



Vidya's journey

Actor Vidya Balan looks back on a bold career choice that redefined her as an actor


LEISURE | **P2**



Myanmar's interim gov

Myanmar's military hands over power to a civilian-led interim government Thursday, but junta chief remains in control as acting president

INTERNATIONAL | **P10**



Fiscal deficit widens

Centre's fiscal deficit stands at 17.9 per cent of the full-year target at the end of June, according to data

BUSINESS | **P11**



Karun leads India

Karun Nair scores a fighting fifty as India reach 204 for 6 at Stumps on Day 1 of the fifth and final Test against England

SPORTS | **P12**

OPS, former TN CM, snaps ties with NDA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, July 31: Former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister O Panneerselvam (OPS)-led AIADMK Cadres Rights Retrieval Committee Thursday walked out of the BJP-led NDA coalition, a year after joining the bloc.

Incidentally, the deposed AIADMK leader twice met DMK president and CM MK Stalin in the day. He later told reporters he was not insulted in NDA.

Pan- ruti S Ramachandran, a veteran leader and advisor to the Committee, announced the decision to leave NDA. Speaking to reporters, Ramachandran, flanked by OPS and panel leaders, said, "Hereafter, the Committee will not be a part of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA)."

The decision to move away from the NDA was unanimous, he said answering a question.

On behalf of the Committee, its chief, OPS will soon commence tour of several parts of the state and it has been resolved to decide on the question of alliance in future according to the political circumstances, he added.

Asked on the reasons for quitting the NDA, Ramachandran said the reason was widely known and there was no necessity to explain it.

He expressed confidence that 'a right alliance to lead the people in the right direction will materialise in future'. Asked if BJP has betrayed the OPS-led panel, Ramachandran said he need not spell out what the BJP did to the Committee as the nation knows it. To a question, OPS said he met Stalin here during his morning walk Thursday and that he moved on after conveying his pleasantries.

Hours after severing ties with NDA, OPS called on Stalin here at his residence in the evening, his second meeting with the CM on the same day, leading to speculations.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Investigations depend on the culprit's political affiliation—why can't courts understand that and stop bashing us?

ALL MALEGAON BLAST ACCUSED ACQUITTED

AGENCIES

Mumbai, July 31: Nearly 17 years after a blast in Malegaon town of north Maharashtra claimed six lives, a special court here Thursday acquitted all the seven accused, including former BJP MP Pragya Singh Thakur and Lt Col Prasad Purohit, noting there was 'no reliable and cogent evidence' against them.

Welcoming the court verdict, BJP said Congress manufactured the theory of 'Hindu terror' when in power to stop the rise of Narendra Modi,

the then Gujarat CM, to appease its Muslim voters. AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi alleged that all the accused in the Malegaon blast case got acquitted due to a 'deliberately shoddy investigation'.

Besides Thakur and Purohit, other accused were Major Ramesh Upadhyay (Retd), Ajay Rahirkar, Sudhakar Dwivedi, Sudhakar Chaturvedi and Sameer Kulkarni.

Notably, an explosive device strapped to a motorcycle went off near a mosque in Malegaon town September 29, 2008, killing six persons and injuring 101 others.

Texas, July 31: A new world record for the longest distance lightning flash was declared Thursday - a megaflash that stretched for 829 kilometres (515 miles) across the United States.

The huge flash occurred October 22, 2017, from eastern Texas to near Kansas City, the World Meteorological Organization said.

The United Nations' WMO weather agency said the megaflash underlined the epic power of lightning - and how flashes can pose dangers far from the original storm.

The previous record, also observed in the US, happened

A few hours after announcing a 25 per cent tariff on goods imported from India along with an unspecified penalty, US President Donald Trump unleashed a blistering tirade against New Delhi-Moscow ties, calling both nations as 'dead economies' and declaring he 'does not care' what India does with Russia. Taking to Truth Social, Trump also revealed sealing a trade deal with Pakistan, saying Washington will work with Islamabad to develop what he described as the South Asian nation's 'massive oil reserves'. The US president wondered if Pakistan could sell oil to India some day.

Washington, July 31: US President Donald Trump once again mounted a sharp attack on India and Russia for their close ties and said that the two countries can take their 'dead economies down together', official sources said Thursday.

The US President's fresh criticism of New Delhi and Moscow came hours after announcing 25 per cent tariffs against India, plus a 'penalty' for its trade with Russia. "I don't care what India does with Russia. They can take their dead economies down to-

gether, for all I care," he said. "We have done very little business with India, their Tariffs are too high, among the highest in the World," he added.

Trump Wednesday announced the imposition of a 25 per cent tariff on all goods coming from India starting August 1, plus an unspecified penalty for buying Russian crude oil and military equipment. The surprise announcement came a day after India said that a US trade team would visit from August 25 to negotiate a trade deal.

The announcement is being seen as a pressure tactic to get New Delhi to agree to demands made by the US, which has, in recent days, got favourable trade deals with major partners like Japan, the UK and the EU. Back home, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said everybody, except PM Narendra Modi and FM Nir-mala Sitharaman, knows that the country's economy is 'dead'. On US' tariff announcement, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said India will take all necessary steps to safeguard and promote national interest.

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P9

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ASADUDDIN OWAISI | AIMIM PRESIDENT

829km lightning megaflash sets new world record

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

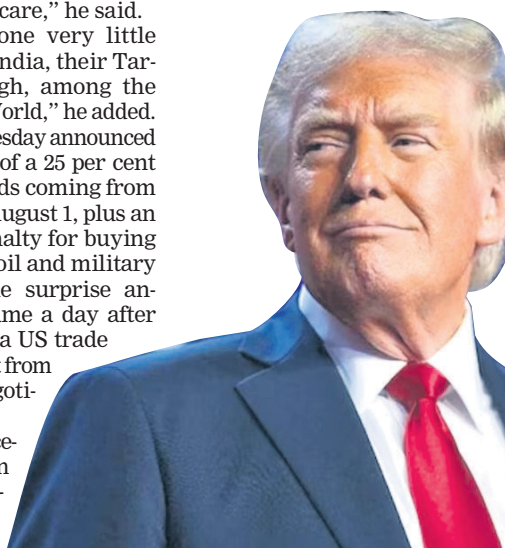
P8



NATURE'S LAP: A person sits near Chitrakote Falls as Indravati river is in spate after heavy rainfall, in Bastar district, Chhattisgarh, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

India, Russia 'dead economies': Trump



6 Indian cos sanctioned

WASHINGTON: The Trump administration has sanctioned six Indian companies for their 'significant' sales and purchases of Iranian-origin petrochemical products. "The Iranian regime continues to fuel conflict in the Middle East to fund its destabilizing activities. Today, the United States is taking action to stem the flow of revenue that the regime uses to support terrorism abroad, as well as to oppress its own people," the Department of State said, as it announced imposing sanctions on 20 global entities engaged in Iranian petroleum, petroleum products or petrochemical trade. It said multiple companies in India, the UAE, Türkiye and Indonesia are being designated for their significant sales and purchases of Iranian-origin petrochemical products. The India-based companies being designated are Kanchan Polymers, Alchemical Solutions, Ramniklal S Gosalia & Co, Jupiter Dye Chem Private Limited, Global Industrial Chemicals Limited and Persistent Petrochem Private Limited.

US SEALS OIL DEAL WITH PAKISTAN

New York/Islamabad: US President Donald Trump has announced sealing a trade deal with Pakistan and said that Washington will work with Islamabad to develop the South Asian nation's 'massive oil reserves'. It is not immediately clear what massive oil reserves in Pakistan Trump was referring to. In a social media post, the US President also wondered if Pakistan could sell oil to India 'someday'. "We have just concluded a deal with the country of Pakistan, whereby Pakistan and the United States will work together on developing their massive oil reserves," Trump said in a post on Truth Social. "We are in the process of choosing the oil company that will lead this partnership. Who knows, maybe they'll be selling oil to India some day!" he added. Pakistan has long claimed to have large oil deposits along its coast, but no progress has been made to tap those deposits. It has been trying to lure in investments to tap into these reserves. The country currently imports oil from the Middle East. Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif took to social media Thursday to thank Trump over the 'historic' trade agreement and expressed hope that it would expand cooperation between the two sides.

Jumbo attack leaves 3 dead in Dhenkanal

PNN & AGENCIES

Dhenkanal, July 31: At least three persons, including two women, were trampled to death by an elephant in Dhenkanal district Thursday, police said.

The incident took place in Baghdadharia village under Hindol police limits in Rasol forest section of Hindol forest range.

The deceased were identified as Jhulana Dehuri, 55, her brother-in-law Karunakar Dehuri, 60, and a villager Sashi Sahu.

Police said the elephant attacked Jhulana when she was plucking flowers near her house. Her brother-in-law came to her rescue and was also trampled by the jumbo. Both died on the spot.

Soon after, Sashi came face-to-face with the elephant and

was severely injured in the attack. Sashi later succumbed to her injuries, police said.

Lusumita Singh, forester and in-charge of Rasol forest beat, said, "With regard to the unfortunate event in Rasol section, where human casualties happened in the early hours, the forester and forest guard concerned have been suspended with immediate effect for dereliction of duty and attached to Hindol range."

The erring officials were tasked with chasing away the elephant back into the forest, Singh said.

Earlier, expressing grief over the incident, Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Ganesh Ram Singhkhumtia said the state government will provide compensation to the deceased who lost their lives in the elephant attack.

2 FOREST OFFICIALS SUSPENDED

78K-ha forest land diverted

New Delhi: The Centre Thursday informed Rajya Sabha that over 78,100 hectares of forest land have been approved for diversion across the country for various projects during 2021-25. Union Minister Kirti Vardhan Singh said 78,135.84 hectares were approved for non-forest use between April 1, 2021 and March 31, 2025. MP accounted for the highest area (17,393.65 hectares), followed by Odisha with 11,033.08 hectares.

₹11,169 crore rail projects for Odisha, 5 others

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 31: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by PM Narendra Modi, approved four railway projects covering 13 districts of six states, including Odisha, worth Rs 11,169 crore, an official release said, Thursday.

The government said these four projects - covering 13 districts across Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha and Jharkhand - will increase the existing network of Indian Railways by about 574km.

These new projects are a fourth line between Itarsi and Nagpur, doubling of railway line between Aurangabad (Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar) and Parbhani, construction of third and fourth line between Aluabari Road and New Jalpaiguri and construction of third and fourth line between Dangoaposi and Jaroli. "The increased line capacity will significantly enhance mobility, resulting in improved operational efficiency and service reliability for Indian Railways," a release said.

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
A new acquaintance will make you feel happy today. You must remember that things don't have to be expressed explicitly; a word or a song from deep within can make a bigger impact. Ganesha says today is the right time to do something which will be more rewarding in the long-term.

TAURUS
this day you will be inclined to act tough and pick up a fight with everyone whom you are likely to encounter, warns Ganesha Those who know you well will be at a loss to make anything out of your belligerent attitude and may not be able to keep up with you for too long. You'll simply be making a lot of enemies, alienating a lot of good friends.

GEMINI
You will feel the need to pursue your passions today. You will give more time to your family and will spend as much time as possible with your children and will bestow your love and affection on them. You will be in an imaginative and romantic mood today. You need to harness your creativity into creating opportunities for yourself, says Ganesha.

CANCER
Sometimes acting a little eccentric and adopting an approach that you will usually not helps you redefine your style, says Ganesha. Go ahead and do that today! Although you will be open to adapt and bring in some revolutionary changes, you will make sure to follow a proper pattern. Thinking out-of-the-box will allow you give an impetus to your current projects.

LEO
Financial gains will make you happy today. You will have the opportunity to participate in social functions. All your work will get completed as per schedule. You will be able to channel your energy effectively, says Ganesha.

VIRGO
You are born with a talent for business. Your organisational skills too are flawless. Ganesha advises you to use all your creativity, innovative ideas and ability to motivate others to make progress in your business. Ganesha says you may freely express yourself and make full use of your sharp judgement.

LIBRA
Ganesha advises you not to take stress about small issues or matters. To avoid tension and to gain mental peace it is advised you perform yoga or meditation. There will be pressure put on you regarding certain matters at the work-front.

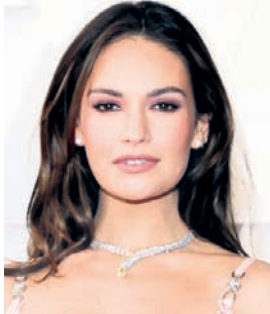
SCORPIO
You go on a shopping spree and that too with your beloved. This may be quite therapeutic for your relationship. You may be just happy to use your bargaining skills to the optimum. Spending lavishly, first on shopping and then on sumptuous dinner to treat your taste buds.

SAGITTARIUS
Tedious day in store for you as hectic work is likely to keep you one toes; this is not-so-good-news. And well, it's time for some good news now. You will do so much running around for your work, that you will actually shed a few kilos of weight. Celebrate by treating your taste-buds, but with low-cal food!

CAPRICORN
Pain and fun, both are the two sides of a coin and today, you will experience both of them in equal amount. You may have to slog yourself to earn money, but be careful and don't drain yourself out, advises Ganesha. You will get what you have wished for, however, you need not try your luck too much. Spend money for the happiness of others.

AQUARIUS
You will receive some good news today. Whatever has been in the pipe line may come out in the open and you'll see the desired output, feels Ganesha. Courageous and patient, you can deal with the toughest of challenges with an ease and Ganesha gives a pat on your back for that. It will be a good day for people associated with Stock Market and finance.

PISCES
Your day today will be like a tug-of-war competition. Try to come out on top in this competition. Ganesha advises you not to underestimate your enemies. It is advisable to find a solution or avoid conflict so that you don't need to waste your energy in this.



LILY TO STAR IN NAVAL THRILLER SUBVERSION

British actor Lily James will feature alongside Hollywood star Chris Hemsworth in an upcoming submarine thriller movie from Amazon MGM Studios. Titled *Subversion*, the film will be directed by German filmmaker Patrick Vollrath from a script penned by Andrew Ferguson.

HARRISON FORD HAS NO PLANS TO RETIRE

Harrison Ford, who has been a part of Hollywood for decades now, said he has no plans to retire. In an interview Ford said, "No. That's one of the things I thought was attractive about the job of an actor was that they need old people, too, to play old people's parts."



Aamir on benefits of being multilingual

MUMBAI: Aamir Khan believes that the more languages one knows, the better. During an exclusive interaction with this news agency, Mr Perfectionist decided to shed light on the benefits of knowing multiple languages. The *Laagan* actor said, "I feel, whichever field you are in, the more languages you know, the more beneficial it will be. So, it is in your interest to know as many languages as you can. I am a little weak when it comes to languages. It takes me a lot of time to learn a new language." Aamir revealed that he did not know Marathi till the age of 44, and he learned his Rajyabhasha after that with the help of a teacher. When I was around 44, I realised that I do not know the Marathi language - although Marathi is taught in school, I did not pay much attention. I felt that it was a matter of shame that I did not know my Rajyabhasha. Then, I hired a Marathi teacher and I learned Marathi from him. Now, I am able to speak decent Marathi," he revealed.

Vidya's career defining moment

MUMBAI: As Vidya Balan marks 20 years in Bollywood this August, she looked back on a bold career choice that redefined her as an actor—playing Amitabh Bachchan's mother in *Paa* (2009). At the time, many warned her against accepting the unconventional role, fearing it might end her career. "I thought R. Balki had lost it when he said he wanted Abhishek and me to play Mr. Bachchan's parents," Vidya recalled in a recent interview. "It sounded absurd, but when he read the script, something shifted. I kept revisiting it, and the actor in me kept saying, 'Do it.'" Despite industry concerns about portraying an older woman early in her career, Vidya trusted her instincts. "I'd already done films that didn't speak to me. Though they worked, I hadn't enjoyed them. I never wanted to feel that disconnect again," she explained. *Paa*, directed by R. Balki, featured Amitabh Bachchan as Auro, a 12-year-old with progeria, with Abhishek as his father and Vidya as his mother. The film was both a critical and commercial success, earning multiple National Awards. Vidya was last seen in *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3* and her debut film *Parineeta* is set for a limited re-release August 29.

AGENCIES



MUMBAI: Actress Urvashi Rautela claimed that her luggage was stolen from the Gatwick airport in London during Wimbledon 2025.

Seeking urgent help to get her bag back, the *Daaku Maharaaj* actress uploaded a picture of her baggage tag and ticket from her Emirates flight on her Instagram account.

Urvashi further wrote on the photo-sharing app, "Injustice tolerated is injustice repeated. Our @wimbledon @dior brown baggage was stolen from the belt at @gatwickairport after flying @emirates from Mumbai during #Wimbledon. baggage tag & ticket above. Urgently requesting help to retrieve it."

As soon as the post was shared, several netizens started trolling

Urvashi, calling it a publicity gimmick. An Insta user wrote, "The so called 'GODDESS OF BEAUTY' and 'BOLLYWOOD DIVA' crying over a lost dior bag??? That's pretty cheap i guess!!"

Another one shared, "Why are you tagging Wimbledon & dior? Simply tagging airlines."

The third comment read, "First Indian to lose baggage returning from Wimbledon!" Taking a dig at Urvashi's several Labubu dolls, which she flaunted during Wimbledon, a cybercitizen penned, "Maybe your labubus took it".

On another note, Urvashi recently delivered a graceful performance in Saudi Arabia's Jeddah Kingdom- for which she charged a whopping 7 crores.

IAN5

Urvashi under fire again

Odia film Lahari to be screened at IFFM

BHUBANESWAR: After a successful world premiere at the 30th Kolkata International Film Festival, acclaimed Odia film *Lahari* has been officially selected for screening at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) 2025, scheduled to take place from August 15 to 25 in Australia.

Directed by National Award-winning filmmaker Amartya Bhattacharyya and produced by Jhilik Bhattacharjee under Jhilik Motion Pictures, *Lahari* explores themes of friendship and fatherhood, set against the lush and serene backdrop of state's eco-tourism hubs. The film celebrates the cultural and natural beauty of Odisha while delving into personal and emotional narratives.

The film features Choudhury Jayaprakash Das, Choudhury Bikash Das, Dipanwit Dashmohapatra, Smruti Ranjan Mahala (child artist), Susant Misra, Swastik Choudhury and Zeinab Doer in key roles.

Amartya has also written the story, handled cinematography, editing, and lyrics — highlighting his multifaceted contribution to the film.

Speaking on the selection, he said "It's a great feeling to have this festival selection, more so because not many of my films would have reached the Australian viewers. I hope Lahari will strike the right chords with the film lovers attending the festival."

Now in its 16th year, the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne is a globally recognised platform celebrating the diversity and richness of Indian cinema.

PNN



Kuna, Jayprakash to shine in Murabi

BHUBANESWAR: Mentis Films has officially announced the title of its debut feature film — *Murabi*. With celebrated actors Kuna Tripathy and Choudhary Jayaprakash Das in lead roles, the film promises a powerful cinematic experience grounded in Odisha's cultural and emotional landscape.

Directed by the award-winning duo Peenakee Singh and Sisir Kumar Sahu, known for their standout works *Dalcheeni* and *Phalguna Chaitra*, *Murabi* brings together an exceptional creative team. The production is backed by Vishal Mourya and Debi Prasad Lenka, the acclaimed directors of *Daman*, further raising anticipation around the project.

Although the storyline remains under wraps, the makers describe *Murabi* as a film "born from the heart of Odisha's middle class – raw, real, and rooted." During the title reveal, a emotionally charged message was shared: "This is just the beginning. Stay tuned — emotions will speak."

Developed under the Mentis Films banner, *Murabi* marks a bold and promising new direction for the production house, signaling a deep commitment to authentic storytelling in Odia cinema.

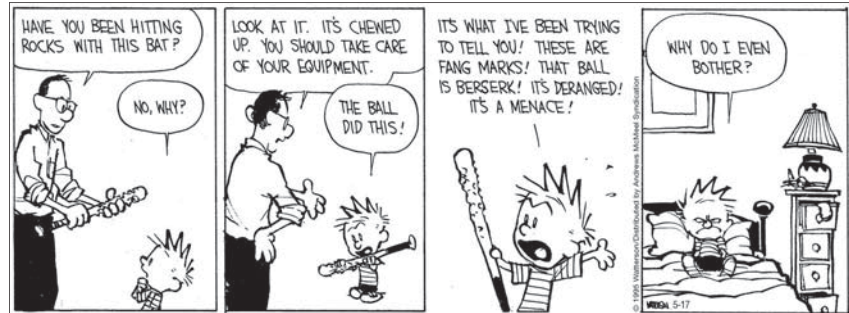
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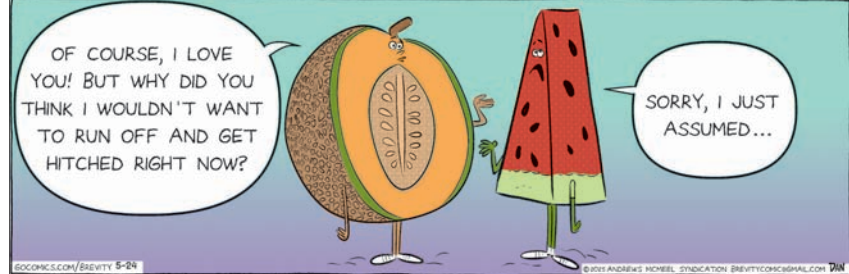
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

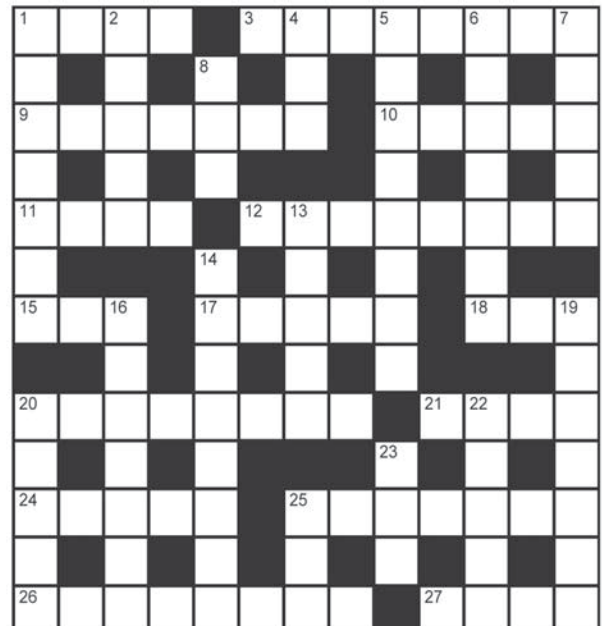


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



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- Across**
1 Bulletin board item
3 Bakery items storage (5,3)
9 Admonition
10 Fancy tie
11 Water holder
12 Sauntered
15 Medic
17 Increased
18 Cygnet's father
20 Rent receiver
21 Unctuous
- Down**
24 Swiss capital
25 Cyclone
26 Longing
27 Colourful salamander
7 Famous
8 Grenade part
13 Wick
14 Barkeeper
16 Choral composition
19 Protest, of sorts
20 Like some goals
22 Boiling mad
23 Annoy
25 Bolivian export

SUDOKU

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

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

SOLUTIONS

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

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

OAS officer booked for ‘cruelty’ to wife, infant

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 31: An Odisha Administrative Service (OAS) officer was booked for allegedly subjecting his wife to neglect, torture and mental harassment, police said Thursday.

The OAS officer, Sarthak Sourav Mohapatra, has been booked under Section 85 (cruelty), 351 (2) (criminal intimidation) and 3(5) (criminal act by several persons with common intention) of BNS, the police said.

Based on a written complaint of the wife, who is an engineer in the state government, the police also booked the OAS officer under the Dowry Prohibition Act.

As per the complaint, the woman got married to the Sarthak February 21 last year, and the couple was blessed with a baby boy May 7 this year.

Sarthak allegedly abandoned his wife and the newborn at the hospital just four days after the birth of the child, the complaint stated, adding she has been staying at her father’s house since then.

“He (husband) was at the hospital for three days after my delivery. However, he abandoned me and my child in the hospital May 10 without



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« Based on a written complaint of the wife, the police also booked the OAS officer under the Dowry Prohibition Act

« Sarthak allegedly abandoned his wife and the newborn at the hospital just four days after the birth of the child

any information. Since then, he has not met me or enquired about the child’s health condition,” she told reporters near Mahila police station here Thursday.

She further alleged that her husband also did not answer her phone calls and text messages.

“We, both mother and child, were subjected to cruelty. I hope that justice will be provided to us,” she said.

The woman alleged that her husband abandoned them at the instruction of his mother and sister.

“I have tried several times to resolve the matter, but he did not cooperate,” the woman said, adding that she had to take the support of the law to give justice to the newborn baby.

The officer concerned, however, refused to comment on the allegations.

State-level training on 2013 POSH Act

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 31: A state level sensitisation-cum-capacity building training on the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 otherwise known as POSH Act was held at the State Institute for Women and Children here Thursday.

The training session was inaugurated by the Women Empowerment and Advocacy Section additional secretary, who emphasised the need for safe and inclusive workplaces, supported by effective institutional mechanisms. The aim of the workshop was to equip master trainers from different districts.



DIVINE TOUCH: An artisan shapes Ganesh idols at Kumbhar Sahi in Cuttack, Thursday

OP PHOTO

Fourth fisherfolk workshop at Bichitrapur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 31: The fourth fisherfolk community workshop on the conservation of Horseshoe Crabs was organised at Bichitrapur, near the ecologically sensitive mangrove region. The event was supported by ECRICC, a project jointly funded by UNDP and the Green Climate Fund.

Over 90 members from the fisherfolk community participated in the workshop, with an aim to raise awareness about the urgent conservation needs of Horseshoe Crabs and possible threats.



HORSESHOE CRAB CONSERVATION

The programme started off with an insightful session by Biswajeet Panda from Bikash Saathi, who elaborated on the challenges and threats to the species and its coastal habitats.

ECRICC project subject matter specialist Dipak Kumar Dey spoke on various conservation

strategies, government fishery schemes, and sustainable development approaches. Assistant livelihood officer Pratima Sen emphasised the responsibility of the fishing community in ensuring the survival of endangered species.

Local FNGO community lead-

er Umasankar Panda shared information about various welfare schemes for fisherfolk community and stressed the importance of proper disposal of ghost nets. Local Sarpanch Kiranbala Jena appreciated the collective efforts of the organisers in promoting conservation at the grassroots level.

Participants included members of local VSS, SHGs, fisherfolk, forest staff and PRI representatives. The workshop was effectively managed by Tapan Kumar Dey, Pradeep Patra, Gopal Chandra Dutta, and Harish Chandra Behera.

Rotary Club installs new team

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 31: The Rotary Club of Bhubaneswar Temple City held its installation ceremony Thursday at Press Club of Odisha, formally ushering in the new leadership team for the 2025-26 Rotary year under the theme ‘Unite for Good.’

Pulin Kumar Sahu took charge as the new president, with Sanjay Kumar Sahoo assuming the role of secretary. Outgoing president PK Sahoo and Secretary Surendra Kumar Panda were commended for their impactful tenure in 2024-25.

The ceremony, attended by Rotary District Governor Manoj Kumar Tripathy, Inner

Wheel chairperson Madhusmita Tripathy, Padma Shri awardee and former AIIMS director Ashok Kumar Mohapatra, and Rotary Assistant Governor KK Senapati also featured a special felicitation programme.

Twenty-four doctors and two chartered accountants were honoured for their outstanding contributions to public welfare. “Recognising those who serve selflessly is central to Rotary’s spirit,” said Tripathy in his address.

Outgoing president Sahoo highlighted the club’s key initiatives during his term, while outgoing secretary Panda presented the annual report. The ceremony also witnessed the unveiling of the club’s souvenir ‘the Dhauli’.

Media workshop bats for investing in breastfeeding

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 31: As part of World Breastfeeding Week 2025 (August 1-7), the Directorate of Health and Family Welfare, in collaboration with Unicef, organised a media workshop Thursday at its conference hall to highlight theme— ‘Prioritise Breastfeeding: Create Sustainable Support Systems.’

The workshop emphasised the importance of breastfeeding in ensuring long-term health for children and mothers, urging collective efforts to build sustainable support systems.

“Our department is actively creating an enabling environment through counselling and community awareness, ensuring mothers get the right sup-



port to continue breastfeeding,” said director of Family Welfare Rajyashree Pattnaik. “Prioritising breastfeeding is not just a health choice—it’s an investment in the future,” she added.

Unicef nutrition specialist Sourav Bhattacharjee emphasised the environmental and societal benefits stating, “Breastfeeding is not just a personal choice; it’s a societal responsibility. It reduces reliance on packaged infant foods that contribute to carbon emissions.

We need safe public spaces for breastfeeding and stronger maternity protection.”

Additional director of Child Health, Aditya Mohapatra added, “Breastfeeding is the first vaccine. It protects against infections and lowers the mother’s risk of certain diseases.”

Odisha continues to lead in breastfeeding practices, with NFHS-5 showing 68.5 per cent of newborns breastfed within an hour of birth and 72.9 per cent exclusively breastfed under six months.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before in the Court of Executive Magistrate, Kesinga, Dist. - Kalahandi on dt 21.7.2025, Surudei Naik, W/o Jharbulu Naik, At. - Jolko, P.O. - Boria, PS - Kesinga, Dist. - Kalahandi (Odisha), I declare that I have changed my name from Kranti Naik to Surudei Naik. Henceforth I will be known as Surudei Naik for all purpose. Surudei Naik

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before in the Notary Public, Kesinga, Dist. - Kalahandi on dt 30.7.2025, Ashish Jain, S/o Bajrang Lal Jain, Wn. 4, PS - Kesinga, Dist. - Kalahandi (Odisha), I declare that I have changed my name from Ashish Kumar Jain to Ashish Jain. Henceforth I will be known as Ashish Jain for all purpose. Ashish Jain

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 31: In a renewed effort to curb plastic pollution and promote sustainable practices, the state government has reiterated complete ban on single-use plastic items across all state government offices, autonomous bodies and Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).

In a directive sent to all additional chief secretaries, principal secretaries, and commissioner-cum-secretaries, the state government has urged strict and immediate compliance with the ban, which has been in place since October 2, 2019. This move also aligns with the Central government’s broader ban on single-use plastics implemented July 1, 2022.

While the move has been widely welcomed by environmental groups, several activists have expressed concern over past failures in enforcement. Orissa Environmental Society (OES) working president JK Panigrahi said, “This is a



welcome step, but such bans have often remained on paper due to poor mon-

itoring. Without strict and continuous enforcement, the problem will persist. The government had already banned several plastic and thermocol products back in 2019. But due to poor monitoring, the ban has become more of a formality.”

“Despite rules prohibiting plastic bags fewer than 120 microns and plastic bottles smaller than 500 ml, there is rampant usage. The solution lies in coordinated action, starting from the state capital, down to the village panchayats,” he said.

Environment activist Bapi Gochhayat said, “This is a welcome step, but we need to move beyond just policy announcements. Real impact comes from strong implementation of the policies.”



OES president **Sundara Narayana Patro** urged the government to take up the challenge of making Odisha a model state free of single-use plastic.

“The intent is welcome, but execution must follow.

We need a robust system that can bring about actual change,” he said.

Sharing his views on the topic, environmentalist **Trilochan Sahoo** said, “The steps taken by the government towards making India, and states from strong implementation of the policies.”

like Odisha plastic-free are commendable. However, real



these guidelines.”

“Every individual must own responsibility in their daily lives—whether by refusing single-use plastics, carrying cloth bags, using steel or glass containers, or by supporting eco-friendly products,” he added.

Environmentalist **Ranjan Panda** welcomed the government’s decision to ban single-use plastic, calling it a progressive step. He emphasised the importance of strict enforcement across all government offices and institutions.

“A ban alone won’t work unless it’s backed by proper support systems,” he said, urging the government to replace plastic water bottles with clean, hygienic drinking water facilities and ensure that office canteens also adhere to the ban.

Despite these policies, authorities observed continued use of plastic items in urban areas, government premises and at public gatherings. The new order comes with a detailed list of specific measures and alternative solutions, designed to eliminate plastic dependency in official settings.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 31: Amid a major row over Chinese e-commerce platform AliExpress selling doormats with Lord Jagannath’s image, the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) Thursday lodged an FIR at the Cyber police station in Puri stating the act hurt the religious sentiments of Hindus globally.

The state’s Deputy Chief Minister Pravatī Parida criticised as ‘offensive’ the act of printing the image of Lord Jagannath on doormats and selling the products, and demanded an apology from the firm. Taking to X, Parida said, “Mahāprabhu Jagannath is deeply connected to the soul and emotions of every Odia. I strongly condemn Chinese e-commerce platform @AliExpress_EN for selling doormats

featuring Mahāprabhu Jagannath’s image. @AliExpress_EN must remove the listing immediately and apologise to devotees for this offensive act.”

AliExpress, in response to an X post by Odisha’s Congress MLA Sofia Firdous, said that the product has been removed.

“We appreciate your report. The item has been reviewed and removed. Community input helps us improve our platform and strengthen our content checks. Thank you for helping us create a safe and friendly online shopping experience,” it said.

Firdous, in her post, stated, “Strongly condemn the blasphemous act of selling doormats with the sacred image of Lord Jagannath on @AliExpress_EN. This is a grave insult to millions of devotees and a serious attack on cultural and religious sentiments.”

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	87.78 ▲ 0.23	SENSEX	81185.58 ▼ 296.28	GOLD	₹98,011 ▼ ₹56
EURO	100.55 ▼ 0.66	NIFTY	24768.35 ▼ 86.70	SILVER	₹109,993 ▼ ₹2871

WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	33.2°	32.2°	Partly cloudy sky with possibility of moderate rain or Thundershower
Min Temp	25.9°	24.6°	
Humidity	89%	91%	
Rainfall	1.9mm	1.4mm	

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad In-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-9937701063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jaggmara-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.

Chorus grows for linking rivers in Kendrapara dist



POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, July 31: With the state government emphasising interstate river-linking projects, voices are growing louder for similar initiatives within Kendrapara district. Local intelligentsia, social activists and political leaders have urged authorities to include the district in the state's broader river-linking roadmap.

The issue assumes significance as the coastline of Kendrapara district covers 48 km stretching from Dhamra sea mouth in neighbouring Bhadrak district to Batighar in the district. Moreover, with nine rivers and 27 creeks and canals flowing through the district, it is vulnerable to natural calamities like floods.

The government has preliminarily proposed six major river-linking projects over the next five years at an estimated cost of ₹1,800 crore. These include the Katara-Subarnarekha canal link, Hiradharbati barrage-Chilika lake connection, Bahuda-Rushikulya basin linkage, Vamsadhara-Rushikulya linkage, Telengiri-Upper Kolab connection, and the Anga-Suktel garland project. The goal is to address potable water scarcity and irrigation issues in the drought-prone areas of the respective regions.

Senior BJP leader Bhuban Mohan Jena, local intelligentsia Ganesh Chandra Samal, environmentalist Hemant Kumar Rout, academic Kshitish Kumar Singh and social activist Manoj Kumar Singh have all stressed the urgent need to link rivers in Kendrapara. They argue such a move would boost agriculture, enhance water security during natural disasters, and aid in coastal afforestation efforts such as mangrove and casuarina plantations.

The district has a dense network of rivers including Luna, Chitrotpala, Paika, Mahanadi, Birupa, Brahmani, Gobari, Kharasrota, Baitarani, and Hansua, along with 27 major drainage channels. Currently, canal irrigation covers 16,357 hectare in Kendrapara block, 7,840 hectare in Derabish, 3,409 hectare in Marshaghai, 3,007 hectare in Mahakalapara, and 11,049 hectare in Pattamundai, according to the Water Resources department.

However, farmers in Aul, Rajnagar, Rajkanika and some other blocks remain dependent on lift irrigation and rainfall. Of the district's 1.52 lakh hectare cultivable land, over 31,081 hectare lies fallow each year due to water scarcity.

River-linking stakeholders said that this would not only expand irrigation but

also benefit inland fisheries, water-based livelihoods and year-round vegetable cultivation. Locals believe such integration could help transform Kendrapara into a less saline and agriculturally vibrant region. With increasing salinity in groundwater, people in the coastal district may soon have to rely entirely on river water for drinking purposes.

Experts say river interlinking is now crucial not only to address the region's drinking water needs, but also to combat ecological crises and preserve biodiversity in areas like the Bhitarkanika National Park as freshwater does not reach the sanctuary during summer season.

Every summer, Bhitarkanika faces an acute shortage of fresh water, endangering its rich biodiversity. The lack of fresh water has led to the destruction of flora, fauna, and medicinal plants. Both marine and freshwater species are under threat, along with the vital mangrove ecosystem.

Mangrove forests like those in Bhitarkanika act as natural buffer, protecting the coast during natural disasters like cyclonic storms. The protective role of these forests was evident during the 1999 Super Cyclone, when they saved countless lives and property.

With the Sagarmala project now pushing for coastal road construction in the region, stakeholders say the district can benefit further if inland waterways are connected within a five-km coastal corridor.

Such integration could help mitigate future threats from cyclones, storm surges, floods, and droughts.

However, when contacted, Additional District Collector Rabindra Kumar Mallik said no formal process has begun yet for river-linking, though discussions are underway.



PRIDE IN FABRIC: Models participate in a fashion show organised by Sambalpuri Ekta Manch at Gangadhar Mandap in Sambalpur on the eve of Sambalpuri Din, Thursday

5 sentenced to life for murder



POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, July 31: A local court here Thursday sentenced five persons to life imprisonment in connection with a murder over suspected witchcraft and sorcery in 2020.

District and Sessions Judge Prasanna Kumar Panda pronounced the verdict after examining the statements recorded by 10 witnesses.

Those convicted are Labakush Kunteri, Somanath Jal, Shukla Jal, Shankar Majhi, and Mangum Majhi; all residents of Gunthabeda village under Motu police limits. The case was prosecuted by government lawyer Jogen Raika.

According to the case diary, in February 2020, the five accused tied Manguli Kunteri and her husband Mukunda Kunteri to a tamarind tree near their village and held a community trial over allegations of witchcraft. They reportedly beat the couple and freed them.

Two days later, they held another meeting and took the couple to a nearby forest. There, in front of Manguli, the accused doused her husband Mukunda in kerosene and set him ablaze.

Manguli later informed her son Manik about the incident, following which the mother-son duo lodged a complaint with Motu police. A case (55/2020) was registered, and the accused were arrested and produced in the court.

Youth beaten to death; 2 held, as many on run

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patana, July 31: A 28-year-old man was allegedly beaten to death in an organised attack by some co-villagers at Ankura Uppar Sahi under Patana police limits of Keonjhar district, police said Thursday.

The deceased was identified as Gangadhar Naik, son of Bhaktabandhu Naik. Police registered a case and detained a couple after the deceased's father lodged a complaint at the police station. Two others are absconding.

As per the complaint, the deceased had gone to watch the flooded Baitarani river Wednesday evening. Meanwhile, Hiramani, wife of Dinabandhu Patra, her son Soumyaranjan and daughter-in-law Bijuli were standing in front of their house at Jhapa Sahi in the village. There Gangadhar allegedly hurled abuses at Hiramani over an undisclosed issue.

Enraged, Soumyaranjan took Gangadhar to their courtyard and all three of them brutally beat him with a wooden plank after tying up his limbs. Later, he rang up another co-villager Lucky Naik and urged him to inform Gangadhar's father.

Bhaktabandhu rushed to the



spot and brought his son back home in critical condition. He went to bed after dinner but was found dead by his mother when she tried to wake him Thursday morning.

Gangadhar's father lodged a complaint at Patana police station, prompting officers including IIC Manas Kumar Mahakur, ASI Saroj Kumar Sethi and constable Lakshman Majhi to begin an investigation.

Police have detained Dinabandhu and his wife, while their son and daughter-in-law are reportedly absconding. A scientific team from Keonjhar was also pressed into service, police said.

Ghatagaon SDPO Bijay Krushna Mahapatra also reached the spot and took stock of the situation.

5 held for molestation, bid to abduct woman

POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, July 31: Police Thursday arrested five workers from neighbouring West Bengal on charge of molesting and trying to abduct a woman under this police limits in Keonjhar district.

The accused were identified as Farid Sheikh, Sahidul Sheikh, Dildar Hussain, Jamal Sheikh and Saffikul Sheikh of Murshidabad area in neighbouring West Bengal. The accused were working as masons at Joda town while the complainant and survivor was working with them as a labourer.

The incident occurred when the survivor was heading for work. The accused persons waylaid and molested her. They also tried to abduct her. However, their attempts were frustrated after the woman raised an alarm.

Police registered a case and arrested the accused persons after the woman's family members lodged a complaint at Joda police station. The accused were produced in the court Thursday, Joda police IIC Susant Pradhan said.

The development comes at a time when Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has alleged that migrant workers from the neighbouring state are being mistreated and attacked in Odisha. However, incidents like these tell an entirely opposite story.

21 arrested with 213 gram brown sugar

Anandapur/Keonjhar/Hatadihi: Keonjhar district police have arrested 21 persons and seized 213 gram brown sugar from their possession during a series of raids under various police station areas across Anandapur sub-division in Keonjhar district. Cash worth ₹8.3 lakh and 12 mobile phones were also seized from their possession during the raids. This was stated here by ASP Pratyush Mohapatra at a presser held on Ghasipura police station premises Thursday. The ASP said the arrests were part of an ongoing crackdown on illegal drug trade in the region. Several areas including Salapada Hatapadia, Salabani Square and other hotspots had drawn police scrutiny after repeated complaints of narcotics peddling. Acting on the directives of SP Nitin Kusalkar Dagdu, a team of the special squad conducted simultaneous raids Tuesday night in Ghasipura, Anandapur, Ramachandrapur and Nandipada police limits. All 21 accused were produced in court Thursday. A case (297/2025) has been registered at Ghasipura police station, Anandapur SDPO Prashant Kumar Behera said. The press briefing was also attended by Sadar SDPO Sudarshan Gangoi and Ghasipura IIC Manas Ranjan Barik.

Doctors brave floodwaters to rescue pregnant woman

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rajnagar, July 31: Amid a second wave of flooding in the Brahmani River, two doctors played the role of Good Samaritan to rescue a pregnant woman in labour and waded through waist-deep floodwaters to bring her to safety. The doctors are being hailed by the local residents for their bravery and selfless act.

Three panchayats in Kendrapara district's Rajnagar block remain inundated in the aftermath of the flood, which affected nearly 20,000 residents.

With no boat service arranged by the administration, Dr Rashmi Ranjan Mohanty, chief medical officer of Rajnagar Community Health Centre (CHC) and his colleague Dr Manoranjan Nath reached Chakibanka village in Bandhapada panchayat on foot.

Clad in traditional napkins (gamuchhas) and armed with umbrellas and sticks, they walked about a kilometre through waist-deep floodwater to reach the residence of Sang-



hamitra Rout, wife of Prasanna Kumar Rout.

Assessing her condition, the doctors arranged a trolley rickshaw to carry her from Chakibanka village to Adhajodi, around 1 km in distance, with the help of villagers. Once brought to Adhajodi, an ambulance took her to Rajnagar CHC for delivery and urgent care.

The doctor duo's act of courage has drawn widespread praise from locals. In a similar case, another pregnant woman, Ritanjali Rout, wife of Prabhat Rout of Tangantela village, was also rescued and admitted to the CHC from a flood-affected area.

Bizarre: 2 tribal youths witness crows mating, declared 'dead' by community



The matter came to light after a video of the incident went viral on social media platforms

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jeypore, July 31: In a shocking display of superstition prevailing even in the age of science, two young men from a tribal community in Koraput district were declared dead by villagers after they witnessed two

crows mating — a sight considered inauspicious by local tradition.

The incident took place at Patraguda village under Randapali panchayat, about 10km from Jeypore town. According to sources, the duo was pronounced 'dead' by the villagers based on the age-old tribal belief that witnessing the union of two crows brings misfortune and leads to death.

The matter came to light after a video of the incident went viral on social media platforms Thursday.

Following the declaration, vil-

lagers pronounced the two youths dead and conducted symbolic last rites using effigies in place of actual bodies. A video of the mock funeral has gone viral, revealing how such superstitions are still deeply rooted among certain tribal communities. Villagers returned from the cremation ground and mourning as well as post-death rituals were observed along with a feast as per local traditions.

It was only after completion of all the rituals that the two "dead" youths were finally brought back home from their hideout, indicating the bizarre extent of superstitious practices that override rationality.

Villagers explained that a purification ceremony was also held to nullify the perceived inauspicious effect of the incident. The villagers believe that anyone who witnesses the crows mating will eventually die.



भारतीय खेल प्रधिकरण

SPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

खेल विभाग / DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS

(An Autonomous Body under Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports)

(युवा कार्यक्रम और खेल मंत्रालय के तहत एक स्वायत्त निकाय)

Room No. 210, SAI-Head Office Building, SAI-Headquarter, Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium Complex (East Gate - No. 10), Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110003

File No. : 01-04001(02)/12/2024-HO-Personnel Division Date : 23.07.2025



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File No. : 01-04001(02)/12/2024-HO-Personnel Division Date : 23.07.2025

SPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR ENGAGEMENT OF SENIOR LEAD (SPORTS SCIENCE) ON CONTRACT BASIS

Sports Authority of India (SAI), an autonomous organization under Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, invites applications from the eligible, qualified and motivated Indian Citizens for engagement to the 01 post of SENIOR LEAD (SPORTS SCIENCE) on contract basis for maximum period of 4 years. The details of the post and other details is available on SAI website i.e. <http://sportsauthorityofindia.nic.in>. The schedule for applying application is given below :-

i. Date of Submission of application form : 24.07.2025

ii. Last date of submission of application form : 07.08.2025 (05:00 P.M.)

उपनिदेशक (DEPUTY DIRECTOR)

भर्ती सेल (RECRUITMENT CELL)

cbc 47103/12/0003/2526

भाषेय मुख् कार्यलय (SAI HEAD OFFICE)



EAST COAST RAILWAY

NOTIFICATION FOR APPOINTMENT OF STATION TICKET BOOKING AGENT (STBA)

No. SD/CM/KUR/STBA/Notification/NSG-5/2025-1 Dt.: 22.07.2025

Applications are invited for selection and appointment of Station Ticket Booking Agent (STBA) for 03 (Three) years on commission basis at 02 (TWO) "NSG-5" category stations over Khurda Road Division of East Coast Railway for issuing Unreserved Tickets through computerized Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS). Interested persons fulfilling the stipulated conditions may apply in the prescribed format to Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, East Coast Railway, Khurda Road Division.

NAME OF THE STATIONS: (1) KENDUJHARGARH, (2) NIRAKARPUR.

No. of STBAs required: Only one (01) STBA at each station to work Round the Clock.

Applications for the above stations duly filled should reach the office of Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, East Coast Railway, Khurda Road by 1100 Hrs. on or before 21.08.2025. If the last day i.e. 21.08.2025 happens to be or is declared to be holiday, applications will be received by the same time on the next working day.

Closing Date of Submission of Applications: 1100 Hrs. of 21.08.2025

Opening Date & Time of Application Box : 1130 Hrs. of 21.08.2025

NB: All the enclosed documents with the application form must be self-attested without which the application will be summarily rejected.

For detailed terms and conditions and application format please visit our website www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in or <http://tenders.gov.in> or contact Office of the Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, East Coast Railway, Khurda Road, PO - Jatni, Dist - Khurda, Pin-752050.

PR-416/Q/25-26 Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Khurda Road

EAST COAST RAILWAY

ENGAGEMENT AS COMMISSION AGENT AT BRAHMANI PASSENGER HALT

No.: G.51/P.H/BRMI/2885 Date : 21.07.2025

APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FROM INTERESTED CANDIDATES FOR ENGAGEMENT AS COMMISSION AGENT TO SELL TICKETS AT BRAHMANI (BRMI) PASSENGER HALT IN BETWEEN JENAPUR (JEN) AND JAKHPURA (JKPR) STATIONS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.

COMMISSION PAYABLE TO THE HALT AGENT WILL BEAS UNDER:

Amount of Sale of tickets per month & Commission payable : • ₹ 1 to 15,000/- : 15%, • ₹ 15,001 to 50,000/- : 12%, • ₹ 50,001 to 1,00,000/- : 9%, • ₹ 1,00,001 to 2,00,000/- : 6%, • ₹ 2,00,001 and above : 3%.

Security deposit for above halt is ₹ 2,000/- (Rupees Two Thousand only) which is to be deposited after selection.

Terms & Conditions: Candidate found suitable for appointment as Halt Agent will have to sell tickets on commission basis as per the rate of commission quoted above. The selected Agent is to execute an agreement with the Railway Administration.

N.B : All Photostat copies enclosed with the application must be self-attested without which the application will be summarily rejected.

How to Apply: Candidates may apply in prescribed format for the above Passenger Halt to which they are eligible from place of residence point of view with the required documents to the Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, East Coast Railway, Khurda Road, P.O. Jatni, Dist. Khurda, Pin-752050 and applications should be dropped in the Box kept for this purpose in the office of the Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, East Coast Railway, Khurda Road, on any working day. Application sent through postal service or by any other means shall not be entertained.

Application duly filled should reach this office by 1500 hrs. on or before 20.08.2025 (Wednesday). If the last day i.e., 20.08.2025 happens to be or is declared to be a holiday, applications will be received by the same time on the next working day. All the received applications will be opened at 1530 hrs. on 20.08.2025.

Applications received after due date & time shall not be entertained under any circumstances. After scrutiny of applications, the candidates will be informed regarding the date of selection for appearing before the Selection Committee, if so required.

The Railway Administration reserves the right to accept or reject any application without assigning any reason whatsoever.

For Application format & other terms and conditions, please visit website www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in

PR-415/Q/25-26 Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/ Khurda Road



AI Isn’t Your Friend

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg and OpenAI’s Sam Altman have been aggressively promoting the idea that everyone – children included – should form relationships with AI “friends” or “companions.” Meanwhile, multinational tech companies are pushing the concept of “AI agents” designed to assist us in our personal and professional lives, handle routine tasks, and guide decision-making. But the reality is that AI systems are not, and never will be, friends, companions, or agents. They are, and will always remain, machines. We should be honest about that and push back against misleading marketing that suggests otherwise. The most deceptive term of all is “artificial intelligence.” These systems are not truly intelligent, and what we call “AI” today is simply a set of technical tools designed to mimic certain cognitive functions. They are not capable of true comprehension and are neither objective, fair, nor neutral.

Nor are they becoming any smarter. AI systems rely on data to function, and increasingly, that includes data generated by tools like ChatGPT. The result is a feedback loop that recycles output without producing deeper understanding.

More fundamentally, intelligence is not just about solving tasks; it’s also about how those tasks are approached and performed. Despite their technical capabilities, AI models remain limited to specific domains, such as processing large datasets, performing logical deductions, and making calculations.

When it comes to social intelligence, however, machines can only simulate emotions, interactions, and relationships. A medical robot, for example, could be programmed to cry when a patient cries, yet no one would argue that it feels genuine sadness. The same robot could just as easily be programmed to slap the patient, and it would carry out that command with equal precision – and with the same lack of authenticity and self-awareness. The machine doesn’t “care”; it simply follows instructions. And no matter how advanced such systems become, that is not going to change.

Simply put, machines lack moral agency. Their behaviour is governed by patterns and rules created by people, whereas human morality is rooted in autonomy – the capacity to recognise ethical norms and behave accordingly. By contrast, AI systems are designed for functionality and optimisation. They may adapt through self-learning, but the rules they generate have no inherent ethical meaning.

Consider self-driving cars. To get from point A to point B as quickly as possible, a self-driving vehicle might develop rules to optimise travel time. If running over pedestrians would help achieve that goal, the car might do so, unless instructed not to, because it cannot understand the moral implications of harming people.

This is partly because machines are incapable of grasping the principle of generalizability – the idea that an action is ethical only if it can be justified as a universal rule. Moral judgment depends on the ability to provide a plausible rationale that others can reasonably accept. These are what we often refer to as “good reasons.” Unlike machines, humans are able to engage in generalizable moral reasoning and can therefore judge whether their actions are right or wrong.

The term “data-based systems” (DS) is thus more appropriate than “artificial intelligence,” as it reflects what AI can actually do: generate, collect, process, and evaluate data to make observations and predictions. It also clarifies the strengths and limitations of today’s emerging technologies.

At their core, these are systems that use highly sophisticated mathematical processes to analyse vast amounts of data – nothing more. Humans may interact with them, but communication is entirely one-way. DS have no awareness of what they are “doing” or of anything happening around them.

This is not to suggest that DS cannot benefit humanity or the planet. On the contrary, we can and should rely on them in domains where their capabilities exceed our own. But we must also actively manage and mitigate the ethical risks they present. Developing human-rights-based DS and establishing an International Data-Based Systems Agency at the United Nations would be important first steps in that direction. Over the past two decades, Big Tech firms have isolated us and fractured our societies through social media – more accurately described as “anti-social media,” given its addictive and corrosive nature. Now, those same companies are promoting a radical new vision: replacing human connection with AI “friends” and “companions.”

At the same time, these companies continue to ignore the so-called “black box problem”: the untraceability, unpredictability, and lack of transparency in the algorithmic processes behind automated evaluations, predictions, and decisions. This opacity, combined with the high likelihood of biased and discriminatory algorithms, inevitably results in biased and discriminatory outcomes.

The risks posed by DS are not theoretical. These systems already shape our private and professional lives in increasingly harmful ways, manipulating us economically and politically, yet tech CEOs urge us to let DS tools guide our decisions. To protect our freedom and dignity, as well as the freedom and dignity of future generations, we must not allow machines to masquerade as what they are not: us.

The writer, Professor of Ethics and Director of the Institute of Social Ethics ISE at the University of Lucerne, is a visiting professor at ETH Zurich.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

No work or love will flourish out of guilt, fear, or hollowness of heart, just as no valid plans for the future can be made by those who have no capacity for living now.

ALAN WATTS

Since boredom advances and boredom is the root of all evil, no wonder, then, that the world goes backwards, that evil spreads. This can be traced back to the very beginning of the world. The gods were bored; therefore they created human beings.

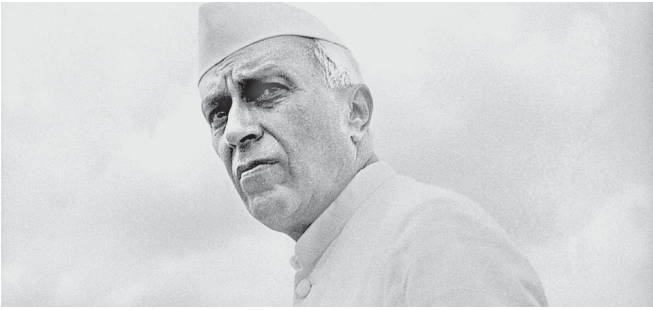
SOREN KIERKEGAARD

People have a hard time letting go of their suffering. Out of a fear of the unknown, they prefer suffering that is familiar.


THICH NHAT HANH

FOCUS POLITICS


THE NEHRU FIXATION



Be it dismantling the Planning Commission or now suspending the Indus Water Treaty, the larger aim is clear: downsize Nehru by highlighting his flaws and negating his many achievements



WHERE THE RSS LOOKS TO GLORIFY A CIVILISATIONAL PAST AND ANCIENT HINDU SCRIPTURES, NEHRU WAS SEEKING TO BUILD A MODERN SOCIETY BASED ON REASON AND SCIENCE



Peter G. Kirchschlger

THE REALITY IS THAT AI SYSTEMS ARE NOT, AND NEVER WILL BE, FRIENDS, COMPANIONS, OR AGENTS. THEY ARE, AND WILL ALWAYS REMAIN, MACHINES. WE SHOULD BE HONEST ABOUT THAT AND PUSH BACK AGAINST MISLEADING MARKETING THAT SUGGESTS OTHERWISE

SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

Unplanned urbanisation, unliveable cities

A recent report ‘Towards Resilient & Prosperous Cities’, prepared jointly by the World Bank with the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), covering 24 cities, has estimated that by 2050, India’s urban population would nearly double and reach 951 million and 70% of all employment would be generated in metros. While extreme heat has been projected in 25 large cities, the heat-treated fatalities are expected to double.

In addition, surface floods are expected to rise between 75 and 100% in the above period. Without intervention, annual losses from stormwater or pluvial flooding are projected to rise from the current \$4 billion to \$5 billion by 2030 and could reach \$14-30 billion by 2070 due to ongoing urbanisation and climate impacts. Not just this report, but Indian cities have been in the news for various reasons as high population density over the past few decades has posed an array

of critical challenges. But India is not alone as most countries have been witnessing this dilemma. The growth of cities in India has been largely unplanned, leading to a myriad of problems and an urban mess that demands immediate attention.

The lack of rural development has led to influx of people from villages and semi-urban areas over decades in search of employment but most, if not all cities, do not have the infrastructure to cope with the increasing population growth. One of the most glaring consequences of unplanned urban growth is the strain it places on existing infrastructure. The result is an overburdened infrastructure that fails to meet the needs of its residents, leading to increased congestion, inadequate services, and a diminished quality of life.

Unplanned urban growth has given rise to a significant increase in traffic congestion. With limited road networks and an unchecked surge in the number of vehicles, commuting has become a daily struggle in ma-

ny cities. It’s worth noting that among metros, Kolkata has the highest vehicular density with over 2,446 vehicles per kilometre of road. The city has around 46 lakh vehicles plying on 1850 km of road space while Delhi has substantially more vehicles (1.52 crore) and has around 34,000 km of roads, giving it a vehicular density of less than 400 per kilometre. Thus, air pollution in all the metros and big cities has emerged as a severe problem in recent years, primarily due to a large number of vehicles.

The other aspect of city life, at least in India, is frequent flooding, which even the World Bank report has pointed out. According to environmentalists, governments must conserve water bodies that are buffer zones. The loss of hundreds of lakes and ponds has contributed to the increase in urban flooding. Whether it is Delhi, Kolkata or Mumbai, quantum jump in residential cover, eating up farmland or vacant areas has hampered percolation of flood water. Down

south Chennai is focusing on desilting and cleaning water bodies, stormwater drains and catch pits, while Delhi will soon have a drainage master plan, as per municipal officials. Urban flooding is a serious threat to public health in India. Large cities often experience spikes in dengue, typhoid, chikungunya, and leptospirosis, whenever water collects or is contaminated.

But thinking about the future and the huge population that would invade cities, urban survival is imperative and this would depend on a massive infrastructural overhaul. Huge investments are obviously called for but small steps like solar rooftop, systematic waste collection and management and low-carbon services are the need of the hour to make cities liveable.

The report warns: Indian cities will be unable to reach their full potential if they stayed on their current development trajectory. The government must heed and read the writing on the wall.

INFA

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
B-15, Rasulgargh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Triumph for forces

Sir, The successful culmination of Operation Mahadev marks a significant triumph for Indian security forces, as the Pahalgam attackers—who eluded capture for over three months—have finally been neutralised. This joint operation by the Indian Army, CRPF, and J&K Police has provided a morale boost to the Modi government, especially as debates continue in Parliament over the 22 April massacre and the broader context of Operation Sindoor. Among the three slain terrorists, two were identified as members of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba, including a dreaded “A-category commander.” Their affiliations debunk theories floated by critics suggesting the attackers were home-grown radicals. This outcome not only affirms the professionalism and coordination of India’s counter-terrorism apparatus but also exposes Pakistan’s continued role as a hub for terrorism. Despite Islamabad’s habitual denials, India now possesses hard proof to mount international pressure and highlight Pakistan’s duplicity. The elimination of the terrorists serves as both justice for the 26 victims of the Pahalgam attack and a stern warning to forces that threaten India’s sovereignty. The operation underlines that accountability will be enforced—no matter how long it takes.. *N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE*

Disturbing sight

Sir, Nearly 45 children die due to road accidents everyday in India. The crying need of the hour is protective gears for children, especially for those boys and girls commuting with their parents on scooters and motorcycles. In 2022, by amending Rule 138 of the Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989, the Road Transport and Highway Ministry had made it mandatory for all children between nine months and four years of age to sport helmets and safety harness on two wheelers. The safety harness was expected to attach the child to the rider of the two-wheeler through a strap. It was said that violation of the rule would attract punitive action and cancellation of vehicle licence for three months. Despite the amendment, nothing seems to have happened on the ground. The sight of children riding pillion with their parents, sandwiched or standing in front of either parent at wheels, is disturbing. *Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA*

IIT Kharagpur mulls smaller ceiling fans in hostels to prevent suicides

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, July 31: In a move aimed at supporting students facing emotional distress and preventing campus tragedies, IIT Kharagpur is considering installing smaller ceiling fans in hostel rooms to make them unusable for self-harm, a senior institute official said Thursday.

The move comes in the wake of multiple student deaths by suicide on the campus this year, sparking concern over emotional well-being among hostel residents. "Apart from taking steps like reaching out to students on campus 24x7, interaction with parents of boarders every alternate month and 'campus mothers' programme (where women faculty and staff members serve as emotional mentors for students), and having permanent psychi-



atrists, we are also exploring steps like scaling down size of ceiling fans so that it cannot be used for any other purpose," institute director Suman Chakraborty told PTI.

Chakraborty said, "This is not an alternative to addressing mental health issues. But to avoid certain situations triggered by sudden impulses to self-destruct oneself, when none may be around, during certain moment."

He added that the presence or absence of tools to cause self-harm can make a crucial difference in critical moments, especially when backed by counselling and emotional support.

The institute also installed bar codes on the gates of every hostel room where the helpline number of counselling services can be scanned by a student in emotional stress at any hour.

WB drafts rules on women's safety at workplaces

The rules were introduced ahead of the completion of one year of the rape and murder of an on-duty doctor at the state-run RG Kar hospital

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, July 31: In a bid to enhance the security of working women, especially those on night shifts, the West Bengal government has drafted a set of new rules, including the setting up of a mandatory complaint committee in an organisation and installation of CCTV cameras at workplaces, an official said Thursday.

According to the proposed rules, night shifts would not be mandatory for female employees of an entity, and an organisation has to ensure the safety of women even during their travel to and from its offices at night.

The draft rules were introduced ahead of the completion of one year of the rape and murder of an on-duty doctor at the state-run RG Kar hospital. "Altogether 22 issues have

been identified in the draft rules. It has been stated that the night shift will be from 8 pm to 6 am, and at least 10 women, or one-third of the total shift workforce, whichever is higher, must be present together," the official told PTI.

It also proposed to make provisions for resting areas and canteens for female employees so that they don't need to leave the office premises, he said.

"CCTV cameras are to be installed at the entry and exit points of the office as well as in the corridors," he added.

The proposed rules also mandated the formation of an internal complaints committee at the workplace, which will enforce a "zero-tolerance policy in cases of sexual harassment", the official said.

The committee members will have to meet every three months to address such com-



plaints.

"As per the draft, if they fail to do so, the company will be fined under labour laws, and in certain cases, their operational clearances may be revoked," he said.

The draft rules also stated that an organisation should ensure the "safety of women even during their commute to

and from the office at night", he said.

"In this regard, the vehicles used by female employees for commuting must be brought under GPS tracking, and the presence of a trained female security personnel in those vehicles is mandated," the official said.

All those vehicles must be

equipped with emergency alert systems, he said, adding that an ambulance should also be made available.

For workplace safety, emergency contact numbers must be prominently displayed in visible areas in offices.

"The authorities should also communicate their safety policy in the local language, he said.

The state has also sought suggestions from various sectors, such as information technology, health, transport, and also from the police for the safety of women working on night shifts, he said.

Since the rape and murder of a woman doctor at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in August last year, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has been emphasising ensuring the safety and security of women at workplaces.

Deportations leave migrants in lurch



Families of Bengali migrants deported to Bangladesh stare at endless uncertainty

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Murari, July 31: Sixty-something Bhodu Sheikh sat on the porch of his ramshackle hut in Dorjee Para, a settlement tucked away in one corner of Paikar village in the Muslim-majority Murari assembly constituency of West Bengal's Birbhum district, with a blank look in his eyes.

More than the rickety body that shrank further during the cough bouts from his debilitating asthma, Bhodu's overt signs of resignation to fate seemed expedited by his total ignorance of the current whereabouts of his daughter, Sonali, and five-year-old grandson Sabir, who along with his son-in-law, Danesh, were picked up by Delhi Police from the Bengali Basti in Sector 26, Rohini, last month and pushed to Bangladesh.

They were deported following orders from the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO), Delhi police had said. The family, Bhodu said, lived in Delhi for nearly 25 years, where Danesh worked as a ragpicker and waste collector. They were targeted, among hundreds of other basti dwellers, because they spoke Bangla and were most vulnerable to being branded as 'Bangladeshi', he alleged.

"I was born in this village,"

Bhodu claimed, "and so was my daughter. My grandson was born in Delhi".

Sonali's brother, Suraj Sheikh, alleged that they paid a lawyer ₹30,000 after he promised to get his sister and her family released, only to learn later that they had been sent to Bangladesh.

"We came home for the Qurbani Eid festival, but now we are too frightened to go back," Suraj's wife, Seema, chipped in. To support his claim that his sister is now in some unknown location in Bangladesh, Suraj played a Facebook video, the authenticity of which PTI could not independently verify, where Sonali and her family, along with three others, and plead with folded hands for help.

About a kilometre away in Fakirpara in Paikar, a fledgling rural hamlet that comes alive every Tuesday account of a cattle trading market that sits there, 30-year-old Amir Khan had a similar story to share.

Amir alleged that his sister, Sweetie Bibi and her two sons, Qurban Sheikh (16) and Imam Dewan (6), were detained by Delhi Police from the same neighbourhood as Sonali and then deported to Bangladesh June 27.

"My sister worked as a domestic help in that area. She was living in Delhi since she was 12 and wasn't at home when police raided, so they took her elder son instead. When she reached the police station looking for Qurban, they arrested her as well. She furnished Aadhaar cards as

proof of their permanent address in Birbhum, which the police dismissed," Amir said. "She had Qurban's birth certificate at home but she couldn't produce it since a devastating fire at the shanty barely days before the raids began had destroyed documents. We, however, have Imam's document here," Amir said, holding up the state health department certificate, which states that Imam was born at the Murari rural hospital on January 1, 2020.

In the purported Facebook video, Sweetie alleged that the police beat them up and coerced them into medical examinations and biometric tests before transporting them to Bangladesh.

"We haven't heard from them for nearly a month now. We have no idea where they are and how they are living through this in an unknown land," said Mahida Bibi, Sweetie's mother, her voice trembling.

She claimed Sweetie was born at the very house where she stood that once belonged to her grandmother.

"We will fight against this till the very end, both politically and legally," said Samirul Islam, TMC Rajya Sabha MP and a local from Murari, while marching with his party supremo Mamata Banerjee in her 'Bhasha Andolan' protest rally in Bolpur against alleged 'linguistic terror' unleashed on migrant Bengalis by the saffron camp.

In a post on X, Islam published photographs of what he claimed were land documents of Sweetie's maternal and paternal grandfathers and Sonali's paternal great grandfather – all dated between 1950s, to the 1970s.

"Anyone in the BJP who can actually read them will understand that these women are far more Indian than the loudmouth BJP touts slandering them," he wrote.

Islam maintained that not just Muslims, but migrant backward class Hindus, like the Namashudra Matuas and Rajbanshis, are also being subjected to similar harassments of detention and deportation.



A fisherman sets up fishing nets in the Yamuna River, in New Delhi, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

Delhi turns to mist spray to tackle dust



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 31: Connaught Place and Khan Market are among the several key locations in Delhi where the government will soon instal mist sprayers on electric poles as part of a phased project to tackle dust pollution.

Covering 24 roads and several high-footfall public areas, the initiative will cost over ₹19 crore and will be rolled out in three phases, aimed at mitigating the effects of dust pollution in the national capital, an official told PTI.

Under Phase-I of the project, the government's civic agency plans to instal misting systems along 10 prominent roads, including Barakhamba Road, Firozshah Road, Sikandra Road and Bhagwan Dass Road. Estimated to cost ₹7.97 crore, 511 poles with 15,330 nozzles will be deployed in this phase. Roads such as Mandir Marg, Tilak Marg and Subramanian Bharti Marg are among the

longest stretches in Phase-I.

Mandir Marg, which is 1,790 metres long, will have 114 poles and 3,420 nozzles. Tilak Marg, at 1,230 metres, will be equipped with 61 poles and 1,830 nozzles; while the 2,210-metre Subramanian Bharti Marg will have 67 poles and 2,010 nozzles.

"This expansion will be completed in the next three to four months, before the onset of winter," Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa told PTI.

"Following Supreme Court directions, the government is making every possible effort to reduce toxic air pollution in the capital for its residents. We have also directed that work be carried out in all identified hotspots," he added.

Misting systems are currently operational at three locations — Lodhi Road, Shanti Path and Africa Avenue. The work at Lodhi Road, which spans 550 metres and includes the installation of 15 poles, has already been completed.

Up, up and away: Hot air balloon rides to debut in Delhi

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 31: In a first, Delhi residents will soon get a chance to enjoy the city's natural beauty while riding a hot air balloon as the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has shortlisted an agency for this project to promote eco-tourism, an official said Thursday.

A concept visualised under the guidance and supervision of Lt Governor VK Saxena will promote recreational activities at Yamuna Sports Complex, Commonwealth Games Sports Complex and along

the Yamuna bank at Asita and Baansera.

An official statement said that the private agency will be provided 3,600 sqm (60X60 m) space at each site for operation of the hot air balloons and its operations would commence within two months.

The selected agency has been awarded the task for three years, extendable up to maximum period of nine years.

Each day, four hour of flying time will be allowed. However, the DDA may extend it as per requirements, said the statement.



The private firm would operate the balloon rides on a revenue sharing model and the pricing will be decided with approval of DDA.

"To ensure transparency and proper record keeping, all proceeds from ticketing will be credited to DDA's account," it said.

The DDA has extensively worked on the Rejuvenation of River Yamuna and many projects are being developed on its bank including Asita, which was once an encroached land and now converted into green beautiful landscape.

Under L-G Saxena's guidance, the DDA has developed Baansera Bamboo Park at Sarai Kale Khan, which was once a construction and demolition waste dumping site. It has now transformed into a bamboo-themed park with over 30,000 bamboos, three water bodies and a musical fountain.

Yamuna Sports Complex, located at Surajmal Vihar, is the biggest sports complex developed by the DDA and Commonwealth Games Sports Complex was developed in 2010 for the international sporting event.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, "e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
PURI (R&B) DIVISION, PURI
WORKS DEPARTMENT
SHORT TENDER CALL NOTICE

Bid Identification No. SE(R&B) Puri-19/2025-26 Email-eerburi@yahoo.co.in
No B-352: The Superintending Engineer, Puri (R&B) Division, Puri on behalf of Governor of Odisha inviting percentage rate bid in single cover/Double Cover system in ONLINE MODE from the eligible class of contractors registered with the State Government and contractors of equivalent Grade/Class registered with Central Government / Railways:

1. Nature of Work : Civil & Electrical Works.
2. No. of Work : 4 Nos.
3. Tender Cost : Rs. 10,000.00/ Rs.6000.00 (On-Line)
4. Class of Bidders: Specialized agency having MOU with Electrical contractor having valid license issued from ELBO(MV/HT)/B Class.
5. Available of Bid document in the Website: From 10.00 AM of Dt.01.08.2025 to 05.00 PM Dt.11.08.2025.
6. Last date of receipt of tender : Dt.11.08.2025 upto 05.00 PM.
7. Date of Opening of Bid : Dt.12.08.2025 at 11.00 AM
8. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website <https://tenderodisha.gov.in>. Any Addendum/Corrigendum/Cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.

Sd./ Superintending Engineer
Puri (R&B) Division, Puri

OIPR-34064/11/0030/2526

WATCO
OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER,
WATCO DIVISION-II, BHUBANESWAR
Near Rajiv Bhawan, Unit-V, Bhubaneswar-751001, Odisha, India
Telefax : +91-674-2390322, E-mail : gmdtwtwo@watco@gmail.com

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-PROCUREMENT

Invitation for Bids (IFB) Dtd.29.07.2025

- 1 Nos. of works : 02 (Two) Nos works
- 2 Estimate cost : Rs.40.25 Lakhs & 42.46 lakhs
- 3 Period of completion : 01 (One Month)
- 4 Class of contractor : B Class
- 5 Date & Time of availability of bid : From 11.00 A.M. of Dt. 04.08.25 to 5.00 P.M. of 18.08.2025
- 6 Last date / time of receipt of bids in the portal : 5.00 P.M. of 18.08.2025
- 7 Last date & time of seeking clarification : 5.00 P.M. of 08.08.2025
- 8 Date & time of opening of bids : At 12.30 P.M. of 19.08.2025
- 9 Name and address of the : General Manager, Officer Inviting Bid WATCO Division-II, BBSR

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal "<https://www.tendersorissa.gov.in>".

Sd./ GENERAL MANAGER
WATCO DIVISION-II, BHUBANESWAR

OIPR-13089/11/0026/2526

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
Office of the Addl. Chief Engineer,
Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar
Email Address: semechcircle104@gmail.com

No.A-448 **e-Procurement Notice**
Bid Identification No.ACEM/MDC-28/2025-26

1. Name of the Work : Mechanical Gate Works
2. No. of Works : 01 (One)
3. Category of executors : SSI Units registered under DIC/ NSIC/ MSME for Irrigation Shutters/ Hydro mechanical gates.

4. Bid Identification No. : ACEM/MDC-28/2025-26
5. Estimated Cost : Rs. 14,00,914/-
6. Period of Completion : 02 (Two) Calendar Months
7. Date & Time of availability of bid documents in the Portal : From Dt.01.08.2025 (10.00 AM) to dt.11.08.2025 (5.30 PM)
8. Last date/time for receipt of bid in the Portal : dt.11.08.2025 (upto 5.30 PM)

9. Date and Place of Opening of Bid : Dt.12.08.2025 (12.00 Noon onwards in the O/o the Undersigned)
10. Name of the Officer Inviting Bid : Addl. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. Any further issue of Addenda/Corrigenda/ Cancellation Notice shall be uploaded in the aforesaid website only.

Sd./ Addl. Chief Engineer
Mechanical Circle Bhubaneswar

OIPR-32405/11/0083/2526

"I dare you to stand by your own preachings, Mr Gandhi. And I hope you and your party doesn't use the honourable Speaker's position to make a mockery of the Indian Constitution, any further," he said.

PTI PHOTO

The BJP flayed Gandhi for “echoing” Trump’s “dead economy” jibe at India, calling

He also alleged that the BJP has destroyed the Indian

New Delhi: India will take all necessary steps to safeguard and promote national interest, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said Thursday, a day after US President Donald Trump announced 25 per cent tariffs plus a penalty on domestic exports to America from August 1. In a *suo motu* statement in both the houses of Parliament, he said, the government is examining the implications of these tariffs and is engaged with all stakeholders including exporters and industry for taking feedback of their assessment of the situation.

Referring to Modi's speech in Lok Sabha Tuesday, Gandhi said the prime minister neither took Trump's name nor that

“Trump has said 30 times that I got the ceasefire done (between India and Pakistan). Trump said five planes of India were downed, and he is now saying I will put a 25 per cent tariff (on India). Did you ask yourself why Modi is not able to answer, what is the reason? Who has the control,” he asked.

The court observed this while hearing a batch of pleas concerning Rohingyas in the country. "The first major issue is simple, are they refugees or illegal entrants," Justice Kant observed. The bench took note

It said the second issue is if the Rohingyas are not refugees and are illegal entrants, whether the action of the Centre and states in deporting them was justified. "Even if the Rohingyas have been held to be illegal entrants, can they be detained indefinitely or they are entitled to be released on bail, subject to such conditions as the court


In a separate statement, the government said the Express-

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet Thursday approved a ₹2,000 crore grant-in-aid to National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) for four years, a move that will help the organisation mobilise more funds for lending to cooperatives. The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the central sector scheme 'Grant in aid to NCDC' with an outlay of ₹2,000 crore for a period of four years from 2025-26 to 2028-29 (Rs 500 crore each year).

sion of Interests (EOIs) would be floated for inviting proposals from eligible entities across the country. The proposals received against the EOI would be approved after proper scrutiny as per the eligibility criteria under the extant scheme guidelines.

Rohingyas and one plea that it said pertains to a different matter altogether.

nts, asks top court



separately and it would fix

On May 16, the apex court had rapped some petitioners who had claimed that 43 Rohingya refugees,

of the day

quote

India under PM Modi's leadership acts firmly, protects national interests, and never bows to international pressure

PAWAN KALYAN | ANDHRA DY CM

Today, an education revolution is going on in Punjab. Good results (of government schools) are coming. The children of poor families are now joining IITs and they are becoming engineers, doctors and advocates. People of Punjab never expected such a government

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | AAP NATIONAL CONVENER

We were all one country at one time. I have not seen any reports that there was a great deal of oil to be found in what is today Pakistan

SHASHI THAROOR | CONGRESS MP

X

POST OF THE DAY

SIGNS OF A DEAD ECONOMY!
Bike Taxis
Betting Apps
High Inflation
High Unemployment

Stock Market Bubble
Low per capita income
Millions of E-rickshaws
Millions of delivery boys
Poor Consumer Demand
Decline in Manufacturing
Rising Fiscal Deficit & Debt
Collapse of Small Businesses

@mohitlaws

SHORT TAKES

Burnt bodies of 2 kids found inside house

Patna: The burnt bodies of two children have been recovered from a house in Patna's Janipur locality, a police officer said Thursday. The cause of the incident is not yet known. A case has been registered and an investigation is underway, Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO), Phulwarishariff, Deepak Kumar, told PTI. "We received information on Thursday morning that two children were lying dead inside their house in Janipur. The bed on which the bodies were found was also burnt. We have sent the bodies for post-mortem examination," he said.

Mamata hikes Durga Puja grant

Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee hiked the Durga Puja grant to ₹1.10 lakh for 40,000 committees, waived taxes, announced an 80 per cent electricity concession, drawing cheers from organisers and criticism from the opposition ahead of the 2026 assembly polls. Addressing a mega coordination meeting of Puja committees at the Netaji Indoor Stadium here, Banerjee said the enhanced financial assistance, up from ₹85,000 last year, was a recognition of Durga Puja's cultural significance and its status as a UNESCO-recognised intangible heritage.

British Sikh man stabbed to death

London: A 30-year-old British Sikh man has been stabbed to death in east London in an attack involving people known to each other, the UK police believe. Gurmuk Singh, known as Gary, died last week in Felbridge Road, Ilford in East London, and was formally named by Metropolitan Police Thursday. The force said its officers had arrested Amardeep Singh, 27, on suspicion of the murder that took place July 23.



Hearing about their educational journey - rising from extremely disadvantaged families that faced hardship - and their dedication to education moved my heart and brought tears to my eyes

M K STALIN | TN CM



Justice not done, will move higher courts

Some of the victim families will file an independent appeal against the judgement, said their lawyer Shahid Nadeem who also blamed the NIA for not pursuing perjury action against the witnesses who turned hostile during the trial

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Malegaon/Mumbai, July 31: The verdict of the trial court in the 2008 Malegaon blast was unacceptable and he will move even the Supreme Court to get justice if necessary, said the father of Farheen (10), the youngest victim of the tragedy, Thursday.

"The court's judgement is wrong. We will go to the Supreme Court to seek justice," said 67-year-old Liyaqat Shaikh, showing a photograph of his daughter as he spoke to the media in Malegaon town of north Maharashtra.

Some of the victim families will file an independent appeal against the judgement, said their lawyer Shahid Nadeem who also blamed the National Investigation Agency (NIA) for not pursuing perjury action against the witnesses who turned hostile during the trial.

The special NIA court in Mumbai Thursday acquitted all seven accused in the case including former BJP MP Pragma Singh Thakur and Lt Col Prasad Purohit.

Recalling the incident, Liyaquat Shaikh, who then worked as a driver, said Farheen had left house to buy 'vada-pav' (a snack) at Bhikku Chowk in Malegaon town on the evening of September 29, 2008.

MALEGAON BLAST CASE



Former BJP MP Pragma Thakur, who was an accused in the 2008 Malegaon blast case, on her way to a sessions court in Mumbai

PTI PHOTO

"I heard the sound of a blast. We lived near the blast site, in a tin-roof house. Splinters were found on the roof of our house afterwards. I went to look for my daughter but could not find her. It was dark outside. Somebody said there was a girl among the injured. My wife and I ran to the hospital, where we found her in a bad situation," he said.

Then Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) chief Hemant Karkare had arrested the accused per-

sons with enough evidence, he said. Six persons including Liyaqat Shaikh's daughter were killed and 101 injured in the blast.

Nisar Ahmed, whose son Sayyed Azhar was one of those who died, said they did not get justice and will approach higher courts. Victims of any blast, whichever religion they may belong to, should get justice, he said.

Usman Khan, whose nephew Irfan Khan (22) died in the blast,

Oppn demands challenge of ruling

New Delhi: The Opposition demands that the government challenge the special NIA court's verdict in a higher court. The BJP Thursday accused the Congress of coining the "Hindu terror" theory in its rule to stop the rise of the saffron party and to appease Muslim vote bank, on a day when all seven accused in the 2008 Malegaon blast case were acquitted. Welcoming the acquittal of all accused, including former BJP MP Pragma Thakur and Lt Col Prasad Purohit, in the case in which six people were killed, the ruling party also demanded that Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi apologise. BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad demanded that the discharged accused should be compensated and the prosecution should apologise for allegedly using torture and planting evidence to frame them. Action should be taken against the officials who allegedly tortured and framed them, Prasad said. Congress leader Digvijaya Singh, whom the BJP accused of being responsible for coining the term "saffron terror", said terrorism should not be associated with any religion and that no faith advocates violence.

said Irfan drove an auto rickshaw and had gone out to have tea at Bhikku Chowk when the blast ripped through the place.

"First we took him to a local hospital, from there we took him to Nashik," he said, adding the doctors at the Nashik hospital asked them to take him to Mumbai.

He was shifted to the govern-

ment-run J J Hospital in Mumbai but died after 10 hours of treatment, Khan said.

He was not happy with the verdict, he said.

"First some Muslims were arrested in the case, and they got a clean chit later. Now these people too were not convicted, so who was the culprit?" he asked. Advocate Shahid Nadeem, who represented some of the victims, said the acquittal highlighted "significant failures" on the part of the NIA.

"...there seems to be a lack of effective strategy. Witnesses turned hostile during the trial, yet the NIA did not pursue perjury charges against any of them, despite requests from the victims," he told PTI.

The victims continue to suffer from the trauma they experienced, he said, adding, "They are determined to seek justice and will pursue legal remedies by filing an independent appeal in the Bombay High Court after reviewing the judgment."

None of the witnesses from Malegaon town or those whose statements had been recorded by the previous probe agency -- Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) -- turned hostile, he claimed. Of the 323 prosecution witnesses, 37 did not back the prosecution's case during their testimony, and were declared 'hostile'.



A 'Common Crow' butterfly sits on a flower, in Kanpur

PTI PHOTO

SNIPPETS

Woman, daughter crack NEET together

Chennai: In a rare coincidence and sheer determination as well, a 49-year-old physiotherapist and her daughter from Tamil Nadu cleared the NEET together. While the woman has secured a seat in the government medical college close to her home district, the girl is awaiting her counselling session for admission. Amuthavalli Manivannan found the syllabus very tough and totally different from her school days. Nevertheless, inspired by her daughter's preparation for the national level screening test, she began her preparation. "My ambition was rekindled after I saw my daughter prepare for NEET. She was my greatest inspiration. I borrowed her books and prepared for the exam," a jubilant Amuthavalli said. M Samyuktha, a CBSE student, had attended a coaching class, and the books she used had also helped her mother.

IT Dept conducts survey in case against Jane Street

Mumbai: The Income Tax Department Thursday conducted a survey operation at the premises of some broking companies as part of an alleged tax evasion probe against Jane Street, the US-based proprietary trading firm accused of market manipulation, official sources said. Sources stated the department is undertaking a "verification" exercise in the backdrop of a recent Sebi action against Jane Street. They added that officials are looking at the account books and computer records of the US firm as part of the survey at the office premises. The BSE said it has sought clarification from Nuvama Wealth Management Ltd, stated to be Jane Street's domestic trading partner, concerning reports about actions taken by the tax department in this matter.

Above-normal rain likely in 2nd half of monsoon: IMD

Most parts of the country, except the Northeast and adjoining areas of eastern India, are expected to record normal rainfall in August, said IMD Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra during an online press conference

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 31: India is likely to receive above-normal rainfall during the second half of the monsoon season (August and September), the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Thursday.

Most parts of the country, except the Northeast and adjoining areas of eastern India, are expected to record normal rainfall in August, said IMD Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra during an online press conference.

Rainfall in September is likely to be above normal, he said. India received above-normal rainfall during the first half of the monsoon season (June and July), with some states, particularly Himachal Pradesh, experiencing flash floods.

"Overall, above-normal rainfall (106 percent of the Long Period Average of 422.8 mm) is most likely over the country during the second half of the southwest monsoon season," Mohapatra said.

"Geographically, normal to above-normal rainfall is most



likely across most regions, except for many parts of the northeast and adjoining eastern India, isolated regions of central India and southwestern areas of the peninsular region, where below-normal rainfall is expected."

Mohapatra said subdued rainfall is expected over the next two weeks; however, the

conditions do not meet the criteria for a "break monsoon phase", which refers to a temporary lull in rainfall during the monsoon when the trough shifts toward the foothills of the Himalayas.

The country received 474.3 mm of rainfall against a normal of 445.8 mm from June 1 to Ju-

ly 31, a surplus of six per cent. The country recorded 624 very heavy rainfall events and 76 extremely heavy rainfall events, the lowest figures in the last five years, the IMD chief said.

"In Northeast India, this is the fifth consecutive year of below-normal rainfall. Over the last 30 years, a declining trend in rainfall activity has been observed in the northeastern states," he added.

According to Mohapatra, good rainfall in July was due to favorable Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) conditions in the latter half of the month and the formation of six low-pressure systems spanning 28 days.

Of these, four systems intensified into depressions. Among them, three formed over land and moved from Gangetic West Bengal/Northern Bay of Bengal to Rajasthan, triggering frequent heavy to very heavy

ED conducts 1st-ever raids in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Port Blair/New Delhi, July 31: The Enforcement Directorate Thursday conducted its first-ever searches in Andaman and Nicobar Islands as part of a money laundering case probe linked to an alleged cooperative bank loan 'fraud' involving a former Congress MP from the Union Territory, official sources said.

Nine places in and around Port Blair and two in Kolkata were raided by the officials of the central probe agency under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the sources said. This is the first time that the central agency has undertaken searches under the anti-money laundering law in the Union Territory located in the Bay of Bengal, they said.

The case pertains to the Andaman Nicobar State Co-operative Bank (ANSCB) and its former vice chairman Kuldeep Rai Sharma. Sharma, a 57-year-old Congress leader, is a former MP of the UT (2019-24). He was arrested by the Andaman and Nicobar Police July 18 from a local hospital as part of this investigation. A court in Port Blair had sent him to three days police custody July 29. Seven others, including an MD and employee of the bank, have been arrested by the police in this case. The money laundering case stems from a May 15 FIR of the Crime and Economic Offences Wing of the local police.

Summoned TCS for consultation on layoffs: K'taka min

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, July 31: Karnataka Labour Minister Santosh Lad Thursday said that his department has asked Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) to explain the reason behind large-scale layoffs.

"Yesterday we got information that the TCS has laid off 12,000 employees. Our department has called TCS officials just to have consultation to know the reason," the minister told reporters here. He said Sunrise Industries have been exempted from labour laws but there are conditions attached. "We have kept the sunrise companies outside the ambit of labour laws and for the past five years we have been giving them exemption year after year but yet there are conditions attached," Lad said. A sunrise sector refers to a new or relatively new industry that is experiencing rapid growth and is expected to become a significant driver of the economy in the future.

"If they want to layoff somebody, they have to give us information. Accordingly, we are talking to them," he added. TCS had indicated that it is set to lay off about 2 per cent, or 12,261 employees, of its global workforce this year, with the majority of those impacted belonging to middle and senior grades.

rainfall and even extremely heavy rainfall on some days, the IMD said.

ENSO-neutral conditions are currently prevailing and are expected to continue until October. Post-monsoon, weak La Niña conditions may develop, the IMD said.

In May, the IMD forecasted that India would receive 106 percent of the long-period average rainfall of 87 cm during the June-September monsoon season. Rainfall ranging between 96 and 104 percent of this 50-year average is considered "normal".

The monsoon plays a critical role in India's agriculture sector, which supports the livelihood of around 42 percent of the population and contributes 18.2 percent to the national GDP. It is also crucial for replenishing reservoirs used for drinking water and power generation.

of the day

quote

It is the clear understanding of the European Union that the US will implement the agreed across the board tariff ceiling of 15 per cent

OLOF GILL | EUROPEAN COMMISSION SPOKESMAN

Parties are accelerating the consultations regarding the establishment of a comprehensive centre for dealing with security threats and challenges

GUO JIAKUN | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON, CHINA

If some words from the former president of Russia cause such a nervous reaction from the supposedly mighty president of the US, then Russia is doing everything right and will continue to proceed along its own path

DMITRY MEDVEDEV | FORMER PRESIDENT, RUSSIA

SHORT TAKES

Thailand, Cambodia plan border visits

Bangkok: Thailand and Cambodia separately planned border visits for foreign diplomats to observe damages from the nearly weeklong clash, as violence that continued after a ceasefire appears to have eased. The ceasefire reached in Malaysia was supposed to take effect at midnight Monday, but it was quickly tested as Thailand and Cambodia continued to accuse each other of violating the truce agreements. Thailand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Thursday it is organising a trip to the border for military attachés of foreign missions and the media Friday to show the impact of the clashes on the ground. Cambodia is also organising a border visit for foreign diplomats on the same day. It held a similar trip Wednesday attended by representatives from 13 countries, including the US and China.

Iranian prez to visit Pak to hold talks

Islamabad: Iranian President Massoud Pezeshkian will visit Pakistan Saturday to hold talks with the country's top leadership on enhancing bilateral ties as well as the recent Iran-Israel conflict, according to a media report. He will visit Pakistan for a two-day trip at the invitation of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, according to the Express Tribune newspaper. Pezeshkian is scheduled to meet the country's top civil and military leaders, including President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Sharif and Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir, the report said, quoting officials. He will land in Lahore from where he will travel to Islamabad for the meetings.

SL moves to strip ex-presidents' privileges

Colombo: The Sri Lankan government Thursday gazetted a new bill which seeks to withdraw all privileges accorded to former presidents and their widows since 1986. Once it is passed, it will force stopping granting of special benefits such as an official residence, monthly allowance, monthly secretarial allowance, official transport and other facilities. The current National People's Power (NPP) government of Anura Kumara Disسانayake in their election manifestos last year pledged to stop privileges to former presidents claiming it was a burden on the public. The country currently has five former living presidents plus a widow.

Wow! Canada has just announced that it is backing statehood for Palestine. That will make it very hard for us to make a Trade Deal with them. Oh' Canada!!!

DONALD TRUMP | PRESIDENT, US

SPAIN, PORTUGAL BATTLE WAVE OF WILDFIRES

Thousands of firefighters in Spain and Portugal Thursday battled an ongoing wave of wildfires, some of which have been burning for days as temperatures are expected to rise in the Iberian Peninsula. In central Spain, firefighters and a special military unit worked overnight to control blazes in the province of Avila



Myanmar ends state of emergency

Myanmar forms interim government before election but top general still in charge

REUTERS

Bangkok, July 31: Myanmar's military Thursday nominally transferred power to a civilian-led interim government ahead of a planned December election, with the junta chief remaining in charge of the war-torn country in his other role as acting president.

An announcement in state media said a decree that granted power to the military after its 2021 coup had been cancelled and a caretaker administration had been formed alongside a special commission to oversee the election.

The move signals no change to the status quo in Myanmar, with coup leader Min Aung Hlaing holding on to all major levers of power as acting president while retaining his position as chief of the armed forces. A state of emergency in place since the coup, which was due to expire Thursday after seven extensions, has now been lifted, said Zaw Min Tun, a government spokesperson.

"The interim president and commander in chief said this upcoming six months are the time to prepare and host the election," he told state media.



- Polls set for December, no date announced
- Junta 'rearranging the same pieces', analyst says
- Coup leader remains acting president, military chief
- Election expected to be dominated by proxies of military

Myanmar has been in chaos since the coup against Aung San Suu Kyi's elected civilian government plunged the Southeast Asian nation into civil war, with the military fighting to contain a rebellion and accused of widespread atrocities,

which it denies.

The election has been dismissed by Western governments as a sham to entrench the generals' power and is expected to be dominated by proxies of the military, with opposition groups either barred from running or refusing to take part.

WAR RAGING

The extent of the civil war's impact on the planned election remains unclear. In an effort to create voter rolls, the junta held a nationwide census last year but was only about to conduct it in 145 out of Myanmar's 330 townships - reflecting its lack

2023 RIOTS

Pak jails 166 members of Imran Khan's party

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lahore, July 31: A Pakistan court Thursday handed down 10-year jail term each to 166 members, including some lawmakers, of incarcerated former prime minister Imran Khan party in connection with the May 9, 2023 attack on ISI building and other military installations in Punjab province.

The sentencing of leaders of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) —including opposition leaders in the National Assembly and Senate and several other lawmakers -- has come just a week before the proposed launch of 'Free Imran Khan Movement' from August 5 across the country.

The PTI has strongly condemned the verdict by the Faisalabad Anti-terrorism Court (ATC) terming it a part of a plan to disqualify its lawmakers from the parliament and stopping the party from holding a peaceful protest.

Khan's party workers vandalised a dozen military installations May 9, 2023, including the Jinnah House (Lahore Corps Commander House), Mianwali Airbase and the ISI building in Faisalabad, some 130 kms from Lahore. The Army headquarters (GHQ) in



Mass sentencing is third against Khan's party this month

Khan says military is set on dismantling his party

Military denies any such plan

Rawalpindi was also attacked by the mob for the first time protesting Khan's arrest.

The ATC Faisalabad Thursday convicted 108 out of 185 accused and acquitted the remaining 77 individuals in the ISI building attack case in Faisalabad.

In the case related to an attack on a police station in Faisalabad, 58 accused have been handed down to 10 years in prison each.

The court handed down 10-year prison sentences each to Leader of the Opposition in

the National Assembly Omar Ayub, Leader of the Opposition in the Senate Shibli Faraz, and prominent PTI leaders Zartaj Gul and Sahibzada Hamid Raza.

The convicts include six members of the National Assembly, one from the Punjab Assembly, and one Senator. So far, 14 legislators from the PTI have been convicted and disqualified related to the May 9 incident trials.

PTI interim chairman Barister Gohar Ali said the PTI would challenge the verdict in the Lahore High Court.

"The PTI lawmakers are disqualified in the name of the May 9 incident, based on testimony from the police officers," he said and added that many PTI lawmakers' status in both National Assembly and Senate stands disqualified.

Lithuania's PM steps down

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vilnius, July 31: Lithuanian Prime Minister Gintautas Paluckas stepped down Thursday, following investigations into his business dealings that prompted protests calling for his resignation.

Paluckas, a newly established leader of the centre-left Social Democrats, ascended to the role late last year after a three-party coalition formed following a parliamentary election in October in Lithuania.

His entire Cabinet is also expected to resign, potentially leaving the Baltic country without an effective government weeks before Russia holds joint military exercises with neighbouring Belarus. "Seeing how the scandals are hindering the work of the government, I believe that I cannot allow our ruling coalition and the Cabinet to become hostages to these scandals," Paluckas wrote in a letter to Social Democratic party members. "Therefore, I have decided to take a quick and decisive decision. I never cling to any position in life — and so I am open to all scenarios and decisions."

President Gitanas Nausėda announced Paluckas' resignation to the media Thursday morning. Lithuanian foreign policy is unlikely to change as a result of the government shake-up. Nausėda, who was elected separately, is the country's face on the world stage and has been one of the most stalwart supporters of Ukraine's fight against invading Russian forces.

Ukraine restores independence of anti-graft bodies



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, July 31: Ukraine's Parliament Thursday overwhelmingly approved a bill presented by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy that restores the independence of two of the country's key anti-corruption watchdogs, reversing his contentious move last week that curbed their power and brought an outcry.

Last week's measure by Zelenskyy to place the watchdogs under the oversight of the prosecutor-general prompted rebukes from Ukrainians, the European Union and international rights groups. It raised fears that the government could meddle in investigations and potentially shield its supporters from scrutiny.

Fighting entrenched corruption is crucial for Ukraine's aspirations to join the EU and maintain access to billions of dollars of vital Western aid in the nearly 3½-year all-out war. It's also an effort that enjoys broad public support.

Zelenskyy said he signed the bill into law less than two hours after its approval — an unusually speedy procedure for legislation.

"It guarantees normal, independent work for anti-corruption bodies and all law enforcement agencies in our state," Zelenskyy said of the new law. "A truly productive day with real impact for the people."

EU Enlargement Commissioner Marta Kos, who called last week's legislative changes "a serious step back," welcomed approval of the bill, saying lawmakers had "corrected last week's damaging vote."

"Today's law restores key safeguards, but challenges remain," Kos, who monitors the record of countries that are candidates to join the bloc, wrote on X. "The EU supports (Ukrainian) citizens' demands for reform. Upholding fundamental values & fighting corruption must remain the priority."

Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said that Ukraine "is committed to reforms and the fight against corruption," and that Zelenskyy "demonstrated

Russian strikes pound Kyiv

Russia launched waves of missiles and drones on Kyiv before dawn Thursday, killing 12 people including a six-year-old boy, and wounding 135 others, officials in the Ukrainian capital said. Over 1,200 police and rescuers dealt with the consequences of the attack and the Interior Ministry said that searches for people buried under rubble continued past 4:30 pm. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Russia launched more than 300 drones and eight missiles. "Today the world has once again seen Russia's response to our desire for peace. Therefore, peace without strength is impossible," Zelenskyy said on the Telegram app. City authorities announced a day of mourning to be held on Friday for the victims. Russia's Defence Ministry said it targeted and hit Ukrainian military airfields and ammunition depots as well as businesses linked to what it called Kyiv's military-industrial complex. The Interior Ministry said 11 children were wounded, the largest number hurt in a single attack on the city since Russia started its full-scale invasion almost three and a half years ago.

a principled approach."

"We got it fixed," he wrote on X.

At the start of a livestream of the parliamentary session, which was the first to be broadcast in real time since the start of the war, two lawmakers could be seen exchanging punches.

Although the reason for the scuffle wasn't known, it occurred amid a tense atmosphere in the chamber where the speaker's podium is flanked by Ukrainian and EU flags.

The backlash against Zelenskyy's measures brought street protests across the country, the first major demonstrations since Russia's full-scale invasion began February 24, 2022. Though the protests didn't call for the president's removal, the controversy threatened to undermine public trust in their leaders at a critical time.

‘Chamber of horrors’ being exhumed at Ireland mass baby grave

A mass grave that could hold up to nearly 800 infants and young children — some of it in a defunct septic tank — is being excavated on the grounds of the former home run by the Bon Secours Sisters, an order of nuns

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tuam (Ireland), July 31: Only one stone wall remains of the old mother and baby home in this town, but it has cast a shadow over all of Ireland.

A mass grave that could hold up to nearly 800 infants and young children — some of it in a defunct septic tank — is being excavated on the grounds of the former home run by the Bon Secours Sisters, an order of nuns.

The burial site has forced Ireland and the Catholic Church — long central to its identity — to reckon with a legacy of having shunned unmarried mothers and separated them from their children, left

at the mercy of a cruel system.

The grave was accidentally discovered by two boys a half-century ago. But the true horror of the place was not known until a local historian began digging into the home's history. Catherine Corless revealed that the site was atop a septic tank and that 796 deceased infants were unaccounted for. Her findings caused a scandal when the international news media wrote about her work in 2014.

When test excavations later confirmed an untold number of tiny skeletons were in the sewage pit, then-Prime Minister Enda Kenny called it a "chamber of horrors."



Pope Francis later apologised for the church's "crimes" that included forced separations of unwed mothers and children. The nuns apologised for not living up to their Christianity.

A cold, cramped and deadly place

The homes were not unique to Ireland and followed a Victorian-era practice of institutionalising the poor, troubled

and neglected children, and unmarried mothers.

The Tuam home was cold, crowded and deadly. Mothers worked there for up to a year before being cast out — almost always without their children.

Corless' report led to a government investigation that found 9,000 children, or 15 per cent, died in mother and baby homes in the 20th century. The

Tuam home — open from 1925 to 1961 — had the highest death rate.

Corless said she was driven to expose the story, "the more I realised how those poor, unfortunate, vulnerable kids, through no fault of their own, had to go through this life."

Discovering deeply held secrets

Corless' work brought together survivors of the homes and children who discovered their own mothers had given birth to long-lost relatives who died there.

Annette McKay said there's still a level of denial about the abuse, rape and incest that led some women to the homes while fathers were not held accountable.

"They say things like the women were incarcerated and enslaved for being pregnant," McKay said. "Well, how did they get pregnant? Was it like

an immaculate conception?"

Her mother ended up in the home after being raped as a teenager by the caretaker of the industrial school where she had been sentenced for "delinquency" after her mother died and her father, a British soldier, abdicated responsibility.

Her mother, Margaret "Maggie" O'Connor, only revealed her secret when she was in her 70s, sobbing hysterically when the story finally came out. Six months after giving birth in Tuam in 1942, O'Connor was hanging laundry at another home where she had been transferred when a nun told her, "The child of your sin is dead."

She never spoke of it again.

Some 20 years later, a Sunday newspaper headline about a "shock discovery" in Tuam caught McKay's attention. Among the names was her long-lost sister, Mary Margaret O'Connor, who died in 1943.

of the day

quote

Indian telecom equipment exports to the US will remain competitive even after imposition of additional tariffs

JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA | UNION TELECOM MINISTER

Market participants will closely track the upcoming US macroeconomic data, including Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) index

KAYNAT CHAINWALA | AVP-COMMODITY RESEARCH, KOTAK SECURITIES

The weakest link in the current communications security chain lies in Over-The-Top (OTT) communication services, which provide voice and messaging capabilities similar to traditional telecom networks but largely escape regulatory oversight

SP KOCHHAR | DIRECTOR GENERAL, COAI

Q1 RESULTS

Coal India profit falls

New Delhi: Coal India Thursday posted an over 20 per cent fall in consolidated net profit to Rs 8,734.17 crore in the June quarter, mainly impacted by lower sales. The country's largest coal-producing company had recorded a net profit of Rs 10,943.55 crore in the April-June period of preceding 2024-25 financial year. Its sales fell to Rs 31,880.43 crore from Rs 33,170.13 crore in the April-June quarter of FY25.

Swiggy loss doubles

New Delhi: Swiggy Thursday reported widening of its losses on a consolidated basis to Rs 1,197 crore for the June quarter, dragged down by the Rs 896-crore loss from its quick commerce business Instamart. The company had reported a loss of Rs 611 crore in the year-ago period. However, its total income increased substantially to Rs 5,048 crore, from Rs 3,310 crore a year ago, the company said in a regulatory filing.

Vedanta PAT grows

New Delhi: Vedanta Ltd Thursday posted a 13 per cent rise in consolidated "adjusted profit after tax" to Rs 5,000 crore in June quarter, driven by higher revenues. The metals and mining company had recorded an adjusted PAT of Rs 4,433 crore in the April-June period of preceding 2024-25 financial year.

Maruti net rises

New Delhi: Maruti Suzuki India Thursday posted a marginal increase in consolidated net profit at Rs 3,792 crore for the first quarter ended June 30, 2025. The country's largest carmaker reported a net profit of Rs 3,760 crore in the April-June period of the previous fiscal year. Total income increased to Rs 40,493 crore for the June quarter as compared with Rs 36,840 crore



India has outpaced Japan in solar energy generation producing 1,08,494 GWh compared to Japan's 96,459 GWh and is now the world's third-largest solar power producer

PRALHAD JOSHI | UNION MINISTER

DPIIT, ROCHE PRODUCTS, HDFC CAPITAL ADVISORS INK PACT

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Thursday said it has inked pacts with Roche Products (India) and HDFC Capital Advisors to help startups. Roche Products will help startups working in critical therapeutic areas such as oncology, neurology, ophthalmology, haematology, and rare diseases



PhonePe launches 'offline partner program'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 31: PhonePe, Thursday, announced the launch of its 'offline partner program' -- a strategic initiative designed to strengthen India's merchant ecosystem through service providers. It offers customised referral commissions to merchants.

The program enables service providers, including those offering Point of Sale (POS) billing software, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software, Vending Machines, and Self-Serving Kiosks, to refer PhonePe's integrated solutions to their clients and earn customised commissions. Service providers (partners) joining the program can showcase a complete billing and integrated payments solutions offering to their merchants (clients), positioning themselves as growth partners who understand their operational needs.

This pairing will help their merchants simplify payment management, making store operations much smoother. It will also play a role in increasing the partner's credibility as a business ally. Merchants can go live with PhonePe's integrated solutions within hours, along with their billing software, ensuring they provide their customers with a smooth payment experience.

The suite includes Integrated POS devices, Dynamic QRs that generate unique codes per transaction, payment links for SMS-based collections, etc. These solutions help merchants ensure error-free and fraud-free transactions, smoother payment collection, validation, and reconciliation when integrated with billing software.

Bank credit growth to industry slows



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 31: The bank credit growth to industry slowed to 5.5 per cent in the fortnight ended June 26 compared to 7.7 per cent in the year-ago period, according to data released by the Reserve Bank Thursday.

On a year-on-year (y-o-y) basis, non-food bank credit grew by 10.2 per cent as of the fortnight ended June 27, 2025, against 13.8 per cent during the corresponding period of the previous year, it said.

The RBI has released the data on sectoral deployment of bank credit for June 2025 collected from 41 select scheduled commercial banks (SCBs), actuals counting for about 95 per cent of the total non-food credit by all banks.

"Credit to micro, small, and medium industries continued to grow steadily. Among major industries, outstanding credit

to 'all engineering', 'construction' and 'textiles' recorded an accelerated y-o-y growth," the RBI said.

Credit to agriculture and allied activities registered a y-o-y growth of 6.8 per cent from 17.4 per cent a year ago.

The central bank further said advances to the services sector moderated to 9.6 per cent y-o-y (15.1 per cent in the corresponding fortnight of the previous year), primarily due to decelerated growth in credit to NBFCs.

Credit growth to the 'computer software' and 'professional services' segment remained robust.

The central bank also said that credit to the personal loans segment registered a decelerated y-o-y growth of 14.7 per cent compared to 16.6 per cent a year ago, largely due to a moderation in growth of 'other personal loans', 'vehicle loans' and 'credit card outstanding'.

TRADE TROUBLE

US tariffs hit India growth



REUTERS

Mumbai, July 31: India's rupee plunged toward a record low and equity indexes declined Thursday after US President Donald Trump slapped steeper-than-expected tariffs on Indian goods, with analysts warning of sustained pressure on country's growth.

The 25 per cent tariffs announced could shave off the South Asian nation's growth in 2025-26 by up to 40 basis points, with the threat of additional penalties further clouding the outlook, economists said.

India's benchmark equity indices, the Nifty 50 and BSE Sensex, fell about 0.6 per cent each, while the rupee declined to an over five-month low of 87.74 before paring losses amid likely dollar-selling intervention by the central bank.

The rupee is within touching distance of the record low

of 87.95 it hit in February.

"88.00 looms as a big level on the charts and likely a focus for RBI as well," said Brad Bechtel, head of global FX at Jefferies.

Impact on growth and investment

Analysts warned that a dent to New Delhi's manufacturing ambitions could hamper growth in the world's fifth-largest economy.

"If these tariffs remain in place, they could undermine India's growing appeal to businesses seeking trade diversion in low-value-added manufacturing sectors," said Raphael Luescher, Co-Head of EM equities at Vontobel.

Goldman Sachs economist Santanu Sengupta estimated a 30-bps hit to growth once the tariffs are imposed, adding that "elevated policy uncertainty in US can cause Indian firms, particularly those exposed to US tariffs, to postpone investment

Sensex, Nifty decline over tariff imposition



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 31: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended lower Thursday after US President Donald Trump announced the imposition of a 25 per cent tariff on all goods coming from India starting August 1 and an unspecified penalty for buying Russian crude oil and military equipment.

Despite the weak start, the indices staged a sharp recovery, but selling pressure re-emerged towards the flag of the session. However, buying in some heavyweight stocks restricted the downward trend, traders said.

Halting its two-day rally, 30-share BSE index declined 296.28 points, or 0.36 per cent,

to settle at 81,185.58 after recovering some lost ground during the afternoon trade. During the morning session, the gauge tanked 786.71 points, or 0.96 per cent, to 80,695.15.

As many as 2,418 stocks declined, while 1,598 advanced and 137 remained unchanged on the BSE.

50-share NSE Nifty dropped 86.70 points or 0.35 per cent to 24,768.35. The penalty was announced as India has made large purchases of oil and military equipment from Russia. India is the first country to face a penalty for Russian imports.

From the Sensex firms, Tata Steel, Sun Pharma, Reliance Industries, Adani Ports, NTPC and Asian Paints were among the biggest laggards.

Fiscal deficit widens amid capital expenditure surge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 31: The Centre's fiscal deficit stood at 17.9 per cent of the full-year target at the end of June, according to data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) Thursday.

It was at 8.4 per cent of Budget Estimates (BE) of 2024-25 in the first three months of the previous financial year.

In absolute terms, the fiscal deficit, or gap between the government's expenditure and revenue, was Rs 2,80,732 crore in the April-June period of the 2025-26 fiscal year.

The Centre estimates the fiscal deficit during 2025-26 at 4.4 per cent of the GDP, or Rs 15.69 lakh crore.



The Government of India has received Rs 9.41 lakh crore (26.9 per cent of corresponding BE 2025-26 of the total receipts) up to June, 2025.

This includes Rs 5.4 lakh crore net tax revenue, Rs 3.73 lakh crore of non-tax revenue and Rs 28,018 crore of non-debt capital receipts.

CGA data showed Rs 3,26,941 crore has been transferred to

Fiscal deficit, or the shortfall between government spending and revenue, excluding borrowings, shows how much the government must borrow to meet its expenses. While moderate deficits can help sustain economic momentum, a sharp rise would raise concerns over inflationary pressures and rising public debt

state governments as devolution of share of taxes by the government, which is Rs 47,439 crore higher than the previous year.

Total expenditure incurred by the Centre was Rs 12.22 lakh crore, or 24.1 per cent of corresponding BE 2025-26.

Of the total expenditure, Rs 9.47 lakh crore was on revenue account and Rs 2.75 lakh crore on capital account.

Of the total revenue expenditure, Rs 3.86 lakh crore was on account of interest payments and Rs 83,554 crore was on account of major subsidies.

Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist of ICRA said tepid direct tax collections in June 2025 pulled down the performance of gross tax revenues in the month, although this was driven by an adverse base.

IMFA appoints BK Mishra as Non-Executive Chairman

Bhubaneswar: Indian Metals & Ferro Alloys Ltd (IMFA), the country's leading producer of ferro alloys has appointed BK Mishra as Non-Executive Chairman of the Company.

BK Mishra is a metallurgical engineer from NIT Rourkela with a PhD from the University of Utah, United States. He taught at IIT Kanpur and held other eminent positions in academia before being appointed as the founding Director of IIT Goa before joining the Board as an Independent Director in March 2024. He has received



several awards for his contributions to the field of metallurgy, material science, and industrial R&D including the prestigious IEEE IAS global lifetime achievement award.

Subhrakant Panda, Managing Director, said: "I warmly congratulate Dr BK Mishra

on behalf of the management. He has exceptional knowledge relating to the Company's core business, and I look forward to his guidance as we execute expansion plans to emerge as the clear leader in the sector."

Panda added: "I would also like to express gratitude to Mr NR Mohanty for his invaluable contribution over the years that have helped us navigate through business cycles and focus on creating value for stakeholders. On behalf of my colleagues, I wish him good health and a long life."

India's gold demand drops by 10% in Apr-Jun qtr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 31: India's gold demand fell by 10 per cent during the April-June quarter to 134.9 tonnes compared to 149.7 tonnes a year ago as record yellow metal prices impacted affordability, the World Gold Council (WGC) said Thursday.

In terms of value, gold demand witnessed a 30 per cent increase to Rs 1,21,800 crore during the second quarter of this calendar year, compared to Rs 93,850 crore in the same period of 2024, as prices breached the psychological Rs 1,00,000 per 10 grams mark for the first time, WGC said in its 'Gold Demand

Trends Q2 2025' report.

The surging gold prices impacted jewellery demand in the country, which declined by 17 per cent to 88.8 tonnes during the quarter under review as compared to 106.5 tonnes in the corresponding quarter in 2024.

However, the value of jewellery demand grew by 20 per cent to Rs 80,150 crore from Rs 66,810 crore recorded in the April-June quarter of 2024.

"As we reflect on the performance of India's gold market in Q2 2025, it is evident that we are witnessing a pivotal moment in consumer behaviour.

Despite a 10 per cent decline in physical gold demand volumes to 134.9 tonnes compared



to 149.7 tonnes last year, the value of this demand has surged by an impressive 30 per cent," Sachin Jain, WGC Regional CEO – India said.

This mirrors the rising price of gold, with the average quarterly global price per ounce reaching \$3,280.4 and the domestic price per 10 grams touching Rs 90,306.8, are clear indicators of gold's enduring appeal as a safe-haven asset, Jain said.

"With total gold demand from January to June at approximately 253 tonnes, we anticipate full-year demand to

range between 600 tonnes and 700 tonnes. If there is stability (price), which we think will be, then it should be on the upper end of the 700-tonne level. However, if the price continues to soar dramatically, which is a very bleak possibility, then the demand could be on the lower side of this projection," he added.

On the investment front, Jain said, "We are encouraged to see a 7 per cent increase in demand volumes, reaching 46.1 tonnes, and a remarkable 54 per cent growth in value to Rs 41,650 crores. Such figures underscore a deepening strategic commitment among consumers to gold as a long-term store of value."

On the supply side, gold imports into India have decreased significantly by 34 per cent to 102.5 tonnes, compared to 150 tonnes in the same period in 2024, he said.

Gold recycling remained resilient with a modest 1 per cent increase to 23.1 tonnes in the second quarter compared to 2 tonnes in the same period of 2024, according to the WGC data.

Going forward, he said, "Since we've not seen a significant increase in recycling, then I think the demand number and the import number could be very much in proportion. But we'll have to wait and watch."

Govt mandates domestic wind turbine parts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 31: The government has made the use of major wind turbine components from the Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (Wind) mandatory, an official statement said Thursday.

The Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) had earlier issued 'Procedure to apply for inclusion of a Wind Turbine Model in the Revised List of Models and Manufacturers of Wind Turbines (RLMM).

The RLMM was a mechanism to ensure the quality and reliability of wind turbines installed in the country, for protecting the consumer interests while ensuring larger energy security.

The ministry said RLMM has been renamed as Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (Wind) -- ALMM (Wind) -- through an amendment.

The amendment also includes mandatorily locating Wind Turbine R&D Centre, Data Centre and/or Servers within India to strengthen the cybersecurity ecosystem.

This amendment will not be applicable to the already bid wind projects and captive/open access/C&I (commercial and industrial)/third party sale projects to be commissioned within 18 months from the date of issuance of the amendment.

Karun leads India’s fight

India make 204 for 6 on rain-affected day one of the series deciding fifth Test against England

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, July 31: India were 204 for six at close of play on a rain-affected opening day of the fifth and final Test against England here Thursday.

Karun Nair and Washington Sundar were batting on 52 and 19 respectively as 64 overs were possible on the day due to several rain interruptions.

India added 119 runs in 35 overs in the extended final session for the loss of three wickets.

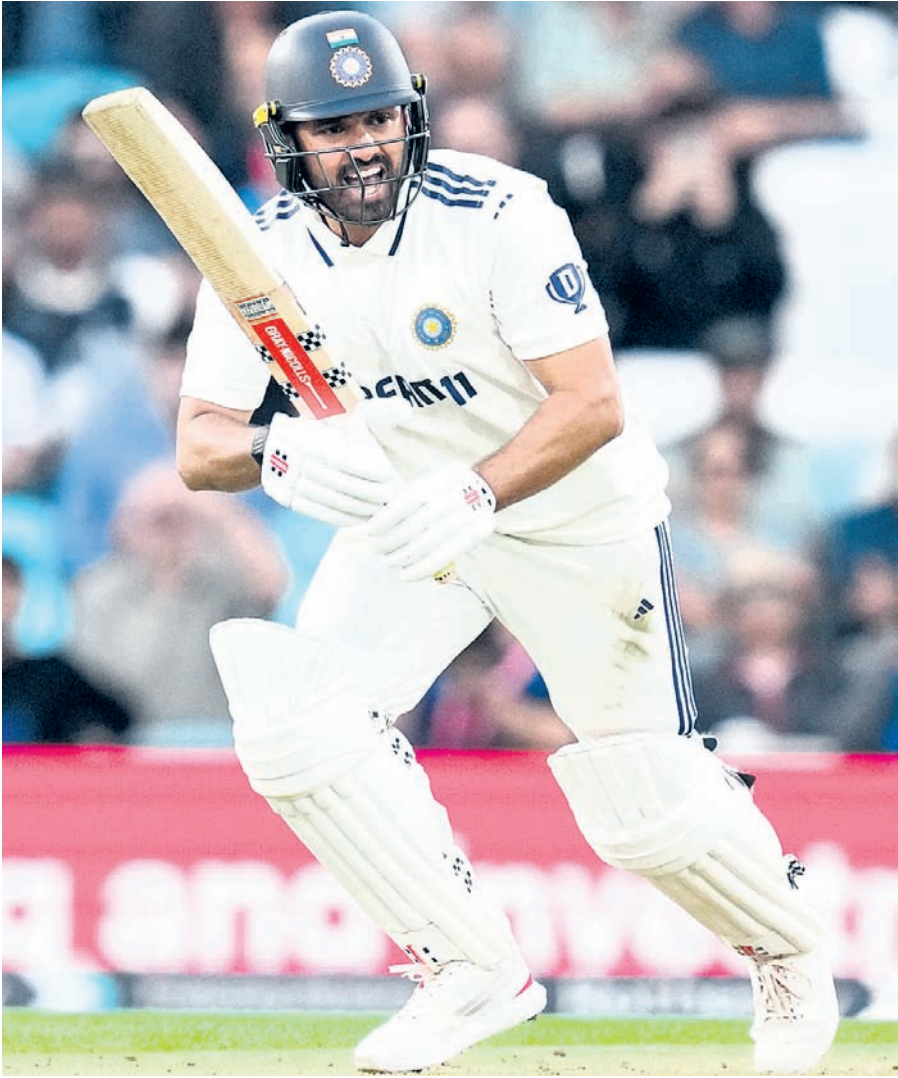
Earlier, only six overs could be bowled in the second session due to rain and wet outfield during which India lost captain Shubman Gill.

After rain forced an early lunch, India began the second session at 72 for two but Gill ran himself out on 21, after adding six runs to his individual total. Rain again interrupted the second session and tea was taken after that.

In the morning session, India lost their openers Yashasvi Jaiswal (2 off 9) and KL Rahul (14 off 40) on a green top but did well to reach lunch 72 for two.

On the greenest pitch of the series, the ball expectedly did seam around but it was not swinging profusely.

Playing his first game of the series, Atkinson struck in his second over by having Jaiswal trapped in front. The on-field umpire did not give it out but England reviewed successfully with the incoming ball going on to hit



the stumps.

The other pacers Josh Tongue and Jamie Overton struggled for control. Tongue conceded 12 runs in his opening over including 10 via two wides on either side of the stumps.

India reached 36 for one in the first hour of play.

Rahul, who has been India's most solid batter over the course of the series, was the second wicket to fall. The short ball from Chris Woakes did not do much but Rahul went for the cut

when it was too close to his body, eventually playing on to his stumps.

Number three Sai Sudharsan and Gill then batted till lunch, which was taken early due to a sudden downpour at The Oval, where the sun played hide and seek.

Sai collected two fours down the ground off Tongue and Woakes respectively.

India's leading run getter Gill punched Overton through the cover before using the short arm pull off the pacer for boundaries on

either side of the wicket.

India made four changes to their playing eleven, bringing in a fit-again Akash Deep, Prasidh Krishna, Karun Nair and Dhruv Jurel for Jasprit Bumrah, Anshul Kamboj, Shardul Thakur and the injured Rishabh Pant.

Brief Scores:

India 204 for 6 in 64 overs (Karun Nair 52 not out, Sai Sudharsan 38, Shubman Gill 21; Josh Tongue 2/47, Gus Atkinson 2/31).

HERE . NOW

OrissaPOST

MEETLE MEET 2025

QUIZ Extravaganza

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

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

ANSWER TO THURSDAY'S QUESTION

Udham Singh

Others who answered correctly are

Barun Kumar Behera, Chandrasekhara Patnaik, DebasishaTripathy, Kiran Pradhan, Suvendra Kumar Mahapatra, Pravat Nayak, Bishnu Bhoi, Sidhartha Kumar Das, Parsuram Swain, Madhumita Sarkar, Ayush Kumar Nayak, Debasish Sahoo, Sudhansu Behera, Swayam Dash, Soumyashree Panda

Squad for AFC U20 Women’s Asian Cup Qualifiers announced

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 31: India coach Joakim Alexandersson Thursday named a 23-member squad for the 2026 AFC U20 Women's Asian Cup 2026 Qualifiers to be held in Yangon, Myanmar from August 6-10.

The Young Tigresses are placed in Group D, and will face Indonesia August 6, Turkmenistan August 8 and hosts Myanmar August 10 at the Thuwunna Stadium. The group winners and the three best second-placed teams across all eight groups will qualify for the AFC U20 Women's Asian Cup that will be held in Thailand in April next year.

India had been training for the Qualifiers at the Padukone-Dravid Centre for Sports Excellence in Bengaluru, and as part of their preparations they travelled to Tashkent to play two friendlies against Uzbeki-



stan U20 earlier this month. Alexandersson's side earned a resounding 4-1 win in the second game after drawing 1-1 in the first, boosting their confidence ahead of the all-important Qualifiers.

The players continued their camp in Bangalore after returning from Uzbekistan. They will depart for Myanmar Thursday night.

Team:
Goalkeepers: Melody Chanu Keisham, Monalisha Devi Moirangthem, Ribansi

Defenders: Alina Chingakh, Cindy Remruatpui Colney, Juhi Singh, Nishima Kumari, Remi Thokchom, Sahena TH, Shubhangi Singh, Thoibisana Chanu Toijam, Viksit Bara.

Midfielders: Anju Chanu Kayenpaibam, Arina Devi Nameirakpam, Bhumika Devi Khumukcham, Monisha Singha, Neha, Pooja.

Forwards: Babita Kumari, Deepika Pal, Khushbu Kashiram Saroj, Sibani Devi Nongmeikapam, Sulanjana Raul.

I only focused on my game: GM Divya

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nagpur, July 31: Grandmaster Divya Deshmukh has said she was not under any kind of pressure while playing the FIDE Women's World Cup final against compatriot Koneru Humpy as she had "nothing to lose".

Divya arrived here Wednesday from Batumi, Georgia to a reception befitting a world champion, with the young achiever overwhelmed by the affection shown by the the people at the airport.

The 19-year-old overcame the 38-year-old Humpy, a two-time World Rapid champion, in the time-controlled tie-break after the two classical rounds ended in draws. This was Divya's biggest success in her career and came after Humpy blundered in the second tie-breaker under time pressure.

"I never thought I was in any danger. I guess that the last blunder which she (Humpy) made, handed me the win," Divya told PTI Vid-



eos, when asked if she was under pressure in the final.

"Since I had no results in my hand, so I was just trying to focus on my performance and wasn't thinking about anything else," said Divya, who entered the event as an underdog aiming to win a Grandmaster norm and ended up becoming a GM.

Divya not just won the tournament and earned the GM title, she also secured a spot in next year's Candi-

dates and became richer by \$50,000.

Divya is hoping women's chess will take off in a big way in India following her success.

"I don't have a message for the young generation but for their parents and that is they should wholeheartedly support their children because they need them more during their failures, not so much in success," added Divya.

I am hoping that women will take up the sport in a big way after this success, especially youngsters, and they start dreaming that nothing is impossible

DIVYA DESHMUKH

On her arrival at the airport Wednesday night, Divya had credited her success to her parents.

"My parents have played the biggest role in my career. Without them I would not have reached here. Credit to my family, my parents, my sister, and my first coach, Rahul Joshi sir. He always wanted me to become the Grandmaster, and this is for him," said Divya, about Joshi, who died in 2020 at just 40 years of age.

"My mother and father had a bigger role to play but definitely my whole family, my sister Arya Deshmukh, my grandmother, grandfather...I don't think whatever I will say will be enough (for my parents)."

MACAU OPEN

Tharun, Lakshya storm into quarters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Macau, July 31: India's Tharun Manneapalli shocked top seed Lee Cheuk Yiu of Hong Kong to enter the quarterfinals of the Macau Open along with compatriot Lakshya Sen here Thursday.

Tharun rallied splendidly to outwit Lee, a world No 15, 19-21, 21-14, 22-20 in a match that went past the hour-mark.

The 23-year-old, holder of world No 47 ranking now has reached his second quarterfinals of a Super 300 tournament after entering the last eight at the German Open in February.



In the quarterfinals, Tharun will face world No 87 Hu Zhe An of China.

Later, Commonwealth Games champion Lakshya Sen fought past Chico Aura Dwi Wardoyo of Indonesia 21-14, 14-21, 21-17 to enter the last-eight stage. However, Ayush Shetty was ousted after a 18-21, 16-21 loss to Malaysia's Justin Hoh.

In the women's singles India's Rakshitha Ramraj went down against Busanan Ongbamrunphan of Thailand 21-14, 10-21, 11-21 in a match that lasted 51 minutes.

In the mixed doubles, fifth-seeded Indian duo of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto lost to Malaysia's Jimmy Wong and Lai Pei Jing 21-19, 13-21, 18-21.

In the men's doubles, Pruthvi Roy and K Sai Pratheek lost to fourth-seeded Junaidi Arif and Roy King Yap of Malaysia 18-21, 18-21.

In later matches, ace second seeded men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will meet Japan's Kakeru Kumagai and Hiroki Nishi.

Gene test now key to women’s athletics entry

REUTERS

Washington, July 31: Athletes will be eligible to compete in the female category for world ranking competitions such as the World Championships only if they clear a one-time gene test in a bid to protect the integrity of women's sport, World Athletics said Wednesday.

The once-in-a-lifetime test for the SRY gene, which helps in determining biological sex, can be conducted via a cheek swab or blood test. The testing protocol will be overseen by member federations and the new regulations come into effect September 1, ahead of the September 13-21 World Athletics Championships in Tokyo.

"It is really important in a sport that is permanently trying to attract more women that they enter a sport believing there is no biological glass ceiling," World Athlet-



ics President Sebastian Coe said in a statement.

"The test to confirm biological sex is a very important step in ensuring this is the case. We are saying, at elite level, for you to compete in the female category, you have to be biologically female."

"It was always very clear to me and the World Athletics Council that gender cannot trump biology. We particularly want to thank our member federations for their support and commitment in the implementation of these new regulations."

Athletics has spent years

It is really important in a sport that is permanently trying to attract more women that they enter a sport believing there is no biological glass ceiling

SEBASTIAN COE | PRESIDENT, WORLD ATHLETICS

debating eligibility criteria to compete in women's events, amid questions over biological advantages for transgender athletes and those with differences of sex development (DSD).

World Athletics bans transgender women who have gone through male

puberty from competing in women's events, while it requires female DSD athletes whose bodies produce high testosterone levels to lower them in order to be eligible.

Earlier this year, a working group found that those rules were not tight enough, with a pre-clearance test for the SRY gene being one of several recommendations the group made for revised rules.

The SRY gene reveals the presence of the Y chromosome, which is an indicator of biological sex.

The test was also approved by World Boxing in May when they introduced mandatory sex testing for all boxers.

Earlier this month, the European Court upheld a 2023 ruling that double 800 metres Olympic champion Caster Semenya's appeal to a Swiss Federal Tribunal against regulations that barred her from competing had not been properly heard.

Vasseur’s deal renewed

Budapest:

Ferrari handed team principal Fred Vasseur a new contract Thursday in a sign of "trust in Fred's leadership" following speculation about his future, with the Italian team yet to win a Formula 1 race in 2025. In an announcement ahead of the Hungarian Grand Prix, Ferrari said the new deal was a "multiple-year contract," without giving further details. Lewis Hamilton gave Vasseur his backing last month after reports in Italian media suggested his job could be in question. Ferrari last won a race in October and, while it is second in the constructors' championship behind McLaren, neither Hamilton nor Charles Leclerc has consistently been able to challenge the leading McLaren drivers this year.



SNIPPETS

Aparajita named FPO

Bhubaneswar: In a proud moment for India and Odisha, Aparajita Gochhikar, International Chess Player and the first woman of India to have Fair Play Expert (FPE) title, has been appointed by International Chess Federation (FIDE) for World School Team Chess Championship 2025 to be held at Washington DC, United States of America from August 2-7. She will be the Fair Play Officer (FPO) of the event along with Juergen Kluevners of Germany. She has been appointed by Arkady Dvorkovich, who is the President of International Chess Federation. Fifty five teams, across forty eight countries will be participating in this event, including one team from India.



No relief for McGregor

Dublin: Martial arts fighter Conor McGregor Thursday lost his attempt to overturn a jury's order that he compensate a woman who accused him of raping her, with Ireland's Court of Appeal rejecting the appeal in its entirety. The plaintiff, Nikita Hand, alleged that McGregor sexually assaulted her December 9, 2018. A jury last year ordered McGregor to pay her nearly 250,000 euros (\$285,250.00) in damages. McGregor, 36, denied the allegation and said he had "fully consensual sex" with Hand. He also denied causing bruising to the plaintiff.

