Friday that the flight trials were carried out in Kurnool. "In a major boost to India's defence capabilities, @DRDO India has successfully carried out flight trials of UAV Launched Precision Guided Missile (ULPGM)-V3 in the National Open Area Range (NOAR), test range in Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh," Singh said in a social media post.

The missile is an enhanced version of the ULPGM-V2 missile developed and delivered by the DRDO earlier. The ULP-GM-V3 is equipped with a high definition dual-channel seeker that can strike a wide variety of targets.

It can be fired in plain and high-altitude areas. The missile has day-and-night capability and two-way data link to support post-launch target update, according to the defence ministry. The missile is equipped with three modular warhead options: anti-armour to destroy modern age armoured vehicles equipped with rolled homogeneous armour, the ministry said. The weapon also has a "penetration-cum-blast" warhead with anti bunker application, it added.

The missile was released from an unmanned aerial vehicle, which is indigenously developed by an Indian start-up -- Newspace Research Technologies, Bengaluru.

The DRDO is actively pursuing integration of ULPGM weapons with long-range and high endurance UAVs from several other Indian companies. The ministry said Adani Defence, Bharat Dynamics Limited, and 30 MSMEs and start-ups contributed to making the project a success.



Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu with Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama during an audience, at Karsha Photang, in Zanskar, Ladakh

Suicides in edu institutions: SC issues pan-India guidelines

All educational institutions were directed to adopt and implement a uniform mental health policy, drawing cues from the "Ummeed" draft guidelines, the "Manodarpan" initiative, and the National Suicide Prevention Strategy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Outlining the rise in suicides and mental health issues among students in educational institutions, the Supreme Court Friday issued pan-India guidelines to combat the problem.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta said there remained a "legislative and regulatory vacuum" in the country with respect to a unified, enforceable framework for suicide prevention of students in educational institutions, coaching centres, and student-centric environ-

the bench said the measures should remain in force and binding, until such time as appropriate legislation or regulatory frameworks were enacted by the competent authority.

All educational institutions were directed to adopt and implement a uniform mental health policy, drawing cues from the "Ummeed" draft guidelines, the "Manodarpan" initiative, and the National Suicide Prevention Strategy.

"This policy shall be reviewed and updated annually and made publicly accessible on institutional websites and notice boards of the institutes," the bench said. The top court highlighted Centre's preventive



steps to mitigate the situation, with "Ummeed" (understand, motivate, manage, empathise, empower, and develop) draft guidelines -- meant to prevent school student suicides -- re-

leased by the Ministry of Education in 2023. For a broader reach, the court said, the Ministry of Education launched "Manodarpan", mental health and the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

The verdict came on an appeal against an order of the Andhra Pradesh High Court, rejecting the plea to transfer the investigation over the unnatural death of a 17-year-old National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test aspirant, preparing in Vishakhapatnam, to the CBI.

Passing a slew of guidelines, the bench said all educational institutions with 100 or more enrolled students should either appoint or engage at least one qualified counsellor, psychologist, or social worker with demonstrable training in child and adolescent men-

tal health.

All educational institutions, particularly coaching institutes or centres, were asked to refrain from segregating students' batches on the basis of academic performance, public shaming, or assignment of aca demic targets disproportionate to their capacities.

The bench stressed on the need for zero tolerance when it came to retaliatory actions against complainants or whistle-blowers. All coaching hubs including Jaipur, Kota, Chen nai, Hyderabad, Delhi and Mumbai, were directed to implement heightened mental health protection and preventive measures.

While issuing 15 guidelines,

well-being of students during

national



l request you to direct the concerned officers to expedite the supply of the shortfall of 1,65,541 metric tonnes of urea, as per the state's allocation, in the interest of our

GOVT NOTIFIES RULES TO IDENTIFY CLEAN UP CONTAMINATED SITES

The Centre has notified new rules for the identification and clean-up of contaminated sites across India to prevent risks to human health and the environment





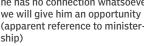
habits may vary, and your folk songs and dances may be thing that unites us all is our identity as Indians. That is our greatest strength and our shared pride

NAYAB SINGH SAINI | HARYANA CM

There is a greater incidence of drug menace in Guiarat. Uttar Pradesh, Raiasthan (BJP-ruled states) and even in Himachal Pradesh (Congress-ruled state) than in Puniab



is ongoing. Once that is completed, the facts will come out. If it turns that he has no connection whatsoever.



AJIT PAWAR | MAHA DY CM



Education Budget of India - \$14 Health Budget-\$11.6 Billion

Sports Budget of India -\$0.4 Billion Freebies Budget of India -\$120

Vote bank politics is art of rewarding laziness, punishing merit, and bankrupting a nation ----Just to win elections.

SHORT **TAKES**

Al flight returns to

Jaipur: An Air India flight

Jaipur after take-off

bound for Mumbai from Jaipur

returned to the airport due to

a suspected technical snag

"Flight AI612 operating from

Jaipur to Mumbai returned to

Jaipur shortly after take-off

due to a suspected technical

were carried out, and it was

determined to be a false

indication," Air India said

in a statement. Following

the checks, the aircraft was

cleared for operations, and

Delhi court seeks Tihar jail

response on Rana's plea

Friday sought the reply of Tihar

26/11 Mumbai attack accused

Tahawwur Hussain Rana seeking

a phone call to family members.

Special judge Chander Jit Singh sought a detailed reply from the Tihar iail superintendent

concerned and posted the matter for August 1. Prison authorities in the meantime informed the court that Rana was provided

with a bed and a mattress. Rana

is a close associate of 26/11 main

conspirator David Coleman Headley

New Delhi: A Delhi court

iail authority on the plea of

the flight continued to its

destination in Mumbai.

issue. Troubleshooting checks

@RajeshwariRW

Modi announces ₹4,850cr **Line of Credit to Maldives**

Male, July 25: India is proud to be the most trusted friend of the Maldives, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Friday after announcing a Rs 4,850 crore line of credit to the island

Modi made the remarks after holding wide-ranging talks with Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu, focusing on consolidating cooperation in areas of trade, defence and infrastructure. The Prime Minister's visit marked a major turnaround in India-Maldives ties after a snell of unease Modi also announced that

the two countries will work towards finalising a bilateral investment treaty and that negotiations for a free trade pact have already started. The Maldives holds an im-

portant place in India's "Neighbourhood First" policy and MA-HASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions) vision, the Prime Minister said. Modi said India has decided to provide a line of credit of \$ 565 million (Rs 4,850 crore) to the Maldives.

Mutual cooperation in the field of defence and security is a testament to mutual trust, he said. India will always support the Maldives to strengthen its defence capabilities, he added.

Modi landed in Male this morning to a warm welcome with Muizzu and a number of top ministers of his government receiving the Prime Minister at the Velena international airport, reflecting the importance Male attached to the trip. Hours later, Modi was accorded



The Prime Minister's visit marked a major turnaround in **India-Maldives ties** after a spell of unease

a colourful ceremonial welcome and a guard of honour at the iconic Republic Square.

"Deeply touched by the gesture of President Muizzu to come to the airport to welcome me. I am confident that India-Maldives friendship will scale new heights of progress in the times to come," Modi said in a social media post.

The two leaders held a oneon-one meeting before settling down for delegation-level talks. The turnaround in the bilateral ties assumes significance as Muizzu, known to be close to China, came to power in the island nation in November 2023 on the back of an "India Out"-

His policies in the first few months of his presidency resulted in severe strain in the ties. Within hours of his oath, he had demanded the withdrawal of Indian military personnel from his country. Subsequently, India replaced the personnel with civilians. The Indian military personnel were deployed to the Maldives to maintain and operate two helicopters and an aircraft, which were used for humanitarian and rescue operations.

It is widely believed that New Delhi's sustained efforts, including its assistance to the island nation to deal with economic woes, helped bring the relations back on track. The Maldives is one of India's key maritime neighbours in the Indian Ocean Region and the overall bilateral ties, including in areas of defence and security, witnessed an upward trajectory under the previous governments in Male.

Parliament to discuss Pahalgam attack, Op **Sindoor from Monday**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Opposition parties have agreed to the agenda of taking up a special discussion on the Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor Monday in Lok Sabha and the next day in Rajya Sabha, brightening up the prospect of normalcy returning to Parliament after the virtual washout of first-week proceedings.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Home Minister Amit Shah and External Affairs S Jaishankar are expected to speak amid indications that Prime Minister Narendra Mo di may use the much-anticipated debate to turn up the heat on the Opposition, which looks to corner the government over alleged intelligence failures and US President Donald Trump's claims of mediating a "ceasefire' between India and Pakistan.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju Friday blamed the Opposition for the washout of the first week of the Monsoon session, accusing it of not allowing Parliament to function despite the government agreeing to its demand for a discussion on these issues right from the ses-Sion's start. Asked about the Opposition's demand that Parliament discuss the special intensive revision of electoral rolls in Bihar, he said all issues cannot be taken up at once and the government will take a call on other matters gradually.

One has to follow the rules guiding discussion in Parliament, he said, when asked about the Opposition's insis tence. With the electoral rolls revision exercise being seen in the government circles as the Election Commission carrying out its mandate, the possibility of a discussion on the contentious issue is slim, sources said.

INDIA-PAK CEASEFIRE

Govt answers in LS over US role

The MEA was asked whether it is a fact that the "ceasefire between India and **Pakistan was arrived** at the behest of the **US interference just** after three days of operations against **Pakistan when the Indian Armed Forces** had the upper hand in the conflict"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: India and Pakistan agreed May 10 for a cessation of firing and military activity as a result of "direct contact" between the director generals of military operations (DGMOs) of both nations, which was "initiated by the Pakistani side", the Centre informed Parliament Friday.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) was asked whether it is a fact that the "ceasefire between India and Pakistan was arrived at the behest of the US interference just after three days of operations against Pakistan when the Indian Armed Forces had the upper hand in the conflict"

In a written response to the query in the Lok Sabha, Minister of State (MoS) for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh said. "All our interlocutors were given a common message that India's approach was focused, measured and non-es-



calatory." The MoS said India and Pakistan agreed May 10 for a "cessation of firing and military activity as a result of direct contact between the DGMOs of both nations. This contact was initiated by the Pakistani side". India had "already achieved

May 8 the main objectives" that it had set forth in terms of destroying designated terrorism infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, he added.

Between April 22 when the Pahalgam terrorist attack hap pened and May 10, there were a "number of diplomatic conver sations with various countries at different levels, including with the United States," the minister said in his response

"With specific regard to the US, it was conveyed to Vice President J D Vance May 9 that India would 'appropri ately respond' if Pakistan launched a major attack. The issue of our trade discussions did not come up in the context of conversations pertaining to the conflict," he added.

As regards any proposal for third-party mediation, "our long standing position remains that any outstanding issue with Pakistan will be discussed only bilaterally. This has been made clear to all nations, including by the Prime Minister to the US President", he said.

School children on a rainy day in Chikkamagaluru, Karnataka

Govt blocks 25 OTT platforms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: The government has ordered the blocking of websites and apps of 25 OTT platforms, including Ullu, ALTT, and Desiflix, for having obscene, vulgar and in some cases, pornographic content.

Among the apps identified for violating various laws are ALTT, ULLU, Big Shots App, Desiflix, Boomex, Navarasa Lite, Gulab App, Kangan App, Bull App, Jalva App, ShowHit, Wow Entertainment, Look Entertainment, Hitprime, Feneo, ShowX, Sol Talkies, Adda TV, HotX VIP, Hulchul App, MoodX, NeonX VIP, Fugi, Mojflix, and Triflicks, officials said.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting took the action in consultation with the Ministries of Home, Women and Child Development, Electronics, Information Technology and Law, industry bodies FICCI and CII, and experts in the field of women and child

Notifications have been issued to various intermediaries as per the provisions of the In-

ter shortage -- elevate the risk of



formation Technology Act, 2000 and the IT Rules, 2021, to ensure that access to the concerned websites and apps is disabled.

Officials said content on these platforms included sexual innuendos, long portions of sexually explicit scenes without any storyline, theme or message in a social context. The government had received complaints against these platforms from the National Commission on Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and from members of the public over the past year.

ties for preparing and respond-

Earlier, the web 'House Arrest' was taken down by Ullu in May, after intervention by the ministry. Officials said all 25 platforms were asked, in September last year, to refrain from publishing obscene, vulgar and in some cases pornographic content, but they continued to publish such content.

They said five platforms, which were blocked earlier in March 2024, started publishing obscene content on new website

PHASE-1 OF **BIHAR SIR ENDS**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: As the first phase of Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Bihar's electoral roll ended Friday, the Election Commission (EC) said its local poll machinery has reported that nearly 35 lakh electors have either per manently migrated or could not be traced since June 24.

The state, going to the polls later this year, has an electorate of nearly 7.90 crore. It also said booth-level officers (BLOs) and booth-level agents (BLAs) of political parties have reported names of approximately 22 lakh deceased electors. Also, nearly seven lakh electors were found registered in more than one

The EC said that enumera tion forms of approximately 1.2 lakh electors were yet to be received back. The poll author ity noted that 99.8 per cent of Bihar electors have been covered so far and forms of 7.23 crore have been received and digitised.

'Over 9% of world's lands at high risk of animal-to-human infections'

Findings published in the journal Science Advances also estimate 3 per cent of the global population to be living in extremely risky areas, and about a fifth in medium-risk areas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Over nine per cent of the world's land area is at "high" or "very high" risk of a zoonotic outbreak -- triggered when an infection spreads from an animal to a human or vice versa, such as the Covid pandemic, according to a study.

Findings published in the journal Science Advances also estimate 3 per cent of the global population to be living in extremely risky areas, and about

a fifth in medium-risk areas.

Researchers, including those from the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) Scientific Development Programmes Unit in Italy, analysed location-specific information from the 'Global Infectious Diseases and Epidemiology Network' dataset and the World Health Organization's (WHO) list of diseases prioritised according to their potential for causing an epidemic or a pan-

Covid, Ebola, coronavirus-related MERS and SARS, and Nipah are among the most



prioritised infections in the zoonosis, or 'spillover events'. WHO's list. The team's analysis The study "presents a global suggests that conditions driven risk map and an epidemic risk by climate change -- higher temindex that combines countries peratures and rainfall, and waspecific risk with their capaci-

'Our results indicate that 9.3 per cent of the global land surface is at high (6.3 per cent) or

ing to zoonotic threats (exclud-

ing SARS-CoV-2)."

very high (three per cent) risk," the authors wrote. They also estimated about 7

per cent of Asia's and 5 per cent of Africa's land area to be at high and very high risk of outbreak, following Latin America (27 per cent) and Oceania (18.6 per cent). Overall, the authors found that climate-related changes to the environment substantially drove a region's vulnerability to the risk of a spillover event. They wrote, "This under-

scores the need for continued monitoring and the integration of climate adaptation and mitigation efforts into public health planning."

"Translating these risk es timates into an epidemic risk index allows for the identification of high-risk areas and supports policymakers in improving response capacities allocating resources effective ly, and fostering international collaboration to address global health threats," the team said A study by the Indian Council of Medical Research found that over 8 per cent of outbreaks re ported between 2018 and 2023 under the country's infectious disease surveillance system were zoonotic. Of a total of 6.948 outbreaks analysed, 583 (8.3 per cent) were spread to humans from animals. Outbreaks were also found to consistently peak during June, July, and August The findings were published in The Lancet Regional Southeast Asia journal in May this year.

Lok Sabha adjourned

alias Daood Gilani, a US citizen.

New Delhi: Lok Sabha proceedings were adjourned for the day Friday as Opposition protests continued over the revision of electoral rolls in Bihar, capping the Monsoon session's first week which has been washed out. It was for the fifth straight day that no significant legislative business transacted. Jagdambika Pal, who was in the chair after the House met at 2 PM, rebuked the opposition MPs for repeated disruptions despite government's assurance that it was willing to answer on all issues.

international



France will recognize Palestine as a state, amid snowballing global anger over people starving in Gaza

WORLD'S MOST PREMATURE BABY TURNS 1

Nash Keen, born at just 21 weeks July 5, 2024, in Iowa City, recently celebrated his first birthday and earned a Guinness World Record as the most premature baby. Weighing only 10 ounces, he spent six months in NICU before going home with his parents to Ankeny, Iowa





summer push to fences along parts

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYY | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE Sri Lanka will extend free



and sustain economic recovery VIJITHA HERATH | FOREIGN MINISTER.

We want **Palestinian** statehood, we



KEIR STARMER | PRIME MINISTER, UK

SHORT TAKES

UK, Oz to sign nuclear submarine treaty

Melbourne: Britain and Australia announced they will sign a cooperation treaty to build Australian nuclear-powered submarines and welcomed a review by President Donald Trump's administration of the United States' role in the trilateral defence deal. Britain's Defence Secretary John Healey and Foreign Secretary David Lammy met Friday with their Australian counterparts Richard Marles and Penny Wong in Sydney for an annual bilateral meeting. Marles said he and Healey will sign a 50year treaty Saturday that will underpin bilateral cooperation on building an Australian fleet of submarines powered by US nuclear technology. "It is as significant a treaty as has been signed between our two countries since federation." Marles said, referring to the unification of several British colonies to form the Australian

Female HR exec caught on Coldplay cam resigns

who was caught on camera embracing the CEO of her in a moment that went viral has resigned, according to news reports. Multiple news outlets reported that Kristin of human resources at tech company Astronomer, has resigned. Her departure Andy Byron, who quit after the company said he was being put on leave pending an investigation. The episode resulted in endless memes, of the pair's shocked faces filling social media feeds. Cabot and Byron were caught Martin asked the cameras to scan the crowd for his "Jumbotron Song" during the concert last week at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, Massachusetts.

Philippine court stops VP

Manila: Philippine Vice a big legal win Friday when the Supreme Court struck down an impeachment complaint against her, ruling that it was unconstitutional. The lower house of Congress had impeached Duterte in February, accusing her of misusing public funds, amassing unusual wealth and threatening to kill Philippine the First Lady, and the House not absolving Duterte of the charges, but the ruling may nevertheless be a huge boost

THAILAND CAMBODIA CLASH

No ceasefire in sight

Surin, Thailand, July 25: Thailand and Cambodia exchanged heavy artillery fire for a second day Friday as border fighting intensified and spread while Cambodia's leader said Thailand had agreed to a Malaysian ceasefire proposal but then backed down.

At least 20 people have been killed and more than 130,000 people displaced in the worst fighting between the Southeast Asian neighbours in 13 years.

Both sides have blamed each other for starting the conflict and Friday ratcheted up the rhetoric. Thailand accused Cambodia of deliberately attacking civilians and Cambodia condemned Thailand for using cluster munitions, controversial and widely condemned. **CEASEFIRE PROPOSAL**

Thailand's acting prime minister, Phumtham Wechayachai, said Cambodia had attacked on multiple fronts.

"The situation has intensified and could escalate into a state of war. At present, it's a confrontation involving heavy

Hong Kong issues

overseas activists

Hong Kong, July 25: Hong

Kong police announced rewards

for information leading to the

arrest of 19 overseas-based ac-

tivists for their roles in what

they called a subversive organ-

isation abroad, accusing them

of violating a national security

Police said in a statement

Friday that the group, Hong

Kong Parliament, aimed to

promote self-determination

and establish a so-called "Hong

Kong constitution," alleging it

was using illegal means to over-

throw and undermine China's

fundamental system or over-

law imposed by Beijing.

bounties for 19

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Indian mission issues travel advisory

The Indian embassy in Thailand Friday issued an advisory for its nationals in the country, urging them to avoid travelling to seven provinces amid ongoing unrest along the Thailand-Cambodia border. "In view of the situation near Thailand-

Cambodia border, all Indian travelers to Thailand are advised to check updates from Thai official sources, including TAT Newsroom," the Indian embassy said in

an X post. Attaching a post by the Tourism Authority of Thailand, it said that the places mentioned "are not recommended" for travelling. The tourism authority

said that "several attractions" in Ubon Ratchathani, Surin, Sisaket, Buriram, Sa

Kaeo, Chanthaburi and Trat provinces are not recommended for visiting.

Cambodia PM says Thailand agreed to ceasefire, then backed out

Thailand says it agrees in principle with truce, will consider based on conditions CAMBODIA ATTACKING CIVILIAN AREAS WITH

mediate. says

damaging 11th-

accuses

Thailand

century temple

OCKETS, SHELLING, THAILAND SAYS

weapons," he told reporters. Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet said in a social media post that he had agreed to a ceasefire proposed by his Malaysian counterpart Anwar Ibrahim, chair of the ASEAN regional bloc, who had informed him that Phumtham

had also agreed. "However, it is regrettable that just over an hour later, the Thai side informed that they had reversed their position," Hun Manet said Thailand late Friday said it

agreed in principle with the idea of a ceasefire and would consider it, but that it must be based on "appropriate on-theground conditions"

'Throughout the day, Cambodian forces have continued their indiscriminate attacks. the Thai foreign ministry said in a post on X. "Cambodia's actions demonstrate a lack of good faith and continue to place

Tens of thousands flee their homes

Tens of thousands of people sought refuge Friday as border fighting between Thailand and Cambodia entered a second day, heightening fears of a broader conflict. The UN Security Council ing on the crisis later Friday in New York bloc that includes both countries, called for an end to hostilities and offered to mediate. The Health Ministry Friday said more than 58,000 have fled from villages to temporary shelters in four affected Thai border provinces, while Cambodian authorities said more than 4,000 people have evacuated from areas near the border. At least 20 people have been killed and more than 130,000 people displaced in the worst fighting between the Southeast Asian neighbours in 13 years.

THAILAND ALLEGES **'BARBARIC ACTS'**

Fighting re-erupted before dawn Friday, with clashes reported in 12 locations, up from six Thursday, according to Thailand's military. It accused Cambodia of using artillery and Russian-made BM-21 rockets to attack areas that included schools and hospitals 'These barbaric acts have senselessly claimed lives and inflicted injuries upon numerous inno cent civilians," it said.

'The deliberate targeting of civilians is a war crime and those responsible must be brought to justice." It put the blame squarely on the Phnom Penh government, which it said was being steered by Hun Sen, influential former premier of nearly four

Munir visits China



This is Munir's first visit to China after India launched Operation Sindoor May 7, targeting terrorist infrastructure in territories controlled by Pakistan in response to the Pahalgam terror attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing/Islamabad, July 25: Pakistan Army chief Asim Munir, who is on his first visit to China after his elevation as the Field Marshal, Friday held talks with top Chinese leaders and discussed ways to deepen cooperation across all sectors.

Munir held separate meetings with Vice President Han Zheng, top military official General Zhang Youxia and Foreign Minister Wang Yi, according to official media reports here.

This is Munir's first visit to China after India launched Operation Sindoor May 7, targeting terrorist infrastructure in territories controlled by Pakistan in response to the Pahalgam terror attack. The strikes triggered four days of intense clashes that ended with an understanding on stopping the military actions May 10.

During the conflict, Pakistan used extensive military equipment supplied by China.

This is also Munir's first visit to China after his trip to Washington, where he met US President Donald Trump and

sought to establish close ties with America, Beijing's stra tegic rival.

Significantly, coinciding with Munir's visit to Beijing, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar is in Washington, where he is expected to meet US Secretary of State Marco Rubio. Dar was in China July 14 to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Foreign Ministers' meeting.

A statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) - the media wing of the Pakistan military - ir Islamabad said that in their talks with Munir, the "Chinese leadership lauded the Pakistan Armed Forces as a cornerstone of resilience and a vital contrib utor to peace in South Asia".
The "Chinese military

leadership reiterated full confidence in the strength of the bilateral defence part nership and acknowledged Pakistan's pivotal role in promoting regional peace, Pakistan daily Dawn quoted the statement as saying.

In his talks with Han and Wang, Munir "focused on the evolving regional and global political landscape, connectiv ity initiatives under the CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Cor ridor), and the need for coordi nated responses to shared geopolitical challenges," it added.

"Both sides expressed satisfaction over the depth of bilat eral engagement and reiterated their shared commitment to sovereign equality, multilater al cooperation, and long-term regional stability," it said.

SNIPPET

Netanyahu, Trump appear to abandon Gaza ceasefire negotiations with Hamas

Jerusalem/Washington/Cairo: Netanyahu and US President Donald Trump appeared Friday to abandon Gaza ceasefire negotiations with Hamas, both saving it had become clear that the Palestinian militants did not want a deal. Netanyahu said Israel was now mulling "alternative" options to achieve its goals of bringing its hostages home from Gaza and ending Hamas rule in the enclave where starvation is spreading and most of the population is homeless



amid widespread ruin. Trump said he believed Hamas leaders would now be "hunted down", telling reporters at the White House, "Hamas really didn't want to make a deal. I think they want to die. And it's very bad. And it got to be to a point where you're going to have to finish the job." The remarks appeared to leave little to no room, at least in the short term, to resume negotiations to pause the fighting, at a time when international concern is mounting over worsening hunger in war-shattered Gaza. French President Emmanuel Macron, responding to the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza, announced overnight that Paris would become the first major Western power to recognise an independent Palestinian state. Britain and Germany said they were not yet ready to do so. Trump dismissed Macron's move.

government in 1901.

throw the institutions in power London: The female executive in the city or China. On request by the police, the city's court issued arrest warcompany at a Coldplay concert rants for activists Elmer Yuen, Johnny Fok, Tony Choi, Victor Ho, Keung Ka-wai and 14 others. They are alleged to have organ-Cabot, the executive in charge ised or participated in an election abroad for the Hong Kong Parliament, as well as setting up or becoming members of the group. follows the resignation of CEO Among the 19 activists, police have already offered 1 million Hong Kong dollars (\$127,400) for information leading to the arrest of Yuen, Ho, Fok and Choi when previous arrest warrants were parody videos and screenshots issued against them. by surprise when singer Chris

Duterte's impeachment

President Sara Duterte scored President Ferdinand Marcos Jr, Speaker. The court said it was for her political ambitions.

Iran, Europeans hold 'frank' nuclear talks

Istanbul, July 25: Iran said it would continue nuclear talks with European powers after "serious, frank, and detailed" conversations Friday, the first such face-to-face meeting since Israel and the US bombed Iran last month.

Before the meeting in Istanbul, Iran also pushed back on suggestions of extending the United Nations resolution that ratifies a 2015 deal, nearing expiry, that was designed to curb its nuclear programme.

Delegations from the European Union and so-called E3 group of France, Britain and Germany met Iranian counterparts for about four hours at Iran's consulate for talks that the UN nuclear watchdog said could provide an opening to resume inspections in Iran.

IRAN AND EUROPEANS PRESENT

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said afterward that both sides had presented specific ideas on sanc-

tions relief and the nuclear issue. "While seriously criticising their stances regarding the recent war of aggression against



- powers since Israeli and US
- Main focus of talks is October 18 UN resolution expiry
- Europeans could reimpose all **UN sanctions**
- IAEA chief optimistic inspectors can return this year

our people, we explained our principled positions, including on the so-called snapback mechanism," he said. "It was agreed that consultations on this matter will continue.

The European countries, along with China and Russia, are the remaining parties to the 2015 deal - from which the US withdrew in 2018 - which lifted sanctions on Iran in return for restrictions on its nuclear programme.

A deadline of Oct 18 is fast approaching when the resolution governing that deal expires.

At that point, all UN sanctions on Iran will be lifted unless the "snapback" mechanism is triggered at least 30 days before. This would automatically reimpose those sanctions, which target sectors from hydrocarbons to banking and defence.

Early Hawaiian petroglyphs reemerge as tides shift, sands move

This is the first time the entire panel of petroglyphs are visible since they were first spotted nine years ago by two guests staying at a bayside US Army recreation centre in Waianae, about an hour's drive from Honolulu

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Waianae (Hawaii), July 25: Hawaiian petroglyphs dating back at least a half-millennium are visible on Oahu for the first time in years, thanks to seasonal ocean swells that peel away sand covering a panel of more than two dozen images of mostly human-looking stick figures.

The petroglyphs are easy to spot during low tide when gentle waves ebb and flow over slippery, neon-green algae growing on a stretch of sandstone. This is the first time the entire panel of petroglyphs are visible since they were first spotted nine years ago by two guests staying at a bayside US Army recreation centre in Waianae, about an hour's drive from Honolulu. Native Hawaiian cultural

practitioner Glen Kila, who traces his lineage to the aboriginal families of this coastal Hawaii community, said he believes the resurfacing of the traditional marvels are his ancestors sending a message. "It's telling the community

that the ocean is rising," said Kila, a recognised expert on the local culture and history of Waianae who is consulting with the Army on the protec-



tion of the petroglyphs. Army officials are trying to balance protecting the petroglyphs with their accessibility on a public beach.

John and Sandy Stone consulted tide charts and drove

about 30 minutes from their home early Tuesday to get a glimpse after a watching a local TV report about the petroglyphs.

"It was so interesting to touch them," said John Stone, who splits his time between Hawaii and California. "It felt interesting to kind of have a connection with the past like that."

It is difficult to date petroglyphs, but an archaeological site in the area is from about 600 years ago, said Laura Gilda, an archaeologist with US Army Garrison Hawaii. According to Kila, Hawaiians arrived in Waianae at least 1.000 years ago.

SHIFT IN WAVES CAUSED

PETROGLYPHS TO APPEAR The beach here fluctuates in size and profile each year, with low-pressure weather systems that form in the eastern Pacific between May and November causing waves that cut away loose sand from shorelines and redeposit them further out, according to an Army report on the petroglyphs. That shift is

likely what causes their tem porary exposure.

Archaeologists identified a total of 26 petroglyphs. Of the 18 anthropomorphic stick figures, eight are depicted with possible male genitalia and the remainder are of undetermined gender, the report said.

The entire panel stretches about 115 feet (35 metres) long, Gilda said.

When the petroglyphs first reemerged in July 2016, it was after late spring and early summer storms, including hurricanes, with a lot of wave action that swept the sand away, Gilda said.

They remained visible for a period and then got covered

"So there's been portions that have been exposed since then, but this is the first summer that the whole panel has been exposed again," Gilda said.

business



Rate cuts will depend on the outlook for growth and inflation rather than the current SANJAY MALHOTRA

EMPLOYMENT-LINKED INCENTIVE SCHEME SOON

Employment-linked incentive scheme, PM Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana, will come into effect from August 1, 2025, the Labour Ministry said Friday. Earlier, the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi had approved the scheme, which is aimed at increasing job creation in the country, the ministry said in a statement. With an outlay of ₹99,446 crore, the PM Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PMVBRY) aims to incentivise the creation of more than 3.5 crore jobs over two years

India fails to secure exemption from UK carbon tax

India's exports worth \$775 million to UK may be impacted due to Britain's decision to introduce a carbon

tax on products such as iron and steel, aluminium, fertiliser, and cement, from 2027, said GTRI



India's journey towards becoming a **Viksit Bharat by** 2047 cannot rest on economic metrics alone; it must be

built on the health, productivity, and well-being of its people SATISH KANNAN | CEO, MEDIBUDDY

India has transformed itself from a net importer to a net exporter of mobile phones. India is now the



Gold edged lower Friday impacted by easing tariff-related concerns, a rebound in the US dollar, and waning

expectations for multiple interest rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve due to a strong job market SAUMIL GANDHI | SENIOR ANALYST, HDFC

01 **RESULTS**

BoB profit rises

Mumbai: Bank of Baroda Friday said its net profit rose 1.9 per cent to ₹4,541 crore in the first quarter of the current fiscal. The state-owned lender had posted a net profit of ₹4,458 crore in the year-ago period. Its operating profit grew by 15 per cent year-onyear (YoY) to ₹8,236 crore in the April-June quarter of 2025-26, the lender said in a statement. The Gross NPA of the bank reduced by 10.7 per cent YoY to ₹27,572 crore in Q1FY26, and the Gross NPA ratio improved to 2.28 per cent in Q1FY26 from 2.88 per cent a

HFCL reports loss

New Delhi: Telecom gear maker HFCL Friday posted a loss of ₹32.24 crore for the guarter ended June 2025, as revenue from operations fell sharply on year-on-year basis. It had logged a profit of ₹111.30 crore a year ago. Revenue from operations declined to ₹871 crore in Q1FY26 from ₹1,158 crore a year ago, according to a BSE filing. The loss (attributable to owners of narent) stood at ₹32.24 crore in the just-ended quarter.

Mahindra Lifespace profit jumps

New Delhi: Realty firm Mahindra Lifespace Developers has reported a fourfold jump in net profit to ₹51.26 crore for the first quarter of this fiscal year on exceptional gains. Its net profit stood at ₹12.74 crore in the year-ago period. Total income plunged to ₹40.61 crore in April-June 2025-26 from ₹206.70 crore in the corresponding period of the preceding year.

Cipla PAT rises

New Delhi: Drug major Cipla Friday reported a 10 per cent increase in its consolidated profit after tax to ₹1,298 crore for the first quarter ended June 30, 2025, aided by robust sales growth in India, Europe, and Africa. The company had posted a profit after tax (PAT) of ₹1,178 crore for the April-June quarter of the previous fiscal.

Orient Electric profit grows

New Delhi: Orient Electric Ltd Friday reported a 22.17 per cent rise in net profit to ₹17.52 crore for the first quarter ended June 30, 2025. It had posted a net profit of ₹ 14.34 crore in the April-June guarter a year ago. according to a regulatory filing.

India hits 20% ethanol blending in petrol

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: India has achieved its target of 20 per cent ethanol blending with petrol five years ahead of schedule, the Indian Sugar & Bio-energy Manufacturers Association (IS-MA) said Friday.

The achievement represents growth from the modest 1.5 per cent blending rate began in 2014. The ethanol blending program has delivered substantial economic and environmental benefits, according to ISMA

Ethanol production surged from 38 crore litres in 2014 to 661 crore litres blended as of June 2025, while generating 698 lakh tonnes in carbon dioxide emission reductions.

The program has provided significant financial benefits to India's agricultural sector. with farmers receiving ₹1.18 lakh crore and distilleries earning ₹1.96 lakh crore over the period. The initiative has also helped India save ₹1.36 lakh crore in foreign exchange costs.

"This achievement is a monumental leap for India's energy independence and rural prosperity," said Deepak Ballani, Director General of ISMA.

Forex reserve drops

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 25: India's forex kitty declined by \$1.183 billion to \$695.489 billion during the week ended July 18, the RBI said Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the overall kitty had dropped by \$3.064 billion to \$696.672 billion. The reserves had touched an all-time high of \$704.885 billion in end-September 2024.

18, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, slipped by \$1.201 billion to \$587.609 billion, the data released Friday showed.

For the week ended July

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves

However, the gold reserves increased by \$150 million to \$84.499 billion during the week. The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were down by \$119 million to \$18.683 billion, the apex bank said.



New Delhi, July 25: India was

cember 2023 decided to implement its Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) starting 2027. By not securing a carve-out

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

or exemption clause on CBAM (carbon border adjustment

New Delhi, July 25: Amid a

brewing feud over who rep-

resents the interest of Kapur

family in auto components

major Sona BLW Precision

Forgings, the company Friday

said it held its AGM with full

regulatory compliance despite

request for postponement from

Rani Kapur, mother of late chairman Sunjay Kapur.

Rani Kapur, former chairper-

son of the Sona group and wife

of former Chairman Surinder

Kapur, in a letter dated July

24 to the board of Sona BLW

Precision Forgings, alleged

that while the family is in the

mourning due to the sudden

passing away of Sunjay last

month, some people have cho-

sen this an opportune time to

wrest control and usurp the

She also alleged that the

death of her son in the UK last

month was in "highly suspi-

cious and unexplained circum-

stances" and she has not given

New Delhi, July 25: Russian

oil giant Rosneft-backed In-

dian refiner, Navara Energy,

which has recently been hit by

EU sanctions, has appointed a

new chief executive officer af-

ter its previous CEO resigned,

family legacy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

mechanism), India lost a vital opportunity to protect its carbon-intensive exports, the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) Founder Ajay Srivastava said.

"From January 2027, UK can impose carbon taxes on Indian steel and aluminum, even as we grant UK goods duty-free access. That's a serious asymmetry. Expect the same treatment in India's trade agreement with the EU," he said.

The GTRI in May stated that India's exports worth \$775 million to UK may be impacted due to Britain's decision to introduce

Sona Comstar's AGM held

with regulatory compliance

any consent or officially nomi-

nated any person to be on the

board of Sona BLW Precision

wishers that an AGM of share-

holders has been kept wherein

one of the items is the passing

of a resolution to appoint cer-

tain directors in the company

as being the representative of

the Kapur family," she stated.

Unfortunately nothing has

been told or explained, let alone

discussed with regarding the

same by the company or the

"Please postpone this AGM

for at least two weeks to be held

on a mutually convenient date,

Nayara CEO resigns as EU sanctions sting

sources aware of the matter

said Friday. Alessandro Des

Dorides resigned as CEO of

Nayara Energy last week and

has been replaced by Sergev

Denisov, they said. The resig-

nation came just as the Europe-

an Union imposed sanctions on

Nayara as part of a new raft of

people involved, she added.

"I have been informed by well

Forgings (Sona Comstar).



a carbon tax on products such as iron and steel, aluminium, fertiliser, and cement, from 2027

UK, after the European Union (EU), will be the second economy to implement CBAM

so that I may gather all neces

Rani Kapur said that as per

pur's estate and accordingly

has not been a shareholder of

the company at least since 2019.

received a declaration of sig-

nificant beneficial ownership

identifying Shri Sunjay Kapur

as the sole beneficial owner of

RK Family Trust, a significant

shareholder of Aureus Invest-

ments Private Ltd (AIPL)," it

limited company since June

2021, with 71.98 per cent public

shareholding and 28.02 per cent

held by its corporate promoter,

measures against Russia over

Rosneft owns 49.13 per cent

stake in Nayara Energy Ltd,

formerly Essar Oil Ltd. Nayara

owns and operates a 20 million

tonne a year oil refinery at Va-

dinar in Gujarat, as well as over

its war with Ukraine.

6,750 petrol pumps.

Sona Comstar is a public

noted.

AIPL, it stated.

"In May 2019, the company

components firm.

sary information," she said.

The tax will initially focus on sectors like iron, steel, aluminum, fertiliser, hydrogen,

ceramics, glass, and cement.

This tax could range from 14-

24 per cent.

India has earlier flagged se-

rious concerns over this tax, terming it a trade barrier. An official has said that New Delhi has preserved its right to retali ate or rebalance concessions, if future measures impact domes-

MARKET CRASH

tic exports.

India reserves right to retaliate if carbon tax hits exports

New Delhi: India-UK FTA does not include a provision on Britain's proposed

right to take steps to mitigate its impact on domestic exports, sources said

Friday. UK government in December 2023 decided to implement its Carbon

Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) starting in 2027. Sources said that

India had flagged the issue during negotiations of the trade agreement. The

comprehensive economic and trade agreement (CETA) was signed July 24

with an aim to double bilateral trade from \$56 billion by 2030.

carbon tax, but if such a tax is imposed in the future, India will have the

Investors' wealth erodes by ₹8.6L-cr



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Investors' wealth eroded by ₹8.67 lakh crore in two days of sharp fall in the equity market, where the benchmark Sensex tanked 1.52

Persistent foreign fund outflows and heavy selling in financial, IT stocks have dragged the markets lower.

In the past two trading days, the 30-share BSE Sensex has dropped 1,263.55 points or 1.52 per cent. Following the sharp fall in equities, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms fell by ₹8,67,406.75 crore to ₹4,51,67,858.16 crore (USD 5.22 trillion) in two days.

Friday, the Sensex tanked 721.08 points or 0.88 per cent to settle at over a month's low of 81,463.09. The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 225.10 points or 0.90 per cent to a month's low

of 24.837. Among Sensex firms, Bajaj

Finance declined 4.73 per cent post its June quarter earnings announcement. Power Grid Infosys, Tech Mahindra, Baja Finsery, Trent, Tata Motors NTPC and Tata Steel were also among the laggards. However, Sun Pharma and

Bharti Airtel emerged as the gainers. Foreign Institutional Inves-

tors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹2,133.69 crore on Thursday, according to exchange da

The BSE smallcap gauge tanked 1.88 per cent and midcap index dropped 1.46 per cent.

Utilities slumped 2.37 per cent, power tumbled 2.36 per cent, oil & gas (2.11 per cent), industrials (1.88 per cent), capital goods (1.83 per cent), IT (1.65 per cent) and metal (1.64 per cent).

BIZ BUZZ

TPCODL wins CSR **TIMES award**



Bhubaneswar: TP Central

Odisha Distribution Limited (TPCODL), a joint venture of Tata Power and the Government of Odisha, has received the prestigious CSR TIMES Award at the 12th National CSR Summit 2025 held in New Delhi. The award recognises TPCODL's flagship initiative Samriddhi, under Anokha Dhaaga, which focuses on empowering women through skill development and the promotion of traditional art and craft enterprises. Implemented through the Roshni Centre in Odisha, the initiative supports women in producing eco-friendly jutebased products, helping them build sustainable livelihoods. This highlights TPCODL's commitment to inclusive growth and community development. By reviving local crafts and creating incomegenerating opportunities, TPCODL is enabling women

to become self-reliant

and contribute to their

The company remains

families and communities.

dedicated to fostering social

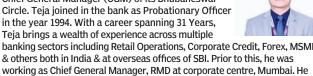
impact through meaningful

CSR initiatives across its

operational areas.

SBI APPOINTS RATNA TEJA DINAKARA **AKELLA AS CGM OF BHUBANESWAR CIRCLE**

Bhubaneswar: State Bank of India (SBI) has appointed Ratna Teja Dinakara Akella as the new Chief General Manager (CGM) of its Bhubaneswar Circle, Teia joined in the bank as Probationary Officer in the year 1994. With a career spanning 31 Years Teja brings a wealth of experience across multiple banking sectors including Retail Operations, Corporate Credit, Forex, MSME & others both in India & at overseas offices of SBI. Prior to this, he was



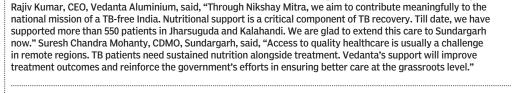


Mahindra launches all new XUV 3XO REVX series

Bhubaneswar: Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd, has launched the new XUV 3XO REVX series at Utkal Automobiles, Mancheswar, Wednesday with prices starting at ₹8.94 lakh. Designed for customers who value individuality and performance, the REVX series features striking new exteriors including a body-colored grille, black alloy wheels, dual-tone roof, and bold REVX badging. Inside, the SUV offers an upmarket experience with leatherette seats, a sunroof, and high-end finishes, setting a new benchmark for the C-SUV segment under ₹10 lakh. Mahindra aims to tap into the aspirations of young, style-conscious consumers with the REVX range, celebrating bold choices and personal expression. Striking new exteriors with new body coloured grille, black alloy wheels, dual-tone roof, and distinctive badging.

Vedanta extends support to Nikshay Mitra Program

Bhubaneswar: Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest producer of aluminium, has extended support towards the Prime Minister's 'Nikshay Mitra' program to support tuberculosis (TB) patients in the Balishankara block of Sundargarh district. As part of this initiative, aimed at supporting the 'TB Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan' (TB-Free India Campaign), the company, in collaboration with Sundargarh district administration, provided nutritional kits to 63 TB patients for a year to aid their recovery. The launch event involved the handing over of nutrition kits in the presence of Suresh Chandra Mohanty, Chief District Medical Officer (CDMO) - Sundargarh, ASHA workers, and other dignitaries.



Hindalco, Odisha govt to set up apparel manufacturing units



development in Odisha, Hindalco Industries Ltd, has committed an investment of 200 crore to set up apparel manufacturing units in Kendujhai and Sambalpur districts. Separate Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) were signed Friday in the presence of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi. The MoUs were exchanged between Ardhendu Mahapatra, President Corporate Affairs, Hindalco Industries Ltd. and BS Poonia. Princinal Secretary, Dept of Skill Development and Technical Education. The agreements were signed during the Textile Investor meet 2025 (Tex-2025), organized in collaboration with FICCI

Bhubaneswar: In a significant move to boost employment and industrial

at the Odisha Secretariat in Bhubaneswar. As per the MoUs, Hindalco will establish apparel manufacturing units in the two districts with each unit's investment of 100 crores, creating potential for 2,400 direct employment opportunities for the youth of the state. The event was also graced by Sampad Charan Swain, Minister for Industries and Skill Development, Pradeep Bal Samant, Minister for Handlooms and Textiles, Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja, Development Commissioner Anu Garq, and Additional Chief Secretary Hemant Sharma

Bol extends CSR support Sambalpur: As part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative, Bank of India, Sambalpur Zone, has donated 30 stretchers and 30 wheelchairs to Bhima Bhoi Medical College and Hospital, Bolangir. The donation, made by Bank of India, Bolangir Branch, was formally handed over in a special event graced by Srijit Shankar Behera, Zonal Manager, Sambalpur Zone. The event was attended by esteemed dignitaries including Swayamprava Pradhan, Dean & Principal, Manasee Panda, Medical Superintendent, Murari Prasad Sahoo, Finance Officer, Jayashree Padhi, Administrative Officer, with Sashi Sekhar Behera, Chief Manager, BOI, Bolangir Branch, along with staff members. This initiative reflects Bank of India's steadfast commitment to community welfare and its ongoing efforts to strengthen public healthcare infrastructure.



Govt to mandate green steel public procurement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: The government is working on modalities to mandate public procurement of green steel, a move towards smoother transition from the traditional carbon steel, a senior official said.

Green steel refers to steel

produced with significantly reduced carbon emissions compared to traditional methods. "Green steel will be in the

market and will be competing with not so green steel," Ashwini Kumar, Economic Adviser in the steel ministry said adding that "there is need to mandate some kind of public procurement of green steel. We are working on that also.' He was addressing the India

Steel Conclave 2025 organised by Assocham. "It is a tricky business. I don't

know when we will see green steel public procurement coming into force but still modalities are being worked out," he said adding that the government is also working on Green Steel Mission. He further said that European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) is against the spirit of free trade agreement. CBAM is the EU's proposed

tax on energy-intensive products, such as iron, steel, cement, fertilizers and aluminium imported from countries like India and China.

Root surpasses Ponting

England batter strikes 38th Test hundred; next in sight is all-time leading run-getter Tendulkar



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Manchester, July 25: Joe Root produced a batting masterclass on way to a milestone 38th hundred as England exploited a jaded Indian bowling attack to stamp their dominance on the fourth Test here Friday.

At stumps on day three, England were 544 for seven, stretching their first innings lead to 186 runs.

Root made a sublime 150 off 248 balls while the other contributions came from Ben Stokes (77 batting off 134) and Ollie Pope (71 off 128), a day after the openers kmph. Even Bumrah, who

dian attack to sword.

It has been a long tour with another Test to go in a week's time but considering the body language of Indian pacers in the field on Friday, lasting the whole series would be a challenge.

The visitors have already been hit by a series of injuries with the latest one being X-factor cricketer Rishabh Pant's toe fracture.

Both Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj seemed to be bowling with a niggle while debutant Anshul Kamboj hit underwhelming speeds in the range 125-130 put a pedestrian looking In- usually bowls in the range

of 140 kmph, clocked speeds in the lower 130s.

Having bowled just one over in the afternoon session, Bumrah was seen holding his ankle and even had to leave the field briefly.

In his 24th over, he man-

aged to procure the wicket

of Jamie Smith (9). discomfort like Bumrah, but he bowled with more intensity in the final session and

was rewarded the wicket of

Chris Woakes. The sun was out for the majority of the day, making conditions better for batting. Root made full use of that and in the process surpassed

the great Ricky Ponting to become the second highest run-getter in Tests, only behind Sachin Tendulkar, who tallied 15921 runs.

The lone positive for India was the performance of Washington Sundar who struck twice in the afternoon session after being questionably brought in as late as the 69th over.

Shardul Thakur was used for 11 overs, raising questions on the presence of three all-rounders in the team.

It would take a special effort from the Indians to bounce back and keep the series alive.

In the afternoon session, Root reached his 12th hundred against India as England extended their dominance over India, reaching 433 for four at tea.

Washington got the ball to drift and got rid of Pope (71 off 128) and Harry Brook (3 off 12) after lunch, providing a much needed relief for India following a wicketless morning session.

Root, however, continued to pile on the runs and reached thee figures with a four down the leg side off Kamboj. India employed spinners Sundar and Ravindra Jadeja from both ends despite taking the new ball. The move worked as Sundar had Pope caught at first Siraj too seemed to be in slip before having Brook stumped as he could not connect on the charge.

> **BRIEF SCORES:** India 1st innings: 358 all out in 114.1 overs (Sai Sudharsan 61, Yashasvi Jaiswal 58; Ben Stokes 5/72)

England 1st innings: 544/7 in 135 overs (Joe Root 150, Ben Duckett 94; Washington Sundar 2-57, Ravindra Jadeja 2-117) A CHANCE TO BE PART OF

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

Extravaganza Senior segments.

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

TODAY'S QUESTION

his day in 1948 marked a significant milestone for justice in Odisha, as what key legal institution began functioning on

ANSWER TO FRIDAY'S QUESTION

UNNATI BOWS OUT OF CHINA OPEN

WikiLeaks

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 XII) No employee or families of OrissaPOST team can be part of the competition.

THE TWO LUCKY WINNERS







raping minor

Jaipur, July 25: IPL side

Royal Challengers Bengal

uru's under-fire pacer Yash

Dayal has been accused of

raping a minor in an FIR

registered against him by

The 27-year-old cricket-

er from Uttar Pradesh is

already facing charges of

sexual exploitation from

a woman in Ghaziabad

who has alleged that Dayal

abused her after promising

to marry her during a five-

SHO of Jaipur's Sangan-

er Sadar police station Anil

Jaiman said that the latest

FIR was registered Wednes-

"FIR was registered

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur Police.

Others who answered correctly are

Gobinda Sahoo, Madan Harijan, Suvendra Kumar Mahapatra. Parsuram Swain, Soumyashree Panda, Abinash Das, Sidhartha Kumar Das, Sudhansu Behera, Soumendu Sarkar, Subash Chandra Sahoo, Deepak Ranjan Nag, Pravat Nayak, Ayush Kumar Nayak, Sourav Nayak, Surendra Pradhan, Gayatri Sahu, Chandra Sekhai Sahu, Saipriya Nahak

SHORT **TAKES**

Nagal returns to Davis Cup fold after two yrs

New Delhi: India's top singles player Sumit Nagal Friday returned to the Davis Cup squad after a two-year absence while number one doubles player Yuki Bhambri also made a comeback to the national fold after missing two ties as the AITA selection panel picked an eight-member squad for the away match against Switzerland, India will travel to the city of Biel for the World Group I first-round tie, which will be played on indoor courts from September 12. Nagal's last innearance was the home tie against Morocco in Lucknow in September 2023 where he won both his singles matches in India's 4-1 win. He did not travel to Pakistan for the historic tie in February 2024 and also missed the subsequent matches against Sweden and Togo. Topranked Bhambri (ranked 35). and N Sriram Balaii (75) are the doubles players chosen in the squad which will have Rithvik

Anahat Singh signs off with bronze medal

Bollipalli (77) as reserve.

Cairo: Teen squash sensation Anahat Singh signed off with a bronze medal from the World Squash Junior Championships after going down to Egypt's Nadien ElHammamy in the women single's semifinals here Friday. The second-seeded Indian fought hard but eventually lost 6-11, 12-14, 10-12 to the Egyptian, who had strong support from the home crowd. Anahat led in both the second and third games but couldn't build on the advantage. With her semifinal finish, the 17-year-old became the first Indian girl to reach the last-four stage of the tournament since Dipika Pallikal in 2010.

Babar left out of T20Is

Lahore: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has announced squads for the upcoming whiteball tour of the West Indies, with two major headlines - the return of pace spearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi to the T20I setup and the continued absence of former captain Babar Azam from the shortest format. Afridi, who missed the recent Bangladesh series, has been recalled to bolster Pakistan's pace attack for the three-match T20I series in Florida.

Veda Krishnamurthy retires

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Indian women's team batter Veda Krishnamurthy Friday announced her retirement from professional cricket but hinted that she will continue to be associated with the sport in some other role.

Veda played 48 ODIs and 76 T20Is, collecting 829 and 875 runs respectively.

"From a small-town girl with big dreams to wearing the India jersey with pride. Grateful for everything cricket gave me the lessons, the people, the memories. It's time to say goodbye to playing, but not to the game. Always for India. Always for the team,' she said in a social media

The 32-year-old, who is married to former Karnataka cricketer Arjun Hoysala, last played for the country during the women's T20 World Cup final against Australia at Melbourne in 2020. Her last one-day international was in 2018.

"A small-town girl with big dreams. That's how it all started in Kadur, I picked up a bat not knowing where



Cricket gave me so much more than just a career. It gave me a sense of who I am. It taught me how to fight, how to fall and how to keep showing up. Today, with a full rt. I'm Ca

VEDA KRISHNAMURTHY

it would take me. But I knew I loved the game. I never imagined it would take me this far from narrow streets to the biggest stadiums, from quiet hopes to proudly wearing the Indian jersey," Veda wrote.

Known for her hard-hitting ways with the bat, Veda's last competitive game was for Gujarat Giants against Royal Challengers Bengaluru in last year's Women's Premier League.

Satwik-Chirag breeze into semis RCB pacer Yash Dayal accused of

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Changzhou (China), July 25: Premier Indian men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty booked their spot in the semifinals but rising badminton star Unnati Hooda's dream run ended at the China Open Super 1000 here Friday.

The reigning Asian Games champions picked a comfortable 21-18, 21-14 win over familiar foes Ong Yew Sin and Teo Ee Yi of Malaysia in 40 minutes.

The win improved Satwik-Chirag's head-tohead record against the Malaysians to 7-3. They will take on the world number two pair of Aaron Chia-Soh Wooi Yik of Malaysia in the last four stage.

Hooda, on the other hand, lost to world number 4 Akane Yamaguchi of Japan 16-21, 12-21 in the women's singles quarterfinal that lasted 33 minutes. The 17-year-old had scripted her biggest career win against 'idol' and twotime Olympic medallist PV

Sindhu. With Hooda's exit, India's singles campaign in the tournament came to

In the opening game, Hooda kept pace with Yamaguchi early on but failed to sustain the momentum, with the Japanese star reeling off five consecutive points at one

stage to take it 21-16.

Hooda's best run was taking three points in a

The second game followed a similar script. Despite a brief fightback where she won four straight points, Hooda

fell behind as Yamaguchi strung together six consecutive points and wrapped up the second game 21-12.

Overall, Yamaguchi won 42 of the 70 points played

across both games. stunned former world champion Sindhu 21-16,

terfinals.

19-21, 21-13 in the pre-quar-

against Yash Dayal for rape under relevant sections of POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences act and the BNS (Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita)," he said here on Friday.



Xavi applies for Indian football team coach job, rejected

Barca legend Xavi Hernandez's application surprises AIFF, but coaching job set to go to an Indian

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Spain's World Cup-winning mid-field superstar Xavi Hernandez was among those who applied for the position of India's head coach, leaving the All Indian Football Federation (AIFF) pleasantly surprised but also unable to process his application for reasons which had nothing to do with the game.

Xavi, it is learnt, "sent an email from his own account" to apply for the However, the AIFF

could not go ahead with the processing of his application as the costs involved in recruiting one of the world's finest mid-fielders was way beyond the federation's means.

"Yes, he (Xavi) applied for the job of the Indian senior men's team football head coach. He has himself mailed his application to the people in the technical committee, and it looks like he was very much interested in the job," a source in the AIFF told PTI on Friday.

"However, those tasked with the responsibility of recommending the shortlist of coaches to the executive committee for final approval federation know that it's difficult.

"You understand that Xavi is one of the greatest



mid-fielders of all time, people talk about Messi all the time but he along with (Andres) Iniesta are right up there as far as Barcelona is concerned. So, yes, it is what it is," he added.

glo-Cypriot Stephen Constantine, Stefan Tarkovic of Slovakia and home-bred Khalid Jamil were among three candidates shortlisted on Wednesday by the technical committee The experienced Anof the AIFF.

Out of the three, Jamil appears to be the frontrunner to replace Manolo Marquez, who quit earlier this month after a string of poor performances by the national team. The side's FIFA ranking has plummeted to 133, which is its lowest in nine years.

The AIFF had invited applications for the top job July 4 with July 13 as the deadline. It received 170 applications, which included big names like former Liverpool stars Robbie Fowler and Harry Kewell. Before Xavi, Fowler and Kewell had thrown their hats into the ring for the position.

Besides the World Cup triumph with Spain in 2010 and Euro title victories in 2008 and 2012, the 45-yearold Xavi has won five La Liga titles, three Copa del Rey trophies, and three

UEFA Champions League trophies with FC Barcelona, including two continental trebles in 2008-09 and 2014-15.

A product of the famed La Masia like his longtime illustrious FCB teammate Messi, Xavi's last coaching job was at FC Barcelona, where he was in charge from 2021 to 2024.

Before that, the maestro was managing Qatari club Al Sadd from 2019-21. After his

glorious 24-year stint at Barcelona, Xavi had also played for Al Sadd before being appointed the team's manager.

He left Barcelona as a player in 2015 for Al Asadd, where he also won four trophies before retiring in 2019.

As Barcelona manager, he led them to the 2023 Supercopa de Espana and the 2022-23 La Liga tile.

According to Jaiman, the victim has alleged that the player raped her first in 2023 when she was 17 and a similar assault took place in April this year at a hotel in Sitapura area.

"She alleged that the cricketer had promised help and support in her career. He contacted her in April this year when he was in Jaipur for IPL and called her to the hotel where he allegedly raped her again," the SHO said, adding that the matter was under investigation.

The player has not issued any statement on either of the two cases so far.

Daval, a medium pacer. is a reasonably well-known bowler in the Indian domestic circuit. He made his debut for Uttar Pradesh in 2018 and has since played 27 first-class games, claiming 84 wickets.

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