



Nushratt's exclaim

Actor Nushratt 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 guided missile at a test range in Andhra Pradesh

NATIONAL | **P8**



Border battle expands

Thailand and Cambodia exchange artillery fire for second day as border clashes intensify

INTERNATIONAL | **P10**



England pile misery

Joe Root makes 150, Stokes unbeaten on 77 as England take 186-run lead over India on day 3 of fourth Test at Old Trafford Friday

SPORTS | **P12**

₹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 forest worker under the social



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 Town, has been unearthed.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

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

School building collapse claims 7 kids



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

PTI PHOTO

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

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 Piplo di 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 Piplo di village around 7.45 am. "Seven children have died so far," Nand Kishore Verma, SHO of Manoharthana police

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, Anubhav Apparels, Bon & Co., and B.L. International, participated in the summit.

Announcing a dedicated task force under the Industries department, the Chief Minister assured investors of fast-track implementation and full gov-

ernment support. He emphasised 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, Jagatsinghpur, Ganjam, and Cuttack.

Noting that the textile industry 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 Maniabandh 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 government 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," Majhi 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 officials said.

In one case, an underage boy was being radicalised by his gaming partner sitting across the border. The boy was hand-

ed 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 foreign 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, Fugli, Mojflix, and Triflicks, officials said.

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

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES
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.

LEO
Your day will start off very ordinarily. The later half of the day too should prove to be uneventful. However, events occurring 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.

VIRGO
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.

LIBRA
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 décor of your home 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 appreciate 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.

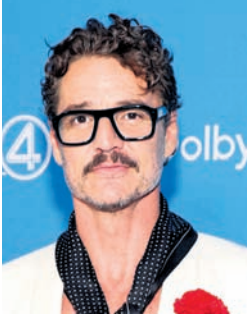


ED SHEERAN PRAISES ARIJIT SINGH'S VOICE

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.



Ananya practises kindness

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 Kindness 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 India.

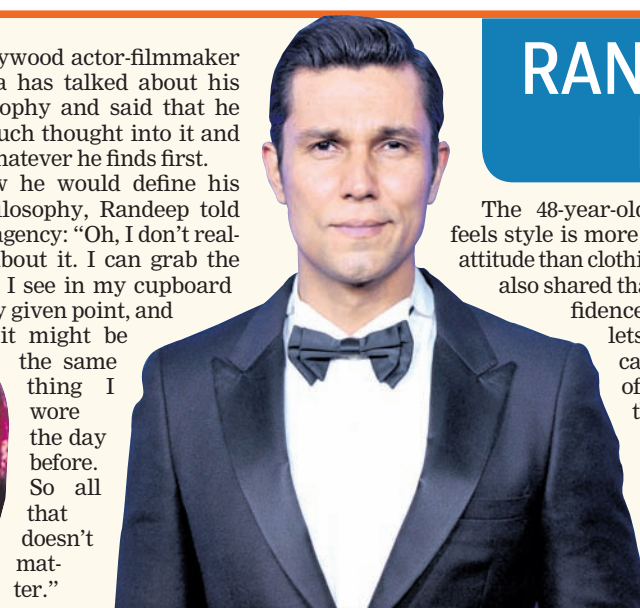
Over 2.5 lakh children will benefit from this curriculum through various programs. It's also available on So Positive's YouTube channel, making it accessible to parents and educators globally.



IAN5

New Delhi: Bollywood actor-filmmaker Randeep Hooda has talked about his fashion philosophy and said that he doesn't put much thought into it and often wears whatever he finds first.

Asked how he would define his fashion philosophy, Randeep told this news agency: "Oh, I don't really think about it. I can grab the first thing I see in my cupboard at any given point, and it might be the same thing I wore the day before. So all that doesn't matter."



RANDEEP'S FASHION PHILOSOPHY

The 48-year-old star feels style is more about attitude than clothing. He also shared that confidence that lets one carry off anything easily.

"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."

IAN5

Mumbai: Despite establishing herself in Bollywood, Nushratt Bharuccha continues to face the challenges of being a woman in a male-dominated industry. In a candid chat, the *Chhorii 2* actor spoke about the persistent gender disparities she's endured — from unequal professional opportunities to basic on-set amenities. "When a male actor delivers a hit, he instantly gets five new offers. But women have to keep proving themselves, again and again," she said, reflecting on her journey since *Pyaar Ka Punchnama*.

Nushratt 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 be naturally granted.

The actor recounted turning down a business class seat offered by friends,

Nushratt flays industry's gender bias

choosing instead to wait until the industry recognised her worth. "Now, I fly business class, booked by the production house," she shared with pride. Yet, not everything was smooth — after her biggest box office success, her management agency dropped her, leaving her without work or support for two years. "People thought I was being selective, but I was just broken and alone," she revealed.



AGENCIES

Curtains down on FSB's children's film festival

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 Byambasuren Davaa.

The festival culminated with a showcase of shadow puppetry

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 Saiadvitya Samal from KIIT International School.

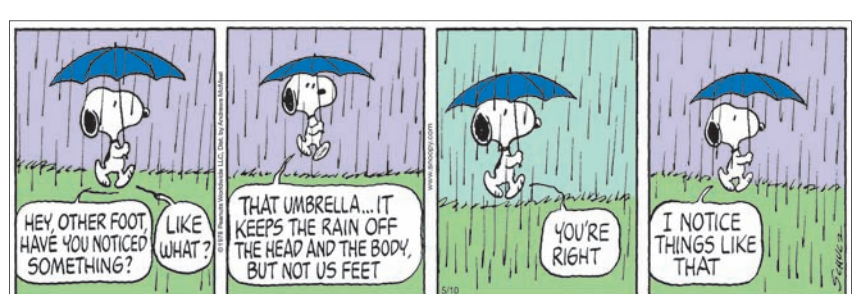
"I had never done shadow puppetry before. Watching *The Gold Rush* by Charlie

Chaplin and participating in the workshop was amazing," added Saibesh Kumar Majhi, Class VI, Loyola Odia School.

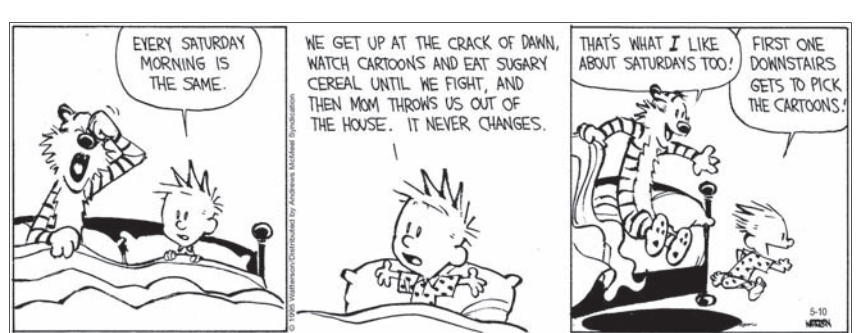
Anushka Kanar, another Loyola student, shared, "It was great collaborating with students from other schools. I was in Group 3 and really loved the work of Groups 1, 2, and 4."

FSB executive Sankalp Mohanty said, "Our aim is to 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

PEANUTS



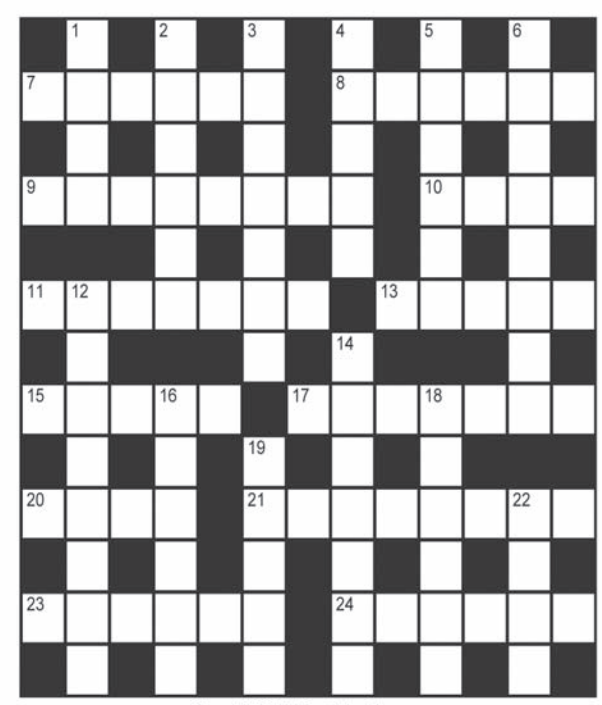
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Some like it hot
 - 8 Ballet company
 - 9 Kennel
 - 10 Cookbook direction
 - 11 Affluent
 - 13 Dish
 - 15 Pile up
 - 17 Gambling game
 - 20 "Tosca" tune
 - 21 Promised land
 - 23 Heavy overcoat
 - 24 Peers
 - 4 Have the helm
 - 5 Tidbit
 - 6 Short distance runner
 - 12 Completely
 - 14 Excursion
 - 16 Maps
 - 18 Ennui
 - 19 Not together
 - 22 Peddle
- Down**
- 1 Goose egg
 - 2 Deadly
 - 3 Detectives

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.

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

NHRC seeks report on Angul septic tank deaths

PNN & AGENCIES

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 Mayurbhanj 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 ma-

sons for private house construc-

tion. Each of the families was 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 Building 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

AGENCIES

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 spokesperson 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 ceremony as Chief Guest, Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo lauded the vision of SAI’s late founder Bijaya Kumar Sahoo. “When Bijaya first shared his dream of SAI, I asked him, ‘Are you sure about this?’ Today, I stand here with deep admiration for what he built,” he remarked. Encouraging 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 Coun-

cil (UNSC), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and more, offering a hands-on experience in diplomacy, negotiation, and global governance. A unique highlight was a service project involving international delegates and SAI students at a school for mentally challenged children, promoting empathy and inclusion.

The event also saw the felicitation of academic toppers with the Bijaya Kumar Sahoo Global SAioneer Award and the Bijaya Kumar Sahoo Emerging Entrepreneur Award, honouring excellence in academics and innovation.

ED dy director walks out of jail

PNN & AGENCIES

Cuttack, July 25: A day after Orissa High Court granted him bail, Enforcement Directorate (ED) deputy director Chintan 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 Bhakti Binod Behera, from whose vehicle the CBI sleuths had recovered the bribe money.

Justice Gourishankar Satapathy allowed their separate bail pleas through a common order, imposing stringent conditions. Raghuvanshi and Behera were arrested from two locations in Bhubaneswar after CBI caught them red-handed while accepting bribe from a city-based 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 advocates 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.



TALENT FETED: Delhi Public School, Kalinga Pro Vice Chairperson Mala Mishra, Principal Suvatrta 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

OP PHOTO

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.

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, one-third 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 heartburns, 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; Syatoslav 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.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Smt. Sabita Brahma, W/o- Late Ajit Kumar Brahma, Aadhaar 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.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	86.52 ▲ 0.11	SENSEX	81463.09 ▼ 721.08	GOLD	₹97,918 ▼ ₹808
EURO	101.47 ▼ 0.00	NIFTY	24837.00 ▼ 225.10	SILVER	₹113,670 ▼ ₹1467

WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	30.2°	31.2°	Generally cloudy sky with possibility of rain or thundershower.
Min Temp	26.1°	24.2°	
Humidity	90%	8.4%	
Rainfall	2.7mm	Nil	

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

सं./No. 18-24/2023-DD-III/NF

भारत सरकार/Government of India

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

दिव्यांगजन सशक्तिकरण विभाग

Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)

Subject: Engagement of Accountant in the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) on Contract basis-regarding.

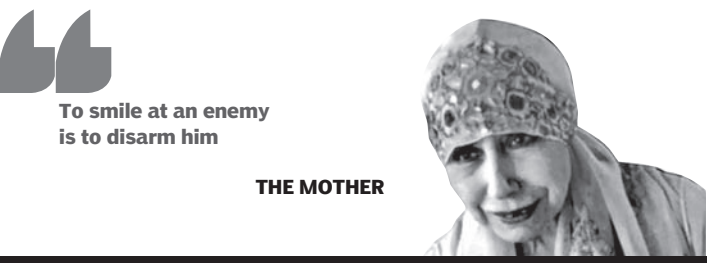
Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) invites applications from eligible individuals for contractual appointment in the Department as under:

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	For Retired Government 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 knowledge in Government Sector.	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
Email: sultan.meena@nic.in

cbc-38117/11/0009/2526



To smile at an enemy is to disarm him

THE MOTHER

Honeytrap Alarm

If 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 moral one.

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

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WISDOM CORNER

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

PAULO COELHO

We always question the bonafides of the man who tells us unpleasant facts

RK NARAYAN

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

CHARLES DICKENS

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.



Rabah Arezki and Rick van der Ploeg

LESS INDUSTRIALIZED DEVELOPING ECONOMIES TEND TO CONSUME FEWER RESOURCES THAN THEY PRODUCE, WHEREAS THE OPPOSITE IS TRUE FOR DEVELOPED ECONOMIES

SPECTRUM GEOPOLITICS



Piotr Opalinski

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

The 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 an economic 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 devel-

opment 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.

Inward-facing institutions 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.

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.

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Central Asia’s new ‘Great Game’

Central 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-lay-

ered 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.

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Letters TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST
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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 Jayanthi, NAVI MUMBAI



Two Kashmirs, 26 years on: A stark divide across LoC

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

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 (PoJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan (PoGB) 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 — while 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 re-branded 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,

hailed as game-changers, have benefitted only the military elite. Clean water, jobs, healthcare — all remain scarce. Even state employees protested in Ju-

ly 2025 over unpaid wages, only to be threatened into silence.

Civil liberties are non-existent at the other side of LoC. Dissent is crushed under constitutional 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 of education and employment.

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

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.

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, experiencing 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 return."

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 traditional attire, showcase skills during an event organised on the eve of Kargil Vijay Diwas, at Drass, in Ladakh PTI PHOTO

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 Sunderbans, 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, chalk-white 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 undocumented 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

Bengal sees 25 drowning deaths every day: Study

The survey, supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, found that 9,191 people in West Bengal die from drowning each year

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, July 25: A recent survey by the India unit of a global research body had pointed out that West Bengal is witnessing 25 drowning deaths every day, with 13 among them being children.

The study paper by the Indian unit of the George Institute for Global Health, a copy of which is available with IANS, has also revealed that West Bengal faced a far worse drowning crisis than official data suggests.

The survey is the largest of its kind ever conducted in India, covering all 23 districts of West Bengal, a population of 18 million people, the institute authorities claimed.

George Institute for Global Health, an independent medical research institute headquartered in Australia with offices in India, China and the UK, researches non-communicable diseases and large-scale clinical studies.

"The survey, supported by 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 preventable public health emergency," a statement issued by the George Institute on Thursday read.

While surveying the matter, the researchers used a low-cost Community Knowledge Ap-



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

DR MEDHAVI GUPTA | GEORGE INSTITUTE

proach, engaging over 15,000 community members to report deaths in their neighbourhoods, which were subsequently 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 invisible.

"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 suggestions 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 survival 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 or neighbours.

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

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

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, according to the statistics of the same Central body, occurred during the last ten financial years, with the number being 4,751.

Fiscally, the maximum exodus 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 industrial 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.

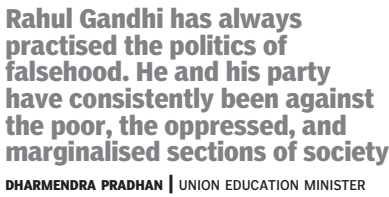
It had been a long-standing argument of both the BJP and the other opposition parties in West Bengal that the rampant extortion by the ruling Trinamool Congress is not only discouraging fresh investment proposals in the state but also promoting existing units in the state to shut their shutters and shift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

At a political rally organised by the BJP's West Bengal unit at the industrial township of Durgapur in West Burdwan district 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 happened 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 dispensation 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. Because 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.



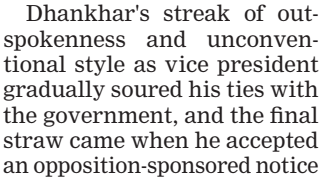


ISRO Chairman V Narayanan Friday said that India has to nearly triple its number of satellites in space, from the current 55, within the next three years. Delivering 'The GP Birla Memorial Lecture on Indian Space Programme - Accomplishments, Challenges and Future Perspectives', Narayanan said by 2040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



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

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

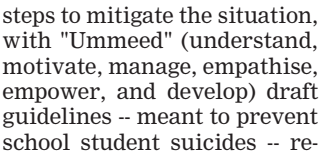


The missile is an enhanced version of the ULPGM-V2 missile developed and delivered by the DRDO earlier. The ULPGM-V3 is equipped with a high

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 environments.

While issuing 15 guidelines,

“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



leased by the Ministry of Education in 2023. For a broader reach, the court said, the Ministry of Education launched "Manodarpan", mental health and well-being of students during

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-

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



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

EMMANUEL MACRON | PRESIDENT, FRANCE

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



Quote of the day

Ukrainian forces are holding back Russia's concerted summer push to break through defences along parts of the front line



VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYIY | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

Sri Lanka will extend free tourist visa policy to 40 additional countries as part of its efforts to boost tourism and sustain economic recovery



VIITHA HERATH | FOREIGN MINISTER, SRI LANKA

We want Palestinian statehood, we desire it, and we want to make sure the circumstances can exist where that kind of long-term political solution can have the space to evolve



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 50-year 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 government in 1901.

Female HR exec caught on Coldplay cam resigns

London: The female executive who was caught on camera embracing the CEO of her company at a Coldplay concert in a moment that went viral has resigned, according to news reports. Multiple news outlets reported that Kristin Cabot, the executive in charge of human resources at tech company Astronomer, has resigned. Her departure follows the resignation of CEO Andy Byron, who quit after the company said he was being put on leave pending an investigation. The episode resulted in endless memes, parody videos and screenshots of the pair's shocked faces filling social media feeds. Cabot and Byron were caught by surprise when singer Chris 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 Duterte's impeachment

Manila: Philippine Vice President Sara Duterte scored 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 President Ferdinand Marcos Jr, the First Lady, and the House Speaker. The court said it was not absolving Duterte of the charges, but the ruling may nevertheless be a huge boost for her political ambitions.

THAILAND CAMBODIA CLASH

No ceasefire in sight

REUTERS

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



Cambodia PM says Thailand agreed to ceasefire, then backed out

Thailand says it agrees in principle with truce, will consider based on conditions

US, Malaysia, China have offered to mediate, Thailand says

Cambodia accuses Thailand of damaging 11th-century temple

CAMBODIA ATTACKING CIVILIAN AREAS WITH ROCKETS, 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-the-ground 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 civilians in danger."

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.

Hong Kong issues bounties for 19 overseas activists

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hong Kong, July 25: Hong Kong police announced rewards for information leading to the arrest of 19 overseas-based activists for their roles in what they called a subversive organisation abroad, accusing them of violating a national security law imposed by Beijing.

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 overthrow and undermine China's fundamental system or overthrow the institutions in power in the city or China.

On request by the police, the city's court issued arrest warrants for activists Elmer Yuen, Johnny Fok, Tony Choi, Victor Ho, Keung Ka-wai and 14 others. They are alleged to have organised or participated in an election abroad for the Hong Kong Parliament, as well as setting up or becoming members of the group. 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 issued against them.

REUTERS

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 IDEAS

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said afterward that both sides had presented specific ideas on sanctions relief and the nuclear issue.

"While seriously criticising their stances regarding the recent war of aggression against

Iran, Europeans hold ‘frank’ nuclear talks

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-



- First talks with Western powers since Israeli and US strikes
- 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.

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 strategic 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 Co-operation Organisation Foreign Ministers' meeting.

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

The "Chinese military leadership reiterated full confidence in the strength of the bilateral defence partnership 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, connectivity initiatives under the CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor), and the need for coordinated responses to shared geopolitical challenges," it added.

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

SNIPPET

Netanyahu, Trump appear to abandon Gaza ceasefire negotiations with Hamas

Jerusalem/Washington/Cairo:

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Donald Trump appeared Friday to abandon Gaza ceasefire negotiations with Hamas, both saying 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.



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.



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 temporary 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 again.

"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.

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 put a pedestrian looking In-

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 nudge while debutant Anshul Kamboj hit underwhelming speeds in the range 125-130 kmph. Even Bumrah, who 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 managed to procure the wicket of Jamie Smith (9).

Siraj too seemed to be in 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 three 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 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)

HERE . NOW

OrissaPOST

MEETLE MEET 2025

OrissaPOST

QUIZ

Extravaganza

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

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

TODAY'S QUESTION

This day in 1948 marked a significant milestone for justice in Odisha, as what key legal institution began functioning on this date?

ANSWER TO FRIDAY'S QUESTION

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

DIVYANSHU MOHANTY

SACHIM MINJ

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 Sekhar 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 appearance 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. Top-ranked Bhambri (ranked 35), and N Sriram Balaji (75) are the doubles players chosen in the squad which will have Rithvik Bollipalli (77) as reserve.

Anahat Singh signs off with bronze medal

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 ElHamamy 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 white-ball 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 post.

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 heart, I'm calling time on this chapter

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.

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

post.

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 short-list of coaches to the executive committee for final approval federation know that it's difficult.

"You understand that Xavi is one of the greatest

Satwik-Chirag breeze into semis

UNNATI BOWS OUT OF CHINA OPEN

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-to-head 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 two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu.

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

In the opening game, Hooda kept pace with Yamaguchi early on but failed to sustain the mo-

mentum, 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 row.

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.

Hooda Thursday stunned former world champion Sindhu 21-16, 19-21, 21-13 in the pre-quarterfinals.

RCB pacer Yash Dayal accused of raping minor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, July 25: IPL side Royal Challengers Bengaluru's under-fire pacer Yash Dayal has been accused of raping a minor in an FIR registered against him by Jaipur Police.

The 27-year-old cricketer 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-year relationship.

SHO of Jaipur's Sanganer Sadar police station Anil Jaiman said that the latest FIR was registered Wednesday.

"FIR was registered 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.

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.

Dayal, 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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