



## PC's cryptic note

Actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas' latest post takes a firm stand on boundaries and self-respect

LEISURE | P2



## Thirst hits Gaza

Weakened by hunger, many Gazans trek across a ruined landscape each day to haul all their drinking and washing water

INTERNATIONAL | P10



## Interest rates unchanged

RBI keeps its policy interest rate unchanged at 5.5% in a unanimous vote and decides to continue with a 'neutral' stance

BUSINESS | P11



## Siraj shines

Mohammed Siraj attains a career-best 15th position in the latest ICC Test rankings following match-winning spell at The Oval

SPORTS | P12

## SHORT TAKES

### Odia mandatory on shop signboards

**Bhubaneswar:** The state government Wednesday made it mandatory for all shops and commercial establishments in urban areas to prominently display signboards in the Odia language. The direction was issued by Housing & Urban Development department Principal Secretary Usha Padhee for businesses under the jurisdiction of municipal corporations, municipalities, and notified area councils. It said that the order aligns with the state government's commitment to uphold the Odia language in public spaces and make signage more accessible to citizens, especially those unfamiliar with other languages or scripts.

P3

### CBSE: Strictly adhere to 75 pc attendance

**New Delhi:** The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has warned schools to strictly adhere to the 75 per cent attendance requirement for students appearing for board exams, according to officials. According to the CBSE Examination Bye Laws, a minimum of 75 per cent attendance is mandatory for students to be eligible to appear for the board examinations. The CBSE offers a 25 per cent relaxation only in cases of exigencies such as medical emergencies, participation in national or international sports events, and other serious reasons, if supported by the necessary documents or record.

P9

### 3 of family killed in bike-truck collision

**Keonjhar:** Three members of a family, including an 11-year-old girl, were killed after a speeding truck hit their motorcycle in Keonjhar district Wednesday, police said. The accident took place on the NH 40 at Jagmohanpur Chhak under the Telkoi police station limits. The deceased hailed from Bahadapashi village under the Barkote police station limits in neighbouring Deogarh district. The couple was on their way to drop their daughter off at the Ashram School in the Kanjipani area of the district when the accident took place. The vehicle was seized, but the driver fled.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Now that Mr Dhankhar has resigned, we really do need paramilitary forces to run the House smoothly

## Now, Trump applies for residence cert in Bihar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Samastipur (Bihar), August 6:** 'Donald Trump' is the resident of a village in Samastipur district of Bihar, a prankster wanted the authorities concerned to believe.

However, the district administration was clearly not impressed and it has ordered lodging of an FIR so that the mischief monger, posing as the American president, could be tracked down and brought to book.

In a statement, the administration said the application for the residence certificate was made online July 29 and the revenue department official concerned turned it

down August 4.

The application showed Trump, with his photograph appended, as a resident of Hasanpur village. The prankster seemed to have done a bit of research as the parents' name was stated to be Frederick Christ Trump and Mary Anne MacLeod, the same as the father and mother, respectively, of the US President.

Notably, this is the fourth incident of its kind reported in the state since the mammoth exercise by the EC began in June. Recently, applications were received in rural Patna and Nawada in the name of canines named 'dog babu', and 'dogesh babu', respectively.

**Washington/New Delhi, August 6:** US President Donald Trump Wednesday slapped an additional 25 per cent tariff, raising it to 50 per cent, on goods coming from India as penalty for New Delhi's continued purchase of Russian oil, a move that is likely to hit sectors such as textiles, marine and leather exports hard.

The United States has imposed this additional tariff or penalty for Russian imports only on India while other buyers such as China and Turkey have so far escaped such measures. The 30 per cent tariff on China and 15 per cent on Turkey is lower than India's 50 per cent.

Reacting to the development, India said that these actions are unfair, unjustified and unreasonable. It is extremely unfortunate that the US should choose to impose additional tariffs on India, the External Affairs Ministry said in a statement, adding India will take all actions necessary to protect its national interests.



Trump signed an executive order - Addressing Threats to the US by the Government of the Russian Federation - imposing the additional tariff over and above the 25 per cent levy which comes into effect from August 7. After this order, the total tariff on Indian goods, barring a small exemption list, will be 50 per cent.

"The ad valorem duty imposed shall be in addition to any other duties, fees, taxes, exactions, and charges applicable to such imports," the order said.

While the initial duty becomes effective August 7, the additional levy will come into effect after 21 days or August 27. After the new levy, India will

### US action unjust; foreign policy needs reset: Cong

After the imposition of an additional 25 per cent tariff on Indian goods entering the US, the Congress Wednesday said the action is unjust and unacceptable, even as it hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying his personalised and headline-grabbing style of huglomacy has been an abysmal failure. Noting that US President Donald Trump has hit India hard and unjustly, Congress general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh called for a comprehensive reset of India's foreign policy and said PM Modi should shed his ego and take inspiration from Indira Gandhi in the manner she stood up to the US' bullying in the 1970s.

P8

attract the highest tariff of 50 per cent along with Brazil. After this, India's competitors will be much better placed in the US market as their duty is lower - Myanmar (40 per cent), Thailand and Cambodia (both 36 per cent), Bangladesh (35 per cent), Indonesia (32 per cent), China and Sri Lanka (both 30 per cent), Malaysia (25 per cent), Philippines and Vietnam (both 20 per cent).

## IIM Ranchi 'WAI' ahead of the curve

Traditional hall-based mid-term exams to be replaced with AI-integrated problem solving under WAI (Working with AI) initiative

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 6:** In a groundbreaking move that signals a fundamental shift in management education, the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ranchi has announced the complete replacement of traditional hall-based mid-term examinations with AI-integrated business problem-solving projects across all courses.



According to officials, the initiative, termed WAI (Working with AI), represents a radical departure from conventional assessment methods and positions the institution at the forefront of pedagogical innovation.

"We recognised that the traditional model of isolated theoretical learning was becoming increasingly disconnected from the dynamic needs of modern business," said Deepak Srivastava, Director, IIM Ranchi.

## Another college student burns

Police inaction over ex-boyfriend's threats to upload intimate pics forced her to take extreme step, says father of the deceased

PNN & AGENCIES

**Kendrapara, August 6:** A female college student died after she allegedly immolated herself at her house in Kendrapara district Wednesday following her former boyfriend's threat to upload her intimate photographs on social media, police said.

The woman's father claimed that his daughter took the extreme step after police refused to accept their FIR around six

months ago, and instead asked them to block the ex-boyfriend's phone number. Kendrapara SP Siddharth Kataria said he will personally probe the allegation.

This was the third incident of a woman dying of burn injuries in Odisha since July 12.

The fresh incident took place in Kathiapada village in Pattamundai (Rural) police station area Wednesday morning.

The father of the 19-year-old woman claimed she poured kerosene over herself and set herself ablaze when she was alone in their house. He said they opened the door of their house to find their daughter's charred body lying on the staircase.

She was an undergraduate student at Mohanpur College located near her village. Her

former boyfriend was black-mailing her, the woman's father alleged. "Had prompt action been taken, my daughter would not have died by suicide," he claimed.

Sailendra Palei, however, denied the allegation.

"I did not receive any FIR, and the woman's father had never come to our police station. I never suggested anyone to block any phone number," he claimed.

SP Kataria, who reached the spot, told reporters, "The woman's father claimed that she died by suicide. The matter will be investigated. I will also personally inquire into the father's allegation against Palei."

When asked about the copy of the complaint, the woman's father, however, claimed he had torn it.

## SC lens on illegal activities in Satkosia Tiger Reserve

PNN & AGENCIES

**New Delhi, August 6:** The Supreme Court Wednesday sought responses from various stakeholders including the Centre and Odisha government on a plea against the alleged proposed constructions inside the Satkosia Tiger Reserve in the state.

A bench comprising Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justices K Vinod Chandran and NV Anjaria took note of the submissions of advocate Gaurav

Kumar Bansal while also asking the response of a central empowered committee.

Bansal sought quashing of the no-objection certificates (NOC) granted by District Collectors of Angul, Nayagarh, Boudh and Cuttack for the construction and development activities in and around the tiger reserve.

His plea alleged unchecked expansion of tourism infrastructure and other proposed constructions in the ecologically sensitive tiger reserve.

P3

## PM likely to visit China this month after 7-year gap

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 6:** After a gap of over seven years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to travel to China later this month to attend the annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), people familiar with the matter said Wednesday.

According to the plan, Prime Minister Modi will embark on a visit to Japan around August 29 and after concluding the trip, he will travel to the northern Chinese city of Tianjin for the SCO summit to be held August 31-September 1.

Modi's visit to China is being planned amid efforts by the two sides to repair their bilateral ties which came under severe strain following the deadly clashes between Indian and Chinese troops in Galwan Valley in June 2020.

There is no official confirmation yet on Modi's two-nation visit to Japan and China. The visit is likely to take place from August 29 to September 1.

Modi last visited China in June, 2018 to attend the SCO summit. Chinese President Xi Jinping visited India in October 2019 for the second "informal summit".

However, the relationship came under stress due to the eastern Ladakh border face-off and clashes at Galwan valley in May-June, 2020.



# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
You will pay attention to the voice of your inner self today. This will help you implement all your plans perfectly. You will not only be jovial, but you will also not let disappointments cow you down. Ganesha says not only today, but you can summon this quality whenever you like.

**TAURUS**  
Ganesha sees you happily engaged in attending to day to day affairs. The day will turn out to be a hectic one. Do not expect too many time outs or even small breaks. Fortunately you will not be too uncomfortable with your tight schedule and will feel as fresh and easy at cease work as you had been at the beginning of the day.

**GEMINI**  
Along with your house, family and business matters, you will also be busy with your social obligations today. You will be afforded the co-operation of those around you. New ways of thinking will flourish within you. Make full use of the opportunities you get today, says Ganesha.

**CANCER**  
Ganesha says that this is good day to buy new house or car. It is likely that you shift to a new house shortly. So be prepared for a ceremony like housewarming. You will achieve tranquil mind through yoga and meditation. It will radiate a new energy, enthusiasm and optimism in you.

**LEO**  
A lucky day is in the offing. You will taste success in all your endeavours. You will be extremely creative. You will contribute a lot of new ideas in meetings. You will be able to talk about your love without any hesitation today, says Ganesha.

**VIRGO**  
Today is a mixed bag of values and pragmatism, says Ganesha, and if there were to be a competition for the most humanitarian person, you would be likely to win hands down. You would do well to make plans to increase your productivity. Ganesha advises you to look at the big picture, which should not be so difficult for you as you already have a broad perspective.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesha says today you will wish to spend more time with your beloved instead of your friends. This is a good day to express your innermost feelings and get varied opportunities. This is a good time to propose to your beloved and give them a happy surprise. Ganesha showers you with his blessings always.

**SCORPIO**  
The grey strands on your head is not just a colour, but speaks about your experiences. Your wisdom will make you take appropriate decisions at work. Ganeshi warns you to stay away from courtrooms and legal issues, or the trap may leave a deep scar.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Beauty therapies or a new hair do, pick one; makeover and personal grooming is on your mind. Once you decide to shop, nothing in the world can stop you. You have decided to de-stress yourself with shopping. Clothes and jewellery is what your wardrobe is awaiting for, says Ganesha.

**CAPRICORN**  
Your investments, inheritance, receipts, etc. will keep your packets filled with cash. No sooner you try to put them in safe; there will be more than one reason for some expenditure. Keeping a watch on incomes and expenses both will help you avoid any monetary problems, advises Ganesha. Your maturity, practicality and experience will come to your rescue today.

**AQUARIUS**  
Planning to buy a house or vehicle? Then today's the day to make the booking. However, don't buy anything in haste. Deliberate, says Ganesha, especially when it involves a huge sum of money. You may even shift residence, or change a job, and it's very likely you will enjoy the whole process.

**PISCES**  
Controversy and differences circle overhead, almost waiting for a chance to corner you. Even though you are a happy go lucky person, you may feel a little run down and disgruntled today. But don't lost heart, says Ganesha, because as the day progresses you will find bigger and better reasons to smile. Your spouse or loved one will have a major role to play in restoring your happiness.



## BEYONCE BEGS HER MOM NOT TO DO ONE THING

Tina Knowles has admitted her daughter Beyonce has asked her to post less on her social media accounts. Beyonce begs her mom to stop posting 'too much' on social media

## STONE ON HER INFAMOUS SCENE IN BASIC INSTINCT

Sharon Stone doesn't think she received 'respect' because of her infamous *Basic Instinct* scene. She can be seen in one scene in the 1992 exposing her private area as her alter ego Catherine Tramell crosses her legs in front of Michael Douglas' character Detective Nick Curran and other cops whilst she is interrogated



## PC's cryptic note on disrespect

**Mumbai:** Priyanka Chopra, known as PC to her fans, is making headlines again, not for a red carpet appearance or film announcement, but for a striking note she shared on Instagram Stories. Known for occasionally dropping thought-provoking or cryptic messages on her social media, the actress's latest post took a firm stand on boundaries and self-respect.

The quote she shared read, "I am the nicest, most understanding person, but disrespect me and you will understand why I only have three friends." She added a playful caption, "LoL. Anyone else relate?"—a message that seems personal yet widely relatable.

Just a few days earlier, she posted another note: "Better a B... than a Bitchari," paired with what appeared to be stylized artwork featuring legendary actress Rekha in golden headgear. Whether or not these posts are directed at someone specific, they've certainly sparked speculation among her fans online.

While Priyanka didn't name names, the internet is buzzing with questions. Has someone in her circle overstepped? Is this a general reflection on setting limits? One thing's for sure that Priyanka's tone is clear: she values respect and isn't afraid to cut ties when it's lost.

Meanwhile, Priyanka Chopra is currently in Hyderabad filming her next major project—SS Rajamouli's *SSMB 29*, alongside Mahesh Babu and Prithviraj Sukumaran.

AGENCIES



## Indian Swan Lake enthrals audience

### INDO-GERMAN CULTURAL COLLABORATION



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 6:** *Indian Swan Lake*, a dance celebration, presented by Orissa Dance Academy (ODA) in collaboration with Germany's L'Art del Mondo left audience in thrall here at Utkal Rangamancha, GKCM Odissi Research Centre, Wednesday.

This unique show brought together two distinguished choreographers - Italian baroque choreographer Deda Cristina Colonna and ODA Secretary Aruna Mohanty from Odisha. The production intertwined the timeless beauty of Swan Lake, the famous German ballet with Nala and Damayanti,



## Widowed twice by 37, Leena's tale of love & loss

**Mumbai:** Leena Chandavarkar, once a luminous star of 1970s Bollywood, led a life far removed from the glamour she portrayed on screen. Hailing from a military family in Karnataka, she made a stellar debut in *Maa Ka Meet* (1968) opposite Vinod Khanna, quickly establishing herself as a leading lady.

Her charm and talent saw her paired with the biggest names of the era, including Rajesh Khanna and Dilip Kumar. But behind the applause and camera flashes, fate had drafted a far more tragic script for her personal life.

At the peak of her fame, Leena fell in love with Siddharth Bhand-



kar, son of Goa's first Chief Minister. They married when she was just 24. But only 11 days into her new life, Siddharth died in a gun accident. Leena returned to her family

home, grappling not just with grief, but with whispers that branded her "unlucky." The tragedy derailed her career. Her attempted comeback with *Bairaag* didn't click at the box

office. But destiny had more in store.

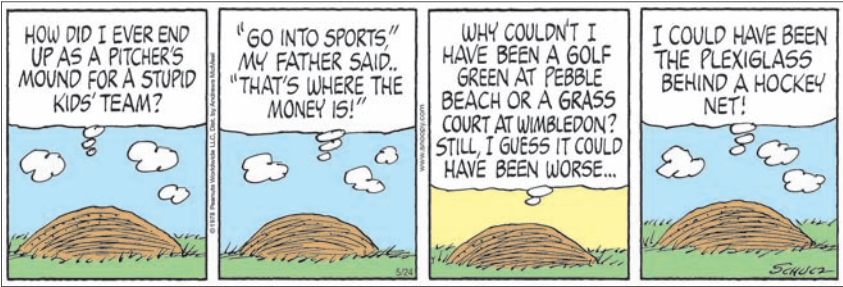
She soon crossed paths with legendary singer Kishore Kumar. Despite their age difference and his three prior marriages, love bloomed. Against societal norms and family resistance, the two married.

Leena's second innings with Kishore Kumar brought love and a son into her life. But after just seven years of marriage, in 1987, she lost Kishore to a heart attack, becoming a widow once again — this time at just 37. The heartbreak was immense, yet she did not retreat from life. Instead, she devoted herself to motherhood and healing.

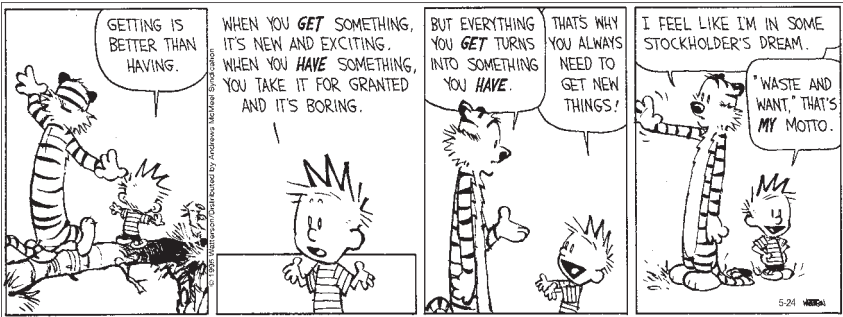
Now 74, Leena Chandavarkar lives quietly with her son and an adopted child she cares for like her own.

AGENCIES

## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBS

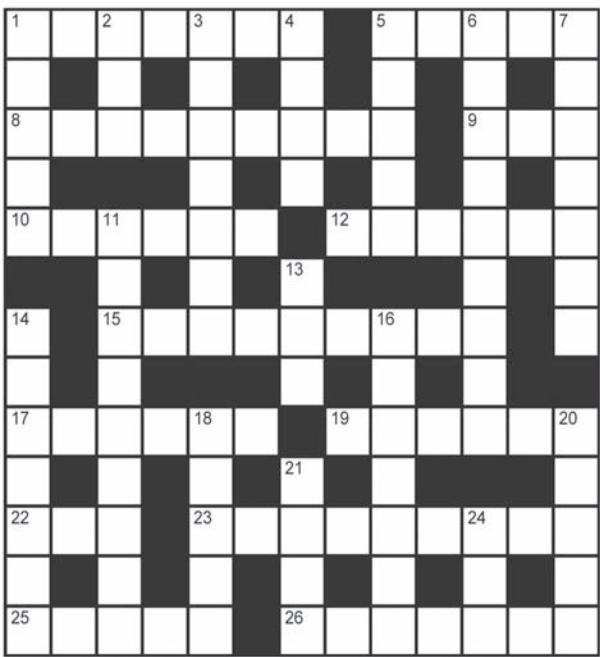


## BREVITY



## FUN post

## CROSSWORD



### Across

- Canoe movers
- Ticked off
- Sorcerer's tool (5,4)
- Bag thickness
- Forbidding
- Limb
- Disinfect
- Laboured
- Musical exercises
- Serengeti grazer

- Like snakes and lizards
- Decorative pitchers
- Frankenstein creator

### Down

- Apples, e.g.
- Excavate
- Swiss city
- Fly like an eagle

- Early warning system
- Zest, e.g. (5,4)
- Porpoise relative
- Foyer
- Auction action
- Exhaustion
- Grade
- Merits
- Like a beach
- Mimics
- Indisposed

## 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.

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

## SOLUTIONS

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

## CROSSWORD

## SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



# downtown

## CM for fair & just resolution to Mahanadi water dispute



CM Mohan Charan Majhi meets Union Home Minister Amit Shah during his New Delhi visit, Wednesday

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 6:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Wednesday met Union Jal Shakti Minister CR Patil in New Delhi and highlighted the need for a fair and just resolution to the Mahanadi water dispute between Odisha and Chhattisgarh.

Taking to X, Majhi said, “Called on Union Jal Shakti Minister Shri C. R. Patil today in New Delhi. Raised Odisha’s concerns over the Mahanadi water dispute and stressed the need for a fair and just resolution. On this occasion, handed over the ‘Vision Odisha 2036 | 2047’, outlining the State’s long-term development approach.”

Emphasising the importance of equitable water sharing for the livelihood of people of Odisha, Majhi urged the Union government to take proactive steps to ensure justice is served and the interests of downstream communities are protected, sources said.

Recently, both the states have agreed to explore an amicable settlement to the issue, prompting the Mahanadi Water Disputes Tribunal to grant additional time for negotiations.

The tribunal, chaired by Justice Bela M Trivedi, has scheduled the next hearing for September 6 and requested the presence of top state officials

to report progress.

During his visit to the national capital, the CM also met Union Heavy Industries and

## Raise rice procurement target, Centre urged

**Bhubaneswar:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi met Union Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Minister Pralhad Joshi in New Delhi Wednesday and urged him to enhance the rice procurement target from Odisha for the upcoming Kharif season.

Sharing the meeting details on X, Majhi wrote, “Called on Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Shri @JoshiPralhad ji today at New Delhi. Requested enhancement of the rice procurement target for the upcoming season in view of the anticipated surplus in the State.”

The Chief Minister also urged the Union Minister to increase the monthly lifting of rice by the Food Corporation of India (FCI) as it would help ensure its smooth and timely evacuation from state godowns. Emphasising the state’s commitment to food security and farmer welfare, Majhi informed the Union Minister about the Odisha government’s proactive steps like promotion of millets, expansion of storage infrastructure, and many poli-

cy measures aimed at strengthening the agri-food ecosystem.

“Highlighted the Odisha Government’s proactive measures, including promotion of millets and expansion of storage infrastructure, aimed at strengthening food security and safeguarding farmers’ interests,” the Chief Minister said. The meeting assumes significance as Odisha prepares for a bumper paddy crop, and the state government looks to ensure adequate procurement and distribution mechanisms are in place ahead of the harvest season.

As per the official sources, currently, 27LMT of rice is required for the state’s consumption. But this year, a total of 93LMT of paddy has been produced in the state, including Kharif and Rabi paddy. “Out of this, an average of 63LMT of rice will be produced, which is much more than the demand of the state. The state government had also earlier raised the issue regarding the slow pace of FCI’s procurement process in Odisha,” an official said.

caused environmental damage by discharging untreated waste into ecologically-sensitive Chilika Lake, the NGT has asked the district Collector to initiate criminal proceedings under the Environment Protection Act.

Both Chilika Development Authority (CDA) and Vikash Eco Resort Private Limited have been asked to submit a detailed report within four weeks. The illegal construction came to light after Maa Kalijai Motor Boat Workers’ Union lodged complaints first with the local tehsildar and later with the district Collector, opposing the

construction in the ecological-sensitive area.

With no response from authorities, the union filed a writ petition with the NGT, which took cognizance of the matter and delivered its order August 1.

For decades, the government had allowed traditional fisherfolk to operate in Chilika. Though the practice was halted in 2017, the fisherfolk who depend on boats for both fishing and tourism have long demanded a jetty for their livelihood.

However, authorities have reportedly shown little interest. Despite the absence of official approval, Vikash Eco Resort Private Limited began constructing a concrete jetty within the lake—an area falling under the CRZ as demarcated by the Forest and Environment department. The area is protected under CRZ notifications, and enforcement of these rules lies with the district-level CRZ monitoring committee, headed by the Collector.

However, despite multiple complaints and wide media coverage since April 24, the Collector’s office failed to take any action against the illegal construction.

Parida called upon all stakeholders to increase the rate of breastfeeding centres across Odisha and encouraged collective societal responsibility in promoting breastfeeding. She virtually inaugurated the first public breastfeeding room at the office of the Odisha State Commission for Women.

The Deputy Chief Minister recommended that similar breastfeeding spaces should be established in all public and private institutions across the state to support working and lactating mothers.

During the event, ‘Lok Kalyan’ – an online web link form for NGO registration – was officially launched by Parida.

child. Breastfeeding brings the child closer to the mother’s heart, she said. She stressed the significant health benefits of breastfeeding, both for mothers and infants, including reduced risks



COURTESY CALL: Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo presents Mahaprasad to Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to New Delhi, Wednesday

## Govt offices to be painted saffron

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bhubaneswar, August 6:** In a bid to bring visual uniformity and a distinct identity to public infrastructure, the state government, Wednesday, issued a notification mandating a uniform saffron-themed colour code for all government buildings across the state.

As per the notification issued by the Works department July 30, 2025, the new colour scheme will be implemented henceforth for all new government buildings, and will also be applicable during periodical repair and renovation of existing buildings.

The new standard adopts saffron-inspired RGB shades, giving a warm and traditional look to public structures. A visual reference of the approved colour palette has been shared as Annexure-1 with the notification.

However, despite multiple complaints and wide media coverage since April 24, the Collector’s office failed to take any action against the illegal construction.

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## FOR A CAUSE

Utkal University students stage a sit-in near the VC office in Bhubaneswar to press for fulfilment of their demands, Wednesday



## SC seeks Centre, state replies on illegal constructions in Satkosia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 6:** The Supreme Court Wednesday sought responses from various stakeholders, including the Centre and Odisha government, on a plea against the alleged proposed constructions inside the Satkosia Tiger Reserve (STR) in the state.

A bench comprising Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justices K Vinod Chandran and NV Anjaria took note of the submissions of advocate Gaurav Kumar Bansal while also asking the response of a central empowered committee.

Bansal sought quashing of the no-objection certificates (NOCs) granted by district Collectors of Angul, Nayagarh, Boudh and Cuttack for the construction and development activities in and around the tiger reserve.

His plea alleged unchecked expansion of tourism infrastructure and other proposed constructions in the ecologically-sensitive tiger reserve.

The petitioner also questioned the legality of directions issued by the district Collectors, pointing out the provisional NOCs were granted without jurisdiction and in violation of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, besides forest and environmental laws.

“The district Collector has issued such permissions for construction of an eco-tourism spot. How can this be permitted,” Bansal asked.

The STR, spread across the districts of Angul, Cuttack, Nayagarh and Boudh in Odisha, is a crucial habitat for tigers, elephants, and several endangered species.

The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), the plea said, in April 2018 directed all states for mandatory delineation of eco-sensitive zones (ESZs) around tiger reserves.

There directions were stated to have clearly stipulated a demarcation of a minimum of a kilometre of ESZ encompassing a protected area, whenever it formed part of the buffer.

There are multiple large-scale and systemic issues affecting the ecological and legal integrity of STR, which require independent attention and urgent consideration of this court, the plea said.

In line with the NTCA’s April 2018 direction, the petitioner said, the Odisha government recently submitted a draft proposal for declaration of ESZ around STR to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for final notification.

However, the said draft, if approved in its current form, will seriously compromise the ecological integrity and conservation dignity of the tiger reserve, it alleged.

The proposed tourism-centric development activities in and around the tiger reserve, including the construction of high-impact infrastructure and grant of arbitrary NOCs, were said to be contrary to the precautionary principle and violate the statutory framework under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

The zero-kilometre ESZ boundary proposed in parts of STR violates NTCA’s 2018 directive, which mandates a minimum one km buffer from core tiger habitat wherever the buffer is absent or disjunct, the plea added.

It claimed the issuance of no objection certificates by district Collectors and non-forest authorities for tourism infrastructure within and around a notified tiger reserve constituted an unlawful usurpation of statutory powers reserved for designated authorities under the Wildlife (Protection) Act and violate the binding directives of the apex court.

The plea alleged the actions of state government and its agencies exhibited a deliberate pattern of undermining central environmental regulations through procedural shortcuts and executive overreach, including attempts to modify ESZ notifications to dilute their protective scope for commercial tourism purposes.

It also sought a direction to the state to withdraw the draft ESZ proposal relating to STR.



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The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), the plea said, in April 2018 directed all states for mandatory delineation of eco-sensitive zones (ESZs) around tiger reserves.

There directions were stated to have clearly stipulated a demarcation of a minimum of a kilometre of ESZ encompassing a protected area, whenever it formed part of the buffer.

There are multiple large-scale and systemic issues affecting the ecological and legal integrity of STR, which require independent attention and urgent consideration of this court, the plea said.

In line with the NTCA’s April 2018 direction, the petitioner said, the Odisha government recently submitted a draft proposal for declaration of ESZ around STR to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for final notification.

However, the said draft, if approved in its current form, will seriously compromise the ecological integrity and conservation dignity of the tiger reserve, it alleged.

The proposed tourism-centric development activities in and around the tiger reserve, including the construction of high-impact infrastructure and grant of arbitrary NOCs, were said to be contrary to the precautionary principle and violate the statutory framework under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

The zero-kilometre ESZ boundary proposed in parts of STR violates NTCA’s 2018 directive, which mandates a minimum one km buffer from core tiger habitat wherever the buffer is absent or disjunct, the plea added.

It claimed the issuance of no objection certificates by district Collectors and non-forest authorities for tourism infrastructure within and around a notified tiger reserve constituted an unlawful usurpation of statutory powers reserved for designated authorities under the Wildlife (Protection) Act and violate the binding directives of the apex court.

The plea alleged the actions of state government and its agencies exhibited a deliberate pattern of undermining central environmental regulations through procedural shortcuts and executive overreach, including attempts to modify ESZ notifications to dilute their protective scope for commercial tourism purposes.

It also sought a direction to the state to withdraw the draft ESZ proposal relating to STR.

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## NGT orders demolition of illegal Chilika jetty

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Khurda, August 6:** The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed Khurda Collector to immediately stop the unauthorised construction of a concrete jetty at Gadadwara of Chilika Lake by Vikash Eco Resort Private Limited. The environment watchdog has also ordered the Collector to ensure demolition of the illegal jetty and restoration of the site to its original condition.

Observing that the construction violated Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) norms and

caused environmental damage by discharging untreated waste into ecologically-sensitive Chilika Lake, the NGT has asked the district Collector to initiate criminal proceedings under the Environment Protection Act.

Both Chilika Development Authority (CDA) and Vikash Eco Resort Private Limited have been asked to submit a detailed report within four weeks.

The illegal construction came to light after Maa Kalijai Motor Boat Workers’ Union lodged complaints first with the local tehsildar and later with the district Collector, opposing the

construction in the ecological-sensitive area.

With no response from authorities, the union filed a writ petition with the NGT, which took cognizance of the matter and delivered its order August 1.

For decades, the government had allowed traditional fisherfolk to operate in Chilika. Though the practice was halted in 2017, the fisherfolk who depend on boats for both fishing and tourism have long demanded a jetty for their livelihood.

However, authorities have reportedly shown little interest. Despite the absence of official approval, Vikash Eco Resort Private Limited began constructing a concrete jetty within the lake—an area falling under the CRZ as demarcated by the Forest and Environment department. The area is protected under CRZ notifications, and enforcement of these rules lies with the district-level CRZ monitoring committee, headed by the Collector.

However, despite multiple complaints and wide media coverage since April 24, the Collector’s office failed to take any action against the illegal construction.

Parida called upon all stakeholders to increase the rate of breastfeeding centres across Odisha and encouraged collective societal responsibility in promoting breastfeeding. She virtually inaugurated the first public breastfeeding room at the office of the Odisha State Commission for Women.

## ADB to extend technical assistance for urban devpt



PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, August 6:** The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has agreed to provide technical assistance to Odisha government in order to address the state’s evolving urban development needs, official sources said Wednesday.

ADB Country Director MI Oka met Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) department Principal Secretary Usha Padhee in the day to discuss the preparation of a comprehensive urban mobility plan aimed at supporting sustainable urban growth and enhancing the liveability of

cities across the coastal state. The meeting focused on fostering technical collaboration between ADB and H&UD department in key areas of urban transformation.

The ADB also expressed its willingness to assist the state in receiving the Urban Challenge Fund from the Union government.

“Both parties emphasised the importance of integrated planning, innovative financing mechanisms, and capacity building to meet future urban challenges and improve the quality of life in urban areas,” an official of the H&UD department said.

## Breastfeeding centres in public places soon: Parida

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, August 6:** The state government will soon set up breastfeeding centres in various public places, including railway stations and bus stands, Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida said here, Wednesday.

“We will open dedicated centres for breastfeeding in public places. In the railway stations, a lady attendant will be deployed at the breastfeeding centre so that lactating mothers can breastfeed their babies in a women-friendly atmosphere,” Parida told mediapersons after gracing the state-level celebration of World Breastfeeding Week 2025 here.

Parida, who is in charge of Women and Child Development department, said there is an emotional and physical bond between mother and



child. Breastfeeding brings the child closer to the mother’s heart, she said.

She stressed the significant health benefits of breastfeeding, both for mothers and infants, including reduced risks



# ‘Odisha must lead in women-led MSMEs’



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 6:** Odisha must take the lead in promoting women-led Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), said MSME, Fisheries and Animal Resources Minister Gokulananda Mallik Wednesday. He stressed that boosting women’s entrepreneurship is essential for the state’s economic growth and social progress.

Speaking at a review meeting with General Managers of District Industries Centres (DICs) at the City’s O-Hub Wednesday, the Minister noted that Odisha

currently ranks 13th in India in terms of women-led MSMEs.

He urged all stakeholders to work towards securing a top position in the national rankings, stressing the need for sustained outreach, capacity-building, and support systems for women entrepreneurs. The meeting reviewed the planning, execution, and monitoring of various schemes implemented by the MSME department, along with the activities of affiliated institutions. Minister Mallik underscored the importance of policy-driven, transparent, and accountable service delivery.

Key government initiatives

were examined, including the Prime Minister’s Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), the Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PM-FME) scheme, and PM-Vishwakarma, alongside the Odisha government’s CM-SHRIM scheme.

Both financial and non-financial incentives under these programmes were assessed for their effectiveness in fostering enterprise growth.

District-level officials highlighted challenges faced during implementation, ranging from procedural hurdles to gaps in beneficiary awareness.

The review was attended by MSME Commissioner-cum-Secretary Prashanth Kumar Reddy, Director of Export Promotion and Marketing Sanjay Kumar Mishra, Principal Secretary Mahesh Kumar Choudhury, Additional Director of Industries Prabhu Prasad Choudhury, and DIC General Manager Samuchita Mallik, among other senior officials.



# Trade unions oppose night shifts for women

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 6:** Central Trade Unions staged a protest Wednesday in front of the Labour Commissioner’s office, strongly opposing the Odisha government’s recent notification permitting women to work night shifts in shops and commercial establishments.

In a joint statement, representatives of major unions — including INTUC, AITUC,

CITU, HMS, AICTTU, TUCC, and LPF — criticised the lack of consultation before the policy change. They accused the Labour and Employees’ State Insurance Department of bypassing trade unions in the decision-making process, thereby violating principles of tripartism and collective bargaining.

While the notification includes safety measures such as mandatory written consent, GPS-enabled transport,

and compliance with anti-harassment laws, unions argue that implementation remains questionable. Citing past incidents from other states, they warned the move could expose women to greater risks and exploitation, particularly in unorganised sectors like hospitality and BPOs.

The unions also voiced concerns over night shifts’ impact on women’s health and work-life balance, arguing that provisions like eight

hours of rest between shifts may be inadequate. They demanded the notification’s immediate suspension and called for thorough assessments with trade union involvement.

Reaffirming their commitment to women’s employment rights, the unions urged a meeting with the Labour Commissioner to ensure future labour reforms are developed through inclusive, democratic dialogue.

## FOR REAL-TIME INSIGHTS

# CRUT officials to ride Ama Bus twice weekly

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 6:** In a bid to further improve Ama Bus services, Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) managing director N Thirumala Naik has directed all employees, including senior officials, to travel by Ama Bus at least twice a week to gain first-hand insight into the commuter experience.

Naik led by example Wednesday, travelling with senior officials on two major routes during peak hours — Route 10 (KIIT Square to Infocity Square) and Route 13 (Trident College to Keshari Talks).

During the journey, Naik interacted with passengers to collect direct feedback on their travel experience. This initiative seeks to bridge the gap between administrative planning and real-world conditions, fostering a more re-

sponsive, user-focused public transport system.

“Understanding the real-time commuter experience is the key to build a better, more responsive public transport system. Our team must be in touch with the ground to bring about meaningful change,” said Naik.

In another surprise inspection earlier in the day, GM (O&M) Sanjay Biswal travelled from CDA-9, Cuttack to Kalahanga, Bhubaneswar, interacting with passengers and evaluating service conditions.

Under this initiative, CRUT officials have been directed to document commuter interactions, identify service gaps, and submit actionable suggestions. The feedback collected will be evaluated and integrated into ongoing plans for route optimisation, increased frequency, technological upgrades, and overall service improvement under the Ama Bus initiative.

# Apollo Hospitals observes World Breastfeeding Week

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 6:** Apollo Hospitals, Bhubaneswar marked ‘World Breastfeeding Week 2025’ with an awareness programme, at the hospital’s Main Block Lobby here Wednesday. The event, aimed at promoting breastfeeding as a critical foundation for maternal and child health, drew healthcare professionals, families, and media representatives for a series of informative sessions.

Leading the initiative, Apollo’s senior consultant and Paediatrics head Ranjit Joshi emphasised the wide-range benefits of breastfeeding and said, “Breastfeeding promotes lifelong immunity, cognitive development, and enhances emotional bonding between mother and child.”

Paediatrics senior consultant Pravin Pahi addressed common misconceptions around breastfeeding and the need for community support. “Break-



ing myths and promoting accurate knowledge is the first step in empowering mothers,” he noted, encouraging families to seek professional guidance.

Highlighting the link between neonatal care and nutrition, Paediatrics and Neonatology consultant Meghmala Sadhukhan said, “Nutritional health starts from birth and lays the foundation for a child’s growth and development. To ensure the best outcomes, a collaborative care model is essential—one that brings together doctors, nurses, and families. This integrated approach not only supports the immediate health of the newborn but also sets the

stage for long-term well-being and resilience.”

Nursing superintendent Suchitra underscored the frontline role of nurses in supporting new mothers and said, “Nurses are often a mother’s first support system after birth. Training them in breastfeeding techniques ensures timely support for mothers facing challenges.”

The programme featured expert talks, myth-busting sessions, guidance on exclusive breastfeeding for six months, and practical advice on overcoming lactation challenges.

Participants praised the evidence-based approach and emotional support offered.

## AIORAI-2025 workshop at SSU

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, August 6:** Industry-Academia Young Professionals Committee (IAY-PC)-2025, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) India Council, and the India Internet Foundation (IIFON), with support from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, jointly organised a workshop titled ‘Advanced Internet Operations Research in India’ (AIORAI) at the Sri Sri University (SSU) here Wednesday.

The workshop, which was simultaneously conducted at 11 centres across the country, focused on skill enhancement in internet engineering. SSU was selected as the host in the Odisha region. The event was graced by SSU VC Tej Pratap, Dean RN Satapathy, and AIO-RAI representative Anupam Agrawal. The sessions included extensive discussions on internet engineering, development of global standards, and the potential transformation of internet measurement practices.

Faculty members from various academic institutions across the state were entrusted with the responsibility of



becoming AIORAI Ambassadors. They were tasked with setting up AIORAI Measurement Anchors within their networks, actively engaging students in the measurement process, conducting at least one student-focused workshop in their institution during August 2025 and facilitating team registrations for a two-month-long hackathon. The final event of this hackathon will be held at Chandigarh University in November 2025.

The programme was coordinated by department of Engineering associate professor Satyajit Pattnaik, and assistant professor Soumendra Mahapatra. SSU president Rajita Kulkarni congratulated the organisers on the successful completion of the programme.

# Angul railway station to undergo revamp

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, August 6:** The Angul railway station is set to undergo a major transformation under the Amrit Station Scheme, with redevelopment work expected to be completed by December 2025.

The project aims to convert Angul station into a modern, inclusive, and culturally vibrant railway hub, significantly enhancing the travel experience for passengers across all categories. According to East Coast Railway (ECoR) sources, the redevelopment will prioritise accessibility, especially for Divyangjan (persons with disabilities). The Phase-I upgrade includes the construction of ramps, low-height ticket and help booths, Divyang-friendly toilets and water kiosks, coach position displays, dedicated parking areas, and lifts integrated with the foot over bridge (FOB).

The upgraded station will feature improved passenger amenities such as public announcement systems, digital signage, enhanced illumination, charging points, CCTV surveillance, automatic ticket vending machines (ATVMs), train indicator boards, tourist facilitation counters and one station one product (OSOP) stalls.

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, August 6:** Building safe campuses requires not just robust mechanisms, but also collective ownership, ongoing sensitisation, and active engagement from all stakeholders — from students to university leadership and the surrounding community, said Dr Rajesh Tandon, UNE-SCO Co-Chair on Community-Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education. While progressive laws are in place, their true impact is realised only when institutions and individuals internalise and act upon them, he emphasised.

Dr Tandon was speaking at a sensitisation programme on “Empowering Campus: Safety, Security and Inclusivity”, organised by the Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD) in collaboration with the Martha Farrell Foundation (MFF), UNFPA, UNESCO, and PRIA. The event, held Wednesday, also marked the launch of the Nationwide Campaign for Safe Campuses in Higher Educational Institutions — an MFF initiative in partnership with the Association of Indian



Universities.

The event highlighted the urgent need to ensure students’ physical, emotional, and psychological safety — particularly for women — as Odisha experiences significant social and demographic changes. “With over 2,500 colleges and nearly 12 lakh post-secondary students, half of them women, Odisha has a unique opportunity to lead in building gender-just campuses,” Dr. Tandon said.

He stressed that members of the academic community have both a moral and institutional duty to initiate change within their own campuses, then extend those efforts outward to

foster a broader culture of collective responsibility.

Jagadananda, mentor and co-founder of CYSD, stressed that building safe and inclusive campuses requires more than awareness — it demands a shared understanding among stakeholders of the structural issues tied to gender justice. Aligning institutional goals with the lived realities of students and faculty, he noted, is key to turning dialogue into meaningful and lasting action.

Dr Nadeem Noor, state head of UNFPA Odisha, noted that the concept of safety and security has evolved beyond mere

physical protection to include mental, emotional, social, and digital well-being — a shift from its traditional focus on physical threats and law-and-order concerns.

The global and national shifts — from demographic changes to technological advances, economic restructuring, and climate impacts — require campuses to adopt an inclusive, future-ready approach to safety, well-being, and gender justice, Dr Noor added.

Rukmani Panda, state head of Breakthrough, stressed the need to integrate gender justice into the curriculum. Pramila Swain, state convener of NAWO, underscored the importance of challenging and transforming deeply entrenched gender norms, while Biraj Pattnaik of PCI India highlighted that achieving gender justice requires systemic change.

The programme united faculty, students, gender focal points, civil society leaders, experts, and volunteers from 17 universities across the state to pledge collective action for fostering gender-sensitive cultures in higher education institutions.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	87.83 ▼ 0.04	SENSEX	80543.99 ▼ 166.26	GOLD	₹101,119 ▼ ₹219
EURO	102.03 ▲ 0.43	NIFTY	24574.20 ▼ 75.35	SILVER	₹113,361 ▼ ₹143

WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	32.8°	32.2°	mostly cloudy sky
Min Temp	27.0°	25.6°	
Humidity	87%	87%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	

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THE MOTHER



# Ticking Time Bomb

In the year since the violent, military-backed overthrow of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s government, Bangladesh has descended into chaos. The economy is reeling, radical Islamist forces are gaining ground, young people are becoming increasingly radicalised, lawlessness is taking hold, and religious and ethnic minorities are under siege. The country’s future has never looked bleaker.

Many had hoped that Hasina’s ouster would open the way for Bangladesh to transition to democracy following an authoritarian lurch under the “iron lady.” After all, they reasoned, it was a student-led uprising that toppled her regime. But this narrative downplayed the decisive role of the powerful military, which had long chafed under Hasina’s attempts to curb its influence and ultimately forced her into exile in India. Similarly, Islamist forces – who provided much of the muscle behind the student protests – viewed her overthrow as an opportunity to end the marginalisation they faced under her secular rule.

The illusory promise of Hasina’s overthrow was further enhanced by the installation of Muhammad Yunus – the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize laureate celebrated as a savior of the poor for pioneering microcredit through his Grameen Bank – as the nominal head of the interim government. But, again, the headline misrepresents reality.

In fact, the Nobel Committee’s choice was less about the Grameen Bank’s actual impact than it was about geopolitical signaling. In presenting the award, the Committee chair invoked Yunus as a symbolic bridge between Islam and the West, expressing hope that his selection would counter the “widespread tendency to demonize Islam” that had taken hold in the West after the US terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. It is no coincidence that former US President Bill Clinton had lobbied for Yunus.

As the leader of Bangladesh’s interim government, Yunus has promised sweeping reforms and democratic elections. But elections have been repeatedly postponed. Meanwhile, despite lacking constitutional legitimacy, the interim government has launched sweeping purges of independent institutions, ousting the chief justice and the next five most-senior Supreme Court justices, and outlawing Hasina’s Awami League, the country’s oldest and largest political party, which led Bangladesh to independence.

The government has also presided over proliferating human-rights abuses and intensifying repression. Those identified as Hasina’s supporters – including lawyers, academics, journalists, artists, and opposition figures – are being jailed in droves, with thousands reportedly detained since February. International media watchdogs have sounded the alarm over escalating attacks on journalists, many of whom are charged with bogus crimes, from murder to abduction. Reports of extrajudicial killings and torture in custody have become commonplace.

But perhaps the most alarming development is the rehabilitation of Islamist extremists. The military-mullah regime that Yunus nominally leads has reversed bans on jihadist groups previously linked to terrorism, and has freed notorious Islamist leaders. Several extremists now occupy ministerial or other government posts, and mobs affiliated with them openly terrorise perceived opponents.

Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, tribal communities, and members of Islamic sects that Islamists consider heretical are being attacked with impunity. Women dressed “immodestly” face public shaming and assault. A culture of Taliban-style moral policing is rapidly taking root. The situation has gotten so bad that even the pro-regime Bangladesh Nationalist Party, long the Awami League’s arch-rival, has decried the erosion of basic freedoms, the “madness that erupted in the name of religion,” and the “terrifying violence” on the streets.

A collapsing economy will only exacerbate these problems. GDP growth has tumbled, foreign debt has ballooned, and inflation has soared to a 12-year high. With investor confidence plummeting, the stock market has fallen to its lowest level in almost five years. Job losses and declining living standards create fertile ground for continued radicalisation and social unrest.

Bangladesh once embodied the promise of secular democracy in a Muslim-majority country. Until the COVID-19 pandemic, it was making impressive progress on economic development and social stability. But now it risks slipping into the kind of military-sanctioned dysfunction that has long plagued Pakistan, the country it fought so hard to break away from. The consequences will reverberate across the region. India, which borders Bangladesh on three sides and is home to millions of undocumented Bangladeshi migrants, will be hit particularly hard. Under Hasina, Bangladesh was one of India’s closest partners, especially on counterterrorism and regional connectivity. Her departure thus dealt a blow to India’s strategic interests. India’s government is now scrambling to manage the fallout, such as by stepping up border security to prevent infiltration by extremists.

Whereas India immediately recognised the risks posed by Hasina’s overthrow, the United States endorsed the regime change. But if Bangladesh continues on its current trajectory, it will significantly complicate US-led efforts to ensure a free, open, prosperous, and stable Indo-Pacific. Some have warned that Bangladesh could become another global flashpoint that draws in even faraway countries.

If the international community is serious about defending democratic values, religious freedom, and regional stability, it can no longer turn a blind eye to Bangladesh’s downward spiral.

*The writer is Professor Emeritus of Strategic Studies at the New Delhi-based Center for Policy Research and Fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy in Berlin.*

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WISDOM CORNER

When we are no longer able to change a situation - we are challenged to change ourselves.

VIKTOR E. FRANKL

Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul - and sings the tunes without the words - and never stops at all.

EMILY DICKINSON

Much unhappiness has come into the world because of bewilderment and things left unsaid.

FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY

FOCUS POLITICS

NATION FIRST, ALWAYS



Bruhaspati Samal

INDIA'S ECONOMY MAY BE FACING CHALLENGES, BUT IT IS FAR FROM DEAD



Brahma Chellaney

Bangladesh once embodied the promise of secular democracy in a Muslim-majority country. Until the COVID-19 pandemic, it was making impressive progress on economic development and social stability. But now it risks slipping into the kind of military-sanctioned dysfunction that has long plagued Pakistan, the country it fought so hard to break away from



Bhabani Shankar Nayak

THE SO-CALLED BIPARTISAN SUPPORT FOR INDIA AS A STRATEGIC PARTNER IS A MYTH. IT IS DRIVEN ENTIRELY BY AMERICAN ECONOMIC INTERESTS



While it is entirely legitimate to criticise the ruling government and its economic policies, equating a political critique with a sweeping condemnation of the entire nation is both irresponsible and detrimental to India's global image

major economy in the world. Even though this growth is not evenly distributed, and income inequality and rural distress persist, the economic fundamentals are not in collapse. Criticism of the government is a fundamental part of democratic functioning. The Opposition has every right—and indeed the duty—to question economic mismanagement, policy failures, and governance lapses. But such criticism must be aimed at the ruling party or administration, not the country itself. A responsible leader, especially one who aspires to govern the nation, must make a clear distinction between condemning the government and maligning the country. When a foreign leader mocks our economy and an Indian leader echoes the remark without nuance or context, it appears as a betrayal of national interest. Patriotism does not mean silence on failures, but it demands loyalty to the truth and sensitivity to the country’s dignity. India’s economy may be facing challenges, but it is far from dead. Despite global headwinds like the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical disruptions, and inflationary pressures, India remains the world’s fifth-largest economy in terms of nominal GDP, with a GDP of \$3.73 trillion as of 2024, ahead of the UK and just behind Germany. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) projects India’s GDP growth rate at 6.8% in 2025, making it the fastest-growing

It should come forward with shadow budgets, policy blueprints, and economic roadmaps. Parliament must be used as a forum for intelligent debate rather than a battleground of loud rhetoric. Leaders must offer their economic vision, suggest reforms, and support the government in national matters like defence, health, and education where unity is vital. A responsible Opposition can help shape fiscal prudence, question wasteful expenditure, and press for transparency. For instance, while the government claims significant infrastructure growth through schemes like PM Gati Shakti and Bharatmala, the Opposition must ask how these projects are being funded and whether they create inclusive growth. Similarly, while the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes in sectors like electronics and semiconductors are yielding results, the Opposition must demand better accountability and more domestic job creation from these capital-heavy investments. However, the responsibility does not lie with the Opposition alone. The government must also foster a culture of openness and accountability. Every criticism must not be dismissed as anti-national. A self-assured government must treat dissent as a tool for improvement. Transparency

SPECTRUM DIPLOMACY

The rise and the fall of Indo-US ties

After failing to bully China through unfair trade and tariff measures, the US led Donald Trump is now attempting to pressure India by imposing various measures aimed at weakening its economy. These actions also threaten India’s independent foreign policy, as the US seeks to undermine India for refusing to fall in line with its imperialist strategies of global dominance that envision India as a junior partner. The history of India-US relations shows that the US has consistently acted against India’s national interests. It has never been a truly committed friend of India—or of any other country, for that matter. Instead, it uses other nations as tools to sustain its declining hegemony in global affairs. From the first decade of independent India to the present day, the US has continued to pursue Cold War-era imperialist politics in Asia, using terrorism and Pakistan as proxies to disrupt peace and progress in the region, while seeking to contain India’s independent and non-aligned foreign policy. From the 1962 Sino-Indian

War to the formation of the QUAD, the US has repeatedly devised strategies to build alliances with India—primarily to counter China. The 123 US-India Civil Nuclear Agreement is structured in a way that primarily serves to revive the struggling nuclear industry in the US, offering India little in terms of meeting its clean energy needs. During the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s American technological embargoes, trade restrictions, and other sanctions were aimed at pressuring India to open its markets on American terms. Over the decades, American leadership has consistently sought to woo Indian policymakers into granting greater access to American companies. However, such moves risk undermining India’s industrial and agricultural productivity, weakening its economy, and jeopardising the country’s food security. India-US relations were relatively warmer during the presidencies of Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama and Joe Biden, who viewed India as a strategic partner—though cooperation remained condi-

tional, with underlying tensions over India’s independent foreign policy, its close ties with Russia, and differing approaches to the containment of China. The Trump administration is essentially continuing the legacy of the long-standing American approach toward India, imposing higher tariffs, introducing trade restrictions, and pursuing political realignments that aim to weaken India’s progress. Containment of Asia has consistently been a central feature of American imperial strategy—often supported by its European allies. This neo-imperial and neo-colonial approach seek not only to undermine India and contain China, but also to exert control over Asia’s natural and human resources, knowledge, and skills in order to maintain dominance over global affairs. The so-called bipartisan support for India as a strategic partner is a myth. It is driven entirely by American economic interests in regional and global politics—first aimed at containing China, and ultimately India as well. The American governing elite opposes the

rise of Asia as a center of peace and prosperity. The Trump administration is not likely to stop at imposing higher tariffs and penalties on Indian goods and services to weaken India’s economy; it will also seek to destabilise the region by promoting regional conflicts and terrorism to hinder India’s progress. It would be naïve to believe otherwise regarding the direction of the American approach toward India and Indians. Therefore, India and its people must revive the spirit of their secular, anti-imperialist, anti-colonial, and anti-capitalist politics to resist American hegemony and expose its nefarious strategies for the region and the world. India needs to expand its anti-imperialist struggle by building solidarities with countries across Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Europe. The end of imperialism and its capitalist hegemony would be beneficial for people worldwide, paving the way for democracy, peace and prosperity across the globe.


The writer is a service union representative and columnist.

The writer teaches at the London Metropolitan University.

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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)



B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Glaring hypocrisy

Sir, This refers to “Will raise tariffs on India in 24 hrs: Trump,” **Orissa POST**, August 6. US President Donald Trump’s move to escalate tariffs on Indian exports—just days after imposing a 25% duty—ostensibly in response to India’s continued purchase of Russian crude, is a tactically unsound and geopolitically hypocritical step. India has rightly called the action “unjustified and unreasonable,” as it could lead to a 30% decline in its exports to the US. Key sectors like textiles face severe economic fallout, while business groups have condemned Washington’s coercive trade posture. The hypocrisy is glaring. During the early stages of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the US subtly encouraged India to maintain oil imports from Russia to help stabilise global markets. Yet now, it continues to import uranium and vital chemicals from Russia, exposing the double standards behind Trump’s rhetoric. Trump’s claim that India is profiteering by re-exporting cheap Russian oil at inflated prices lacks evidence and borders on deliberate misinformation. His inflammatory tone weakens diplomatic ties and undermines mutual trust. Instead of weaponising tariffs, the US should adopt a more balanced, respectful approach—based on sovereign equality, strategic realism, and long-term partnership..

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Promote handloom

Sir, India’s Swadeshi Movement took off on 7 August, 1905 to protest British Raj’s decision to partition Bengal. The movement was aimed at boycotting foreign clothes and boosting indigenous textile manufacture. India’s handloom sector is the world’s largest. An important source of livelihood in rural and semi rural India, 70% of handloom workers are women. National Handloom Day was first observed on 7 August, 2015. It aims at highlighting the contribution of the handloom sector to country’s socioeconomic development besides preserving and boosting the domestic handloom sector. Plenty of unheralded artisans and weavers, who work behind the scenes, are recognised and honoured. Making people aware of the rich cultural traditions of handloom is crucial for the sector’s sustenance. The Centre should put in place more and more technical training programmes and digital marketing should be given a push.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA



# Development drowns Uttarakhand

*The state's geology compounds is risky. Steep slopes, young and fragile formations prone to erosion and tectonic faults such as the main central thrust make the terrain unstable. CSE's Atlas shows 13 Himalayan states and Union territories reported extreme weather events on 822 days, claiming 2,863 lives*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 6:** The death and destruction left behind by the flash floods in the Kheer Ganga river in Dharali resurrected painful memories for Geeta, a survivor of the 2013 Kedarnath disaster, who lost four family members in that tragedy, India's worst since 2004 tsunami.

"The same thing happened in Kedarnath," she exclaimed as visuals played out on television at some house in New Delhi where she works as a domestic help.

The 2013 disaster was triggered by more than 300 mm of rain in 24 hours as an early intense monsoon surge interacted with a western disturbance. The extreme rainfall, combined with rapid snowmelt, breached the moraine dam of Chorabari Lake, unleashing massive



floods that killed around 5,700 people.

Scarred by the tragedy, Geeta (now 45 years old) and her family migrated to Delhi to rebuild their lives. But each time it hits the Himalayan state, it revives those haunting memories for her.

Over the past 12 years, a series of disasters have underscored the fragility of the Himalayan terrain.

August 18, 2019, a cloudburst in Uttarkashi's Arakot region triggered flash floods and landslides, killing at least 19 people and affecting 38 villages.

In February 2021, the collapse of a hanging glacier caused a debris flow in the Ronti Gad stream, a tributary of Rishiganga, sweeping away two hy-

dropower projects in Chamoli. Eighty bodies were recovered, and 204 people went missing.

In August the last year, flash floods caused by a cloudburst in the Maldevta-Song-Baldi river system washed away large parts of the Maldevta town near Dehradun, affecting a 15 km stretch.

The Dharali disaster, experts say, shares features with the 2021 Chamoli tragedy.

"It is similar to Chamoli, and rainfall is just one factor. We need high-resolution satellite data or ground verification to know more," HNB Garhwal University Professor YP Sundriyal said.

The 2021 Chamoli disaster impacted an area spanning 20-22 km but did not affect the Alaknanda downstream. A

study published last month in the Journal of the Geological Society of India has confirmed a sharp rise in extreme rainfall and surface runoff events in Uttarakhand after 2010.

The research, led by Professor Sundriyal, shows that while 1998-2009 saw warming and low rainfall, the trend reversed post-2010, with central and western Uttarakhand witnessing more extreme precipitation events.

"Data from 1970 to 2021 shows a clear increase in extreme rainfall events after 2010," Sundriyal said. The state's geology compounds is risky. Steep slopes, young and fragile formations prone to erosion and tectonic faults such as the main central thrust make the terrain unstable. The orographic effect

# Organic farming gains traction in Himachal



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Himachal Pradesh, August 6:** With incentives like subsidies and assured minimum support price given by the state government to promote natural farming, around 37,000 farmers have adopted natural farming in the twin districts of Una and Hamirpur.

Over 20,000 farmers in Hamirpur district and 16,853 farmers in Una have adopted natural farming, officials said. Deputy Commissioner of Hamirpur Amarjeet Singh said around 96 quintals of wheat and 9 quintals of turmeric prepared through natural farming have been purchased in the district in the Rabi season, while 53 quintals of maize were purchased in the last Kharif season.

Project Director of Aatma Project, Hamirpur, Nitin Sharma said that to promote natural farming, farmers are given a subsidy of Rs 25,000 for the

purchase of indigenous cows.

Apart from this, a transport subsidy of Rs 5,000 and payment of animal market fee up to Rs 2,000 are also provided under the project. A subsidy of Rs 8,000 is given for paving the floor of the cowshed and setting up systems for collecting cow urine. Additionally, a subsidy of up to Rs 2,250 is available for preparing materials required for natural farming, such as drums and other equipment.

Shakuntala Devi and Sushma Devi of Gram Panchayat Amlahad, who have adopted natural farming, have found new hope. Not only has it significantly reduced their farming costs, but their crops are also fetching better prices, and their food is now free from harmful chemicals, Sharma added.

The ATMA Project Director Virender Bagga claims 41.66 metric tonnes of natural wheat and 11.15 metric tonnes of natural maize were purchased by farmers in Una district.

# Chamoli's SHG women craft eco-friendly rakhis

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chamoli, August 6:** Women of Self-Help Group are not only running their livelihood by taking advantage of the public welfare schemes run by the government, but they have also improved their economic condition by earning good profits by making eco-friendly rakhis in Uttarakhand's Chamoli.

The initiative is a part Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), the Ministry of Rural Development's flagship programme aimed at reducing poverty by building strong institutions for the poor, especially women. These institutions are empowered to access financial services, market linkages, and diverse livelihood opportunities.

In Chamoli, this mission has taken a colourful turn. As Raksha Bandhan approaches, SHG members are crafting rakhis from pirul, bhojpatra, and vajrayanti seeds - materials rooted in the region's ecology and traditions. Alongside, they are preparing local delicacies like arasa and roti, attracting buyers keen on authentic, handmade products.

The response has been overwhelmingly positive. Local residents and visitors



are readily purchasing these unique items, praising both the craftsmanship and the initiative's eco-friendly ethos. For the women involved, the sales have meant more than just extra income - they have brought recognition, confidence, and a stronger voice in household and community decisions.

"We are making rakhis from waste material, giving new life to things often discarded," said Pratibha Tiwari, a beneficiary.

"We've already sold over 500 rakhis, and today alone, around 200 have been purchased."

Another SHG member, Sanjeeta Bisht, added: "There is a high demand for our rakhis. We are selling a lot, and people are appreciating our work."

For Suman Devi, the project's biggest success is collective empowerment.

"Seven or eight women are working together on this. It's not just about rakhis - it's about improving our economic condition and supporting each other," she said.

Chamoli's Chief Development Officer, Abhishek Tripathi, highlighted the vision behind Chief Minister's Em-

powered Behna Yojana, the same has amplified the impact of SHGs.

"We have set up 18 stalls for SHG women across the district to sell rakhis made from pirul, bhojpatra, and vajrayanti, as well as traditional sweets like arasa and roti. The festive season has boosted sales, and these women are earning substantial profits," Tripathi said.

DAY-NRLM adopts a demand-driven approach, allowing states to create poverty reduction plans tailored to local needs. Intensive blocks and districts implement all programme components through State Rural Livelihood Missions (SRLMs) or partner institutions, while others are classified as non-intensive.

The mission, a restructured version of the Swarnajayanti Gram Swaraj Yojana (SGSY), was renamed as DAY-NRLM, March 29, 2016. Its target is to reach seven crore rural poor households across 600 districts, 6,000 blocks, 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats, and six lakh villages within eight to ten years. This is achieved through self-managed SHGs and federated institutions, enabling members to form livelihood collectives and access rights, entitlements, and public services.

# HP govt to set up TIPC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Shimla, August 6:** The Himachal Pradesh government will set up Tourism Investment Promotion Council (TIPC), a single-window mechanism for fast-tracking project approvals and providing comprehensive investor facilitation to boost private investment in the sector, an official release said Tuesday.

The tourism council will serve as a dedicated platform to evaluate and approve tourism projects with an investment of Rs 50 crore and above. It will be chaired by Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu and supported by an Investment Promotion Cell within the state Department of Tourism.

The Council will be governed by the principles of minimum regulation, maximum facilitation, and time-bound decision-making.

The initiative will help in creating a proactive system wherein the onus of project



preparedness will rest with the state government, thereby significantly reducing entry barriers for prospective investors in the state, the statement said.

Furthermore, except in cases involving statutory approvals (under Section 118 or environmental clearances), projects will be deemed approved if not cleared within

the stipulated time frame.

"Tourism is a vital economic driver for Himachal Pradesh, contributing significantly to employment generation, income creation and balanced regional development. However, fragmented governance, slow approvals, and inadequate investor facilitation have hampered sectoral growth," a government spokesperson said.

"The state government has launched TIPC as a strategic, policy-aligned body to attract, assess and enable tourism investments in a streamlined and transparent manner," the spokesman added.

The state-level apex body will convene monthly meetings to examine and approve investment proposals in a time-bound manner.

# Himachal plans to start water metro services

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bilaspur (HP), August 6:** The Bilaspur district administration in Himachal Pradesh is planning to start a water metro service from Bhakra Ghat to Kosaria Ghat, connecting Maa Nainadevi Temple and Shahtalai through waterway, officials said Tuesday.

A team including Director Fisheries Department Vivek Chandel, Assistant Commissioner Narendra Ahluwalia and District Tourism Officer Mandi Rajneesh Kumar, under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Bilaspur Rahul Kumar inspected possibilities for the project from Mandi Bharari to Bhakra Dam area Monday.

The team held a discussion on water metro service from Bhakra Ghat to Kosaria Ghat. The deputy commissioner said this project will make the movement of passengers as well as vehicles possible, a statement issued here said.

The project will save time and also give a thrilling experience to the devotees and tourists. The inspection team proposed wayside amenities and glass bridge site in Mandi Bharari area.

Water metro is a modern, eco-friendly public transportation system utilising waterways, to reduce congestion and improve connectivity.

Kumar said that the natural beauty of Bhakra, calm water streams and mountainous environment make it an ideal place for water sports activities.

He said that the devotees coming to Naina Devi will get a new experience of water sports here.

The deputy commissioner said that this area connects major tourist places like Shimla, Dharamshala, Chandigarh and Manali. Therefore, facilities like high-level rest rooms, food,



**The aim of the development is to bring Bilaspur on the tourism map of not only the state, but the country**

parking and information center will be provided here.

He also said that the detailed project report (DPR) of the glass bridge has been sent to the tourism department. Construction work will begin as soon as the approval is received.

During the inspection, the possibilities of water sports in the Nakrana area were also assessed.

Kumar also interacted with locals, engaged in boating activities and listened to their problems, during the inspection. He said that the aim of the district administration is to bring Bilaspur on the tourism map of not only the state, but the country. All necessary steps will be taken to bring the proposed projects on the ground soon.



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Phone: 91-0674-2542983, 2542802, 2545526, 2542826  
OHPC: TECH: C&P: 13/2025-26/6038  
Date: 30.07.2025

**E-TENDER NOTICE No. 04/2025-26**  
**INVITATION FOR BIDS**  
No. CAD-1408: OHPC Ltd., Bhubaneswar, invites percentage rate bids in double cover system (Cover-I Technical Bid and Cover-II Price bid) for the work as detailed below through 'e'-procurement. The bids should be submitted 'online' in <https://tendersodisha.gov.in> by the "C" & "D" Class of contractors registered with the State Government and contractors of equivalent grade/class registered with Central Government / Railways / MES having registration for execution of civil works on production of definite proof from the appropriate authority. The bidders should have necessary portal enrolment with their own valid Digital Signature Certificate. The bidder must possess compatible Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of Class-II or Class-III.

Name of the Work	Value of Work put to Tender (in ₹)	E.M.D. (in ₹) (Online)	Cost of Bid Document (Online)	Class of Bidder	Period of Completion of Work (in calendar month)
"Repair, Renovation and Interior furnishing of OHPC Qtr. No. 3R(S)/9 at OPTCL Colony, Bhubaneswar"	11,61,412	12,000/-	7,080/- (Rs.6000 + 18% GST)	"C" & "D" Class Contractor	03 Months

Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal : From 11.00 Hrs. of Dt.08.08.2025 to 12.00 Hrs. of Dt.20.08.2025

Last date & time of submission of Bid : Upto 12.00 Hrs. of Dt.20.08.2025

The date & time of opening of the Technical Bid : 12.00 Hrs. onwards of Dt.21.08.2025

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.

**OIPR-04012/11/0043/2526****C & P Head**







of the day

quote

A dedicated portal is coming up where indige-nous people, who perceive a threat to their lives and reside in sensitive areas, can apply for Arms License

**HIMANTA BISWA SARMA** | CHIEF MINISTER, ASSAM

Creating a safe, hygienic, and welcom-ing school environ-ment is essential. Infrastructure upgrades must be undertaken in coordination with district councils, municipal corpo-rations, and local bodies

**DEVENDRA FADNAVIS** | CHIEF MINISTER, MAHARASHTRA

We all know how President's Rule came to be imposed in the state.... There is a need for a popular government, and it should come. I have stood for popular govern-ment from the very beginning. Due to the situation, I was forced to resign. You all know it

**N BIREN SINGH** | FORMER CHIEF MINISTER, MANIPUR

X

POST

OF THE DAY

> Fake petrol  
> Fake paneer  
> Fake spices  
> Fake milk  
> Fake road  
> Fake caste certificates

Is there anything "REAL" that is being sold?

@talk2anuradha

SHORT TAKES

2 militants among 4 held in Manipur

**Imphal:** Security forces arrested two arms smugglers and two militants belonging to proscribed outfits from Manipur's Imphal West and East districts, police said Wednesday. A 41-year-old active cadre of the banned Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup was apprehended from his residence at Phumlou Keiroi Maning in Imphal West district on Tuesday, a senior officer said. The militant was involved in recruiting cadres for the outlawed organisation, he said. A 33-year-old member of the proscribed Kangleipak Communist Party (MFL) was also arrested from a rented house at Lamphel in Imphal West district Tuesday for allegedly being involved in extortion activities, the officer said.

1 killed, 4 hurt as platform collapses

**Bilaspur:** A worker was killed and four others were injured after a platform collapsed at a plant of government-run National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) in Chhattisgarh's Bilaspur district Wednesday, police said. The incident took place in unit no 5 of the plant in Sipat village, around 25 km from here, said Gopal Satpathi, Station House Officer (SHO), Sipat. As per the preliminary information, the victims were working on the 'air pre heater platform' when the structure collapsed, the police official said. Shyam Sahu (27) was killed and four others sustained injuries, he said.

2 killed in oxygen cylinder plant blast

**Chandigarh:** A massive blast rocked an oxygen cylinder plant in Punjab's Mohali district Wednesday, leaving two persons dead and four injured, officials said. The incident took place at Hi-Tech Gases, an oxygen cylinder unit located in the industrial area in phase-9 in Mohali.

UTTARKASHI CLOUDBURST

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Uttarakashi (Uttarakhand), August 6:** As the sun set over the flood-ravaged Himalayan village of Dharali with 190 people rescued and two bodies recovered Wednesday, fears mounted for those still trapped under the massive river of sludge that buried scores of houses, trees and cars.

Four people are suspected to have been killed in the disaster that struck the ecologically fragile area Tuesday afternoon.

Two bodies were recovered Wednesday and 15 are missing, Disaster Management Secretary Vinod Kumar Suman said.

Two Chinook helicopters have reached Sahastradhara helipad in Dehradun in which 50 NDRF jawans are to be taken along with rescue equipment to ground zero. Five AN-32 helicopters of the IAF have also arrived at the helipad on the way to Dharali.

Tonnes of rubble lay on the site with the ITBP, Army and SDRF personnel rummaging through it for those trapped underneath amid continuing rain and road collapses.

Officials said the army's Ibox brigade which had helped in rescue operations in the Mana avalanche of February is preparing to take the help of ground penetrating radars and sniffer dogs to search the missing.

Two more NDRF teams are en route to Dharali but have been unable to get there because continuous landslides have blocked the Rishikesh-Uttarkashi highway.

According to Mohsen Shahedi, NDRF deputy inspector general (DIG) operations, two NDRF teams are to be airlifted from Dehradun, but they can't



The officers were served suspension notices yesterday. Have the elections even been announced yet? Which law allows them to be suspended at this stage? It is our responsibility to protect you all. We will do that. We will not suspend them

MAMATA BANERJEE | CHIEF MINISTER, WEST BENGAL

Rescuers retrieve 2 bodies; NDRF at site

Four people are suspected to have been killed in the disaster that struck the ecologically fragile area Tuesday afternoon



be moved as bad weather is preventing a successful sortie.

Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami to get an update on the situation and assured him of the Centre's assistance.

Modi also met MPs from Uttarakhand -- Anil Baluni, Mala Rajya Laxmi Shah, Trivendra Singh Rawat and Ajay Bhatt -- at the Parliament House and was briefed on the current situation and the ongoing rescue operations.

Dhami did an aerial survey of the affected areas and met the kin of the missing people in Dharali assuring them of all support.

"190 people have been rescued. All of them are safe and are at secure places," he told PTI Videos, adding, "The injured have been admitted to

Experts say rain data doesn't support claim

A cloudburst in the upper catchment of the Kheer Ganga river is widely believed to have triggered the flash flood in Uttarkashi's Dharali, but experts feel the amount of rain the Uttarkashi district received Tuesday was not enough for it to be termed a "cloudburst". "Data available with us does not reflect the occurrence of a cloudburst," Rohit Thapliyal, a scientist with the India Meteorological Department (IMD), told PTI. He explained that Uttarkashi received only 27 mm of rain Tuesday, "which is too little for a cloudburst or flash flood of such devastating intensity". Asked what could have been the reason for the flash flood if not a cloudburst, he said it was a subject of research. "Only after detailed research can anything be definitively said about what led to the flash flood," he said. "All I can say is the data available with the meteorological department confirms there was no cloudburst", Thapliyal said. Counted among the most devastating natural disasters in the Indian Himalayas, a cloudburst causes an enormous amount of rainfall across a limited area within an extremely short span of time.

hospitals while some have been sent to the military camps and higher centres."

Dharali is about 140 km from Dehradun and usually a five-hour drive.

"Today I will be staying in Uttarkashi to closely monitor the relief and rescue operations in Dharali. I am also continuously reviewing the rescue operation by holding meetings with the

officials," Dhami also said in a Facebook post.

"Rescue operations are being carried out with full readiness by SDRF, NDRF, Army, ITBP and the local administration," he said.

Landslides blocked arterial roads leading up to Dharali where dozens of people were trapped and many homes and cars swept away by the raging

MODI INAUGURATES KARTAVYA BHAVAN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday inaugurated Kartavya Bhavan, the first of the 10 upcoming Common Central Secretariat buildings which will house offices of all ministries. The ambitious project is aimed at bringing ministries and departments under one roof for efficiency. Kartavya Bhavan-03, the first to be inaugurated, will house the Home Affairs, External Affairs, Rural Development, MSME, DoPT, Petroleum & Natural Gas ministries, and the Principal Scientific Adviser's office



IN A FIRST

Kolkata court grants police custody to law college rape accused

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, August 6:** In what is being claimed as a first-of-its-kind order by a court in Kolkata, all four accused in the South Calcutta Law College rape case were remanded to police custody for an additional period of three days, 39 days after they were first arrested.

The prime accused in the case, Monojit Mishra, an alumnus and a contractual employee of the college, and two of his suspected accomplices, Pramit Mukhopadhyay and Zaib Ahmed, both students, along with Pinaki Banerjee, security guard of the campus, were granted police custody till August 8 by Amit Sarkar, Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate of Alipore Court.

The order was passed Tuesday in the wake of all four accused having previously been remanded to police custody for 11 days, followed by their judicial custody for another 28 days.

"Under the provisions of Section 167 of the earlier CrPC Act, the prayer for police remand had to be made within the first 15 days of arrest. That provision has now changed under the new Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), which replaced the CrPC July 1, 2024. The BNSS now empowers the police to pray for remand anytime within the first 60 days of arrest for heinous crimes like rape and murder," Sourin Ghosal, the Kolkata Police Chief Public Prosecutor in Alipore Court, explained.

"But this was the first time that the relevant clauses of BNSS were invoked in a court in Kolkata and, possibly, in the entire West Bengal and in which the judge found merit," Ghoshal added.

Enforce 75% attendance for board exams: CBSE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 6:** The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has warned schools to strictly adhere to the 75 per cent attendance requirement for students appearing for board exams, according to officials.

According to the CBSE Examination By Laws, a minimum of 75 per cent attendance is mandatory for students to be eligible to appear for the board examinations.

The CBSE offers a 25 per cent relaxation only in cases of exigencies such as medical emergencies, participation in national or international sports events, and other serious reasons, if supported by the necessary documents or record.

"All students and parents must be made aware of the mandatory 75 pc attendance requirement criteria and the potential consequences of not meeting this criteria. Any student, if on leave due to a medi-



cal or any other reason, needs to apply for the leave to the school with proper medical and other documents at the time of availing leave. Leave without a written request will be considered unauthorized absence from the school," CBSE Examination Controller Sanyam Bhardwaj said in a letter to schools. The board has directed that schools must regularly monitor and maintain correct attendance records.

"Attendance registers should be updated daily, signed by the

class teacher and the competent authority of the school and be readily available for inspection by the CBSE.

"The Board may conduct surprise inspections to verify student attendance records. During such inspections, if it is found that the records are incomplete or students have not been attending the school regularly, the school may face strict action, including disaffiliation. The students may be disqualified from appearing in the board exams," Bhardwaj said.

Musk vs Modi: Inside the battle over India's internet censorship

REUTERS

**Bangalore/New Delhi, August 6:** In January, an old post on Elon Musk's social media platform, X, became a concern for police in the Indian city of Satara. Written in 2023, the short message from an account with a few hundred followers described a senior ruling-party politician as "useless".

"This post and content are likely to create serious communal tension," inspector Jitendra Shahane wrote in a content-removal notice marked "CONFIDENTIAL" and addressed to X. The post, which remains online, is among hundreds cited by X in a lawsuit it filed in March against India's government, challenging a sweeping crackdown on social media content by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration.



Since 2023, India has ramped up efforts to police the internet by allowing many more officials to file takedown orders and to submit them directly to tech firms through a government website launched in October.

X argues India's actions are illegal and unconstitutional,

and that they trample free speech by empowering scores of government agencies and thousands of police to suppress legitimate criticism of public officials.

India contends in court documents that its approach tackles a proliferation of unlawful con-

tent and ensures accountability online. It says many tech companies, including Meta and Alphabet's Google, support its actions. Both companies declined to comment for this story.

Musk, who calls himself a free-speech absolutist, has clashed with authorities in the United States, Brazil, Australia and elsewhere over compliance and takedown demands. But as regulators globally weigh free-speech protections against concerns about harmful content, Musk's case against Modi's government in the Karnataka High Court targets the entire basis

for tightened internet censorship in India, one of X's biggest user bases. Musk said in 2023 that the South Asian nation had "more promise than any large country in the world" and that Modi had pushed him to invest there.

This account of the behind-the-scenes battle between the world's richest person and authorities in the world's most populous country is based on a Reuters review of 2,500 pages of non-public legal filings and interviews with seven police officers involved in content-removal requests. It reveals the



workings of a takedown system shrouded in secrecy, some Indian officials' ire over "illegal" material on X, and the broad spectrum of content that police and other agencies have sought to censor.

While the takedown orders include many that sought to counter misinformation, they also encompass directives by Modi's administration to remove news about a deadly stampede, and demands from state police to scrub cartoons that depicted the prime minister in an unfavourable light or mocked local politicians, the filings show.

X didn't respond to Reuters questions about the case, while India's IT ministry declined to comment because the matter was before the court. Modi's office and his home ministry didn't respond to questions.



of the day

Quote

Talks about Field Marshal Asim Munir becoming the president of Pakistan are completely baseless

AHMED SHARIF CHAUDHRY | ARMY SPOKESPERSON, PAKISTAN

Through our Plan for Change, we're backing parents by not only protecting our young people online, but giving them the support and opportunities they deserve so no child falls through the cracks

KEIR STARMER | PM, BRITAIN

If DC doesn't get its act together, and quickly, we will have no choice but to take Federal control of the City, and run this City how it should be run, and put criminals on notice that they're not going to get away with it anymore

DONALD TRUMP | PRESIDENT, US

SHORT TAKES

Trump says VP Vance likely his MAGA heir

**New York:** President Donald Trump has suggested that Vice President J D Vance is "most likely" the heir apparent to his Make America Great Again (MAGA) movement, while Secretary of State Marco Rubio can also join him in "some form". "Well, I think most likely. In all fairness, he's the vice president," Trump said on Tuesday while answering a question on his "heir apparent" to MAGA. Trump, who assumed office over six months ago, said that it is "too early" to talk about successors, but Vance is certainly "doing a great job, and he would be probably favourite at this point," CNN reported. However, Trump was quick to add that Rubio can also "get together with JD in some form."

First member of SL's Rajapaksa family held

**Colombo:** Shasheendra Rajapaksa was Wednesday arrested in an anti-corruption case, making it the first such arrest from Sri Lanka's powerful political dynasties of Rajapaksa under the current NPP government's anti-graft crusade. Shasheendra is accused of misappropriating state-owned land in the southeastern region of the island nation. He is charged with illegal construction, which when suffered an arson attack in May 2022 public protests, he used his political authority to pay compensation. This was despite officials showing reluctance to pay citing the plot itself belonged to the state. Shasheendra, the son of Chamal Rajapaksa, the eldest of the Rajapaksa brothers, was arrested by the anti graft commission and produced before Colombo chief magistrate's court.

Five soldiers shot at army base in Georgia

**Savannah:** Five soldiers were shot Wednesday at Fort Stewart in Georgia, leading to a lockdown at the Army base before the shooter was arrested, officials said. The conditions of the soldiers and the circumstances of the shooting weren't immediately clear, nor was the identity of the shooter. The Army said it's investigating. The injured were treated and then moved to Winn Army Community Hospital, base officials said in a Facebook post, adding there's no threat to the community. Law enforcement was sent to the 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team complex shortly before 11 am Wednesday. The shooter was arrested at 11:35 am, officials said.

REUTERS

**Gaza, August 6:** Weakened by hunger, many Gazans trek across a ruined landscape each day to haul all their drinking and washing water - a painful load that is still far below the levels needed to keep people healthy.

Even as global attention has turned to starvation in Gaza, where after 22 months of a devastating Israeli military campaign a global hunger monitor says a famine scenario is unfolding, the water crisis is just as severe according to aid groups.

Though some water comes from small desalination units run by aid agencies, most is drawn from wells in a brackish aquifer that has been further polluted by sewage and chemicals seeping through the rubble, spreading diarrhoea and hepatitis.

COGAT, the Israeli military agency responsible for coordinating aid in the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories, says it operates two water pipelines into the Gaza Strip providing millions of litres of water a day.

Palestinian water officials say these have not been working recently.

Israel stopped all water and electricity supply to Gaza early in the war but resumed some supply later though the pipeline network in the territory



has been badly damaged.

Most water and sanitation infrastructure has been destroyed and pumps from the aquifer often rely on electricity from small generators - for which fuel is rarely available.

COGAT said the Israeli military has allowed coordination with aid organisations to bring in equipment to maintain water infrastructure throughout the conflict.

Moaz Mukhaimar, aged 23 and a university student before the war, said he has to walk about a kilometre, queuing for two hours, to fetch water. He often goes three times a day, dragging it back to the family tent over bumpy ground on a small metal handcart.

"How long will we have to stay like this?" he asked, pulling two larger canisters of

Starvation and dehydration are no longer side effects of this conflict. They are very much frontline effects

JAMES ELDER | SPOKESPERSON, UNICEF

very brackish water to use for cleaning and two smaller ones of cleaner water to drink.

His mother, Umm Moaz, 53, said the water he collects is needed for the extended family of 20 people living in their small group of tents in Deir al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip.

"The children keep coming and going and it is hot. They keep wanting to drink. Who knows if tomorrow we will be able to fill up again," she said.

Their struggle for water is replicated across the tiny, crowded territory where nearly everybody is living in tempo-

Trump in dark on Russian imports



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New York, August 6:** President Donald Trump has said that he doesn't know anything about the US imports of Russian uranium, fertilisers and chemicals.

Trump made the comments Tuesday while responding to a question on India's statement on American imports of these commodities.

"I don't know anything about it. I'd have to check, but we'll get back to you on that," Trump said, adding that he will soon decide on tariffs to be imposed on nations buying Russian energy.

India Monday mounted an unusually sharp counterattack on the US and the European Union for their "unjustified and unreasonable" targeting of New Delhi for its procurement of Russian crude oil.

Firmly rejecting the criticism, India pointed out the dou-

ble standards in targeting it on the issue and said both the US and the EU are continuing their trade relations with Russia.

"Unlike our case, such trade is not even a vital national compulsion," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement on Monday night.

The Europe-Russia trade includes not just energy, but also fertilisers, mining products, chemicals, iron and steel, and machinery and transport equipment, the MEA said.

"Where the US is concerned, it continues to import from Russia uranium hexafluoride for its nuclear industry, palladium for its EV industry, fertilisers as well as chemicals," it added.

"In this background, the targeting of India is unjustified and unreasonable," the MEA said. In response to another question that he has threatened to impose 100 per cent tariffs on all countries that purchase

UK's Imperial War Museum collects Indian stories from WWII

*By the end of the war in August 1945, the Armed Forces from the Indian subcontinent were the second largest fighting force drawn from Commonwealth nations, after Britain*

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**London, August 6:** Britain's Imperial War Museums (IWM) has launched a major collections project entitled 'India's War', inviting members of the public to share stories and memorabilia relating to Indian experiences of serving in and living through the World War II.

By the end of the war in August 1945, the Armed Forces from the Indian subcontinent were the second largest fighting force drawn from Common-

wealth nations, after Britain. According to IWM, 89,000 South Asian military personnel gave their lives fighting on almost every battle front Britain was engaged in, with 28 Indian armed forces personnel awarded the Victoria Cross – the highest award for gallantry in action.

"While IWM has significant film and photography collections documenting the Indian contribution to the Second World War, these are often unable to fully convey the experiences of the war at an individual level," said Adrian Kerrison, Senior Curator Second World War and Mid-20th Century at the IWM.

"This collecting project is an opportunity for IWM to reach out to our audiences to ensure that these powerful personal stories – significant for our understanding of the consequences of the Second World War in



India and the UK – are properly represented within IWM's collections," he said.

The curator said India's War, which went live recently, is aimed at building IWM's collections and strengthening relationships with South Asian communities through the conversations that it will generate.

To all the leaders around the world: Please visit Hiroshima and witness for yourselves the reality of the atomic bombing

KAZUMI MATSUI | MAYOR, HIROSHIMA

ITALY OKAYS SICILY BRIDGE

A long-delayed and debated bridge linking the Italian mainland with Sicily cleared a major hurdle Wednesday, allowing work to begin on what would be the world's longest suspension bridge, despite concerns over earthquakes, environmental impacts and the threat of mafia interference



Ghana says eight people including two ministers die in helicopter crash

REUTERS

**Accra, August 6:** Ghana's defence and environment ministers died in a military helicopter crash Wednesday in the southern Ashanti region along with three other officials and three airforce crew, the government said.

Julius Debrah, President John Mahama's chief of staff, told a press conference that the crash in which Defence Minister Edward Omane Boamah and Environment, Science and Technology Minister Ibrahim Murtala Muhammed were



killed was a national tragedy.

"The president and government extend our condolences and sympathies to the families of our comrades and the servicemen who died in service to the country," Debrah said.

Earlier Ghana's armed forces said radar contact had been lost with a Z9 airforce helicopter.



Trees burn during a wildfire at sunrise near Saint-Laurent-de-la-Cabrerisse, near Narbonne, southern France, Wednesday

REUTERS

France's biggest wildfire of summer eclipsed size of Paris, still spreading

**Paris:** France's biggest wildfire this summer was spreading quickly Wednesday in a Mediterranean region near the Spanish border after leaving one person dead, authorities said. About 2,000 firefighters and several water bomber aircraft battled the blaze that broke out Tuesday afternoon in the village of Ribaute in the Aude region, a rural, wooded area that is home to wineries. The wildfire remained 'very active' Wednesday and weather conditions were unfavourable, the local administration said in a statement. One person died in their home, nine others were injured, including seven firefighters, and at least one person was missing, the statement said. The interior ministry said the fire had spread over 13,000 hectares (32,000 acres), an area larger than the French capital. Jacques Piraux, mayor of the village of Jonquières, said all residents have been evacuated. "It's a scene of sadness and desolation," he told broadcaster BFM TV after he visited Wednesday morning to assess the damage. "It looks like a lunar landscape, everything is burned. More than half or three-quarters of the village has burned down. It's hellish." Residents and tourists in nearby areas were requested to remain in their homes unless told to evacuate by firefighters. Two campsites were evacuated as a precaution.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II and 'India's War' collecting project is aimed at highlighting the immense contribution made by members of the Armed Forces from pre-Partition India during colonial rule

was posted to 263 Squadron as a fighter pilot. He was killed in action at the age of 26 while attacking German ground targets in the Falaise Pocket engagement during the Battle of Normandy in 1944. His headstone, maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), is written in

Hindi, English and French, and reads: "This Hindu Airman is Honoured Here". "The 'India's War' collecting project seeks to gather more personal stories of service members like Tiger Rajan while also uncovering new civilian perspectives. The aim is to add more under-represented voices to IWM's collections, documenting South Asian experiences on both the fighting and home fronts," IWM said.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II and 'India's War' collecting project is aimed at highlighting the immense contribution made by members of the Armed Forces from pre-Partition India during colonial rule.

The aim is to showcase how the events impacted people from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka by broadening the scope of IWM's collections, as well as inform and shape future programming.



of the day **Quote**

**The government is working to increase milk procurement by 50 per cent over the next five years under the cooperative-led White Revolution 2.0**

AMIT SHAH | UNION MINISTER

**Artificial Intelligence (AI) is now at the forefront of investment talks, be it business process management or product arena**

SINDHU GANGADHARAN | CHAIRPERSON, NASSCOM

**Portfolio managers need to modernise onboarding, reporting, and client engagement through digital solutions to stay competitive**

TUHN KANTA PANDEY | SEBI CHIEF

**Q1 RESULTS**

**HUDCO profit rises**

**New Delhi:** Housing and Urban Development Corporation Ltd (HUDCO) Wednesday reported a 13 per cent increase in its consolidated net profit to Rs 630.23 crore for the first quarter of this fiscal. Its net profit stood at Rs 557.75 crore in the year-ago period. Total income rose to Rs 2,945.47 crore during the April-June period of this fiscal against Rs 2,197.19 crore in the corresponding period of the preceding year, according to a regulatory filing.

**Pidilite net up**

**New Delhi:** Pidilite Industries Wednesday reported 18.7 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at Rs 678.13 crore for the June quarter of FY26, helped by volume growth and healthy operating margins. The company logged a profit of Rs 571.27 crore in the April-June period a year ago, according to a regulatory filing by Pidilite Industries.

**PVR INOX posts loss**

**New Delhi:** PVR INOX Ltd Wednesday reported a narrowing of consolidated loss after tax to Rs 54.5 crore in the first quarter ended June 30, 2025. The company had posted a consolidated loss after tax of Rs 179 crore in the corresponding period last fiscal.

**TD Power Sys net up**

**New Delhi:** TD Power Systems Wednesday posted a nearly 42 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit to Rs 50.07 crore in the June quarter compared to a year ago. It reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 35.34 crore in the quarter ended on June 30, 2024, according to a regulatory filing.

**Bharat Forge profit rises**

**New Delhi:** Auto components maker Bharat Forge Wednesday posted 63 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to Rs 284 crore for the June quarter. The company posted a net profit of Rs 174 crore in the April-June quarter of last fiscal. Total income, however, declined to Rs 3,958 crore in the first quarter as against Rs 4,158 crore in the year-ago period, Bharat Forge said in a regulatory filing.

**Blue Star profit falls**

**New Delhi:** Blue Star Ltd Wednesday reported a decline of 28.4 per cent in its consolidated net profit to Rs 120.82 crore for the June quarter. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 168.76 crore in the April-June quarter a year ago, according to a regulatory filing.



**“The architecture of pricing in India is quite skewed. At the entry level itself you get so much data allowance, calling and messaging. It's just an unfortunate situation where people who can afford to pay, the rich, are paying less and the poor, you know, we don't need to charge the poor anymore”**

GOPAL VITTAL | MD, BHARTI AIRTEL

**FIEO, AMAZON INK PACT TO BOOST E-COMMERCE EXPORTS**

Apex exporters body FIEO Wednesday said it has inked a pact with leading e-retailer Amazon to increase awareness among domestic companies about huge export opportunities through e-commerce medium. This partnership aims to establish a dedicated e-commerce export task force to collaboratively shape policy frameworks, enable infrastructure support, and increase awareness of e-commerce export opportunities among Indian businesses



**INTEREST RATES UNCHANGED**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, August 6:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) kept its policy interest rate unchanged Wednesday as it appeared to have taken a wait-and-watch approach to assess the full unveiling of US President Donald Trump's trade policies as well as transmission of past rate cuts.

The six-member rate-setting panel, headed by RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra, held the repurchase rate at 5.5 per cent in a unanimous vote and decided to continue with a 'neutral' stance.

While on-track monsoon rains and the approaching festival season are expected to provide buoyancy to the economy, global trade challenges continue to linger, Malhotra said, announcing the decision of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC).

Trump last month slapped a 25 per cent duty on all Indian goods entering the US from August 7, and Tuesday threatened to substantially hike the tariff for New Delhi's continued purchase of Russian oil.

"Over the medium-term also, the Indian economy holds bright prospects in the changing world order, drawing on its inherent strength, robust fundamentals, and comfortable buffers," he said. "Opportunities are there for the taking, and we are making all efforts to create enabling conditions through a multi-pronged yet cohesive approach to policy making."

The pause follows a 100 basis point (bps) cut in interest rate over three bi-monthly MPC meetings in 2025. The full transmission of the front-loaded 50 bps rate cut effected in June is



**BI-MONTHLY POLICY HIGHLIGHTS**

- Short-term lending rate (repo) unchanged at 5.5 pc;
- MPC unanimously decided to keep policy rate unchanged;
- GDP growth projection for FY26 retained at 6.5 pc;
- Governor says domestic growth remains resilient, broadly evolving;
- Inflation forecast for FY26 lowered to 3.1 pc;
- CAD expected remain within sustainable level;
- Monetary policy transmission still on;
- Impact of 100 bps rate cut since Feb on the economy still unfolding;
- RBI to standardise claim settlement procedure in bank accounts and lockers of deceased bank customers;
- RBI Retail-Direct platform to enable SIP in treasury bills;
- Next meeting of MPC scheduled from Sep 29 to Oct 1, 2025.

still awaited.

While keeping the repo rate unchanged, RBI revised its inflation forecast lower by 60 bps to 3.1 per cent. Malhotra flagged a rise in headline inflation towards the end of the year.

"CPI inflation is likely to edge up above 4 per cent in Q4:2025-26 and beyond, as unfavourable base effects, and demand side factors from policy actions come into play," he said.

With the target for inflation being kept above 4 per cent for the fourth quarter of the current fiscal year ending March

31, 2026 and the first quarter of next, and the forecast for GDP growth at 6.6 per cent for Q1 FY27, raises the bar for a further rate cut in the coming quarters, economists said.

The central bank kept the GDP growth forecast unchanged at 6.5 per cent for 2025-26 (FY26). "Despite a challenging external environment, the Indian economy is navigating a steady growth path with price stability. Monetary policy has appropriately used the policy space created by the benign inflation outlook to support

**TARIFF TROUBLE**  
**Exports to hit hard: Experts**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 6:** Domestic export sectors such as leather, chemicals, footwear, gems and jewellery, textiles and shrimp will be severely impacted by the imposition of the 50 per cent tariff by US, say industry experts.

US President Donald Trump Wednesday slapped an additional 25 per cent tariff, raising the total duties to 50 per cent on goods coming from India, as a penalty for New Delhi's continued purchase of Russian oil.

The United States has imposed additional tariffs or penalty for Russian imports only on India while other buyers such as China and Turkey, have so far escaped such measures.

"The tariffs are expected to make Indian goods far costlier in US, with potential to cut US-bound exports by 40-50 per cent," think tank GTRI said.

After the new tariff, it said, organic chemicals' exports to US will attract additional 54 per cent duty. The other sectors which will attract high duties include carpets (52.9 per cent), apparel - knitted (63.9 per cent), apparel - woven (60.3 per cent), textiles, made ups (59 per cent), dia-

monds, gold and products (52.1 per cent), machinery and mechanical appliances (51.3 per cent), furniture, bedding, mattresses (52.3 per cent).

The 25 per cent duty, announced July 31, will come into force from August 7 (9.30 am IST).

The additional 25 per cent will be implemented by US from August 27. These will be over and above the existing standard import duty in US.

In 2024-25, the bilateral trade between India and US stood at \$131.8 billion (\$86.5 billion exports and \$45.3 billion imports).

The sectors, which would bear the brunt of 50 per cent duty include textiles/clothing (10.3 billion), gems and jewellery (12 billion), shrimp (\$2.24 billion), leather and footwear (\$1.18 billion), chemicals (2.34 billion), and electrical and mechanical machinery (about \$9 billion).

The Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI) said that it is "deeply concerned" about the potential adverse impact of the effective 50 per cent US tariff rate for India.

It urged the government to urgently take steps to help the sector during these hugely testing times.

**Govt revokes uniform tariff for RE projects**

*In view of the substantial renewable energy capacity waiting power sales agreement (PSA) signing and to expedite the deployment, the govt has decided to withdraw the order regarding the implementation of the Uniform Renewable Energy Tariff (URET) mechanism*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 6:** The power ministry Wednesday said it has done away with a uniform tariff mechanism and dissolved central pricing pools for renewable energy purchase pacts amid concerns over uncertainty on power tariffs.

The move is expected to ease price discovery between renewable energy producers and users as well as deployment of renewable capacity in the country.

In view of the substantial renewable energy capacity waiting power sales agreement (PSA) signing and to expedite the deployment of RE, it has been decided to withdraw the



order regarding the implementation of the Uniform Renewable Energy Tariff (URET) mechanism, the ministry said in a statement.

Consequently, the Solar Power Central Pool and Solar-Wind Hybrid Central Pool shall stand dissolved, it said.

Earlier, the ministry had ordered implementation of URET from February 15, 2024 for three years up to February 14, 2027.

The URET mechanism and the associated central pools were notified to address the potential impact on procurers in the context of declining bid-discovered prices.

However, Renewable Energy Implementing Agencies (REIAs) and RE developers have expressed concerns over procurers reluctance towards signing PSAs (power sale agreements) under URET on account

**RBI revises CLA for banks and NBFCs**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, August 6:** The Reserve Bank Wednesday issued revised directions on co-lending arrangements (CLA) to provide specific regulatory clarity on the permissibility of such arrangements and address some of the prudential as well as conduct-related aspects.

Regulated entities (REs), including banks, NBFCs, and All-India Financial Institutions, can enter into a lending arrangement with other REs for extension of credit to the borrowers, subject to compliance with the extant prudential regulations.

While there is no generic regulatory framework for such lending arrangements, co-lending involving banks and NBFCs has gained traction in the wake of a specific regulatory framework being prescribed for the purpose of priority sector lending.

CLA refers to an arrangement, formalised through an ex-ante agreement, between an RE which is originating the loans and another RE which is co-lending, to jointly fund a portfolio of loans in a pre-agreed proportion, involving revenue and risk sharing.

"Each RE under a CLA shall

**CLA REFERS TO AN ARRANGEMENT, FORMALISED THROUGH AN EX-ANTE AGREEMENT, BETWEEN AN RE WHICH IS ORIGINATING THE LOANS AND ANOTHER RE WHICH IS CO-LENDING, TO JOINTLY FUND A PORTFOLIO OF LOANS IN A PRE-AGREED PROPORTION, INVOLVING REVENUE AND RISK SHARING**

be required to retain a minimum 10 per cent share of the individual loans in its books, said the Reserve Bank of India (Co-Lending Arrangements) Directions, 2025.

It further said the credit policy of a RE shall suitably incorporate provisions relating to CLAs, including the internal limit for the proportion of their lending portfolio under CLAs; target borrower segments; due diligence of the partner entities; customer service and grievance redressal mechanism.

"The interest rate and any other fees/charges on the underlying loans charged to the borrower shall be based on the contractual agreement, subject to the regulatory norms applicable to the REs," the RBI said.

According to the revised norms, all transactions (disbursements/repayments) between the REs, as well as with the borrower, shall be routed through an escrow account maintained with a bank, which could also be one of the REs involved in CLA.

The directions shall come into force from January 1, 2026, or from any earlier date as decided by an RE as per its internal policy.

**Sensex falls by 160 pts**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, August 6:** Falling for the second day, benchmark BSE Sensex declined by 160 points Wednesday due to selling in IT and healthcare shares amid the RBI policy decision to keep the key interest rates unchanged.

30-share BSE Sensex fell 166.26 points or 0.21 per cent to settle at 80,543.99 with 18 of its constituents ending lower and 12 with gains. The 50-share NSE Nifty dipped 75.35 points or 0.31 per cent to close at 24,574.20.

Among the Sensex firms, Sun Pharmaceuticals, Tech Mahindra, HCL Technologies, Infosys, Bajaj Finance, Eternal, Tata Consultancy Services, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finserv, Tata Steel, ITC and L&T were the major laggards.

Asian Paints, Mahindra & Mahindra, BEL, Adani Ports, State Bank of India, Trent, HDFC Bank were among the gainers.

The BSE smallcap gauge declined 1.14 per cent and the midcap index by 1 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, Focused IT fell by 1.78 per cent, followed by Healthcare (1.72 per cent), IT (1.64 per cent), Realty (1.55 per cent), Teck (1.20 per cent), Industrials and Capital Goods (0.83 per cent each), FMCG (0.80 per cent), Telecommunication (0.75 per cent) were among the laggards.

Bankex is the only gainer. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms eroded by Rs 3,50,296.28 crore to Rs 4,45,19,999.04 (\$5.08 trillion) in two days of fall in the equity market. In Asian markets, Japan's Nikkei 225, Shanghai's SSE Composite index, and Hong Kong's Hang Seng closed in the positive territory, while South Korea's Kospi settled on a flat note. Global oil benchmark Brent crude rose 1.61 per cent to \$68.73 a barrel.

The European markets are trading in the green territory. The US markets ended lower Tuesday. Global oil benchmark Brent crude rose 1.61 per cent to \$68.73 a barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors offloaded equities worth Rs 22.48 crore while Domestic Institutional Investors purchased equities worth Rs 3,840.39 crore, Tuesday.



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 6:** Renault India Wednesday unveiled the all-new Triber, India's most versatile sub-four-metre 7-seater, featuring over 35 design and feature enhancements. The upgraded model is priced between Rs 6.29 lakh and Rs 9.16 lakh (ex-showroom) and

was launched at the Renault Bhubaneswar showroom.

The refreshed Triber boasts a completely redesigned front fascia, new sculpted hood, bold grille, advanced LED projector headlights with integrated LED DRLs, and a modern dual-tone interior. It also features an 8-inch floating touchscreen infotainment system, adding to

the premium feel.

The launch event was graced by Sidharth Garg, Director; Satish Garg, Managing Director; Amulya Ratan Das, General Manager of Gargson Automobiles, along with other dignitaries from the automobile industry and customers.

Speaking on the occasion, Amulya Ratan Das said, "This model offers unmatched flexibility and comfort for Indian families, now with a completely renewed design that ensures a high level of driving pleasure."

Powered by a 1.0-litre engine delivering 72 PS of power and 96 Nm of torque, the Triber is available with a 5-speed manual and Easy-R AMT gearbox options. A CNG-ready variant is also in the pipeline. The vehicle comes with a standard 3-year warranty, extendable up to 7 years.



Hero MotoCorp's all new Xoom 125 launch at Essen Hero, Sikharpur, Cuttack Wednesday. Narayan Mohapatra - General Manager, Hemant Thacker, Managing Partner, and Saurabh Thacker, Managing Partner were present at the unveiling ceremony



India debuts on Continental Tour

# Javelin takes center stage

The one-day competition, to be held at the Kalinga Stadium, will see 160 athletes slugging it out for honours in 19 events

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 6:** The men's javelin event is set to be the top draw when the country hosts its maiden World Athletics Continental Tour bronze level competition in Bhubaneswar August 10 with two Indians and as many Sri Lankans expected to vie for top honours.

Though two-time Olympic medallist Neeraj Chopra is missing from the competition, Sachin Yadav and Yashvir Singh will spearhead India's challenge while Sri Lankans Sumeda Ranasinghe and Rumes Tharanga Pathirage will also fancy their chances.

The total prize fund of the one-day event is \$25,000.

Ranasinghe has already secured a direct spot in World Athletics Championships in September while Pathirage, Yadav and Singh are likely to make the showpiece through world ranking quota.

The 34-year-old Ranasinghe has the top season's best with his 85.78m effort in March, while Pathirage, who won bronze in the NC Classic last month, has 85.14m for his best of the year.

Meanwhile, Yadav, the Asian Championships silver winner, has 85.16m as his season's best while Singh's top mark of the year is 82.57m. Rohit Yadav and Vikrant Malik are the other Indians in the fray, and both



have 80m-plus personal best throws.

"This is the country's first Continental Tour event and we are hoping for a successful competition so that the world knows we can host this kind of events," Athletics Federation of India (AFI) President Bahadur Singh Sagoo said in a press conference.

The one-day competition, to be held at the Kalinga Stadium, will see 160 athletes slugging it out for honours in 19 events. Out of the 160 athletes, 97 are from India while the rest 63 are from abroad. Athletes from 17 countries are taking part in the competition.

Among the foreign countries, Nepal has sent the largest number of athletes at 13, followed by Sri Lanka

**Odisha has hosted major championships including the Asian Athletics Championships in 2017 and back-to-back hockey World Cups (2018 and 2023). So, we have the confidence to host such international events**

SACHIN JADHAV | SPORTS SECRETARY, ODISHA GOVERNMENT

(10) and Malaysia (9). South Africa and Great Britain have sent four athletes each.

"It is mandatory to include one throwing and one jumping event. The competition should have a minimum of 12 disciplines, including five in women's. Certain events couldn't be included as the duration of one-day Continental Tour event as

per guidelines of WA is two hours and 30 minutes," Sagoo added.

The Indians taking part in various events were picked from their best performance of the season till July 12. Those Indians who are in the top-7 rankings were considered for participation.

Top Indian stars

Besides the men's javelin, other events likely to see tough competition include men's and women's 400m and women's long jump. The men's 100m dash may also see some spark as Animesh Kujur, who holds the national record of 10.18 seconds, will be up against Malaysia's Muhammad Azeem Fahli who ran wind-assisted 10.01 seconds and a legal 10.20 seconds, both in May.

In women's long jump,

Shaile Singh (season's best 6.64m) and Ancy Sojan (6.54m) will be up against Alice Hopkins of Great Britain and Northern Irelands who has a season's best of 6.59m.

South Africa's Shirley Nekhubui, part of the bronze-winning 4x400m relay team, will compete in the individual quarter-mile event in which she has a season's best of 51.28 seconds. Aishwarya Mishra (SB: 51.12 seconds) and Vithya Ramraj (SB: 52.81 seconds) will spearhead the Indian challenge in the event.

The men's 400m event will see top Indians like Vishal TK, Rajesh Ramesh, Jay Kumar and Amoj Jacob taking on Sri Lanka's Kalinga Hewa Kumarage who won bronze in the Asian Championships in May.

Other top Indians in fray include long jumper Murali Sreeshankar who has won three straight titles after his comeback and 800m national record holder Mohammed Afsal. Gulveer Singh, national record holder in 5000m and 10,000m, is skipping the event as he is competing aboard.

The competition is being organised by the Odisha government along with the AFI which is looking after the technical aspect. The Odisha government is taking care of the funds and hospitality of the athletes and the officials.

ICC RANKINGS

## SIRAJ, PRASIDH ATTAIN CAREER-BEST TEST SPOTS

Pacer Siraj jumps to 15th position following heroics at The Oval



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dubai, August 6:** India pacer Mohammed Siraj has attained a career-best 15th position in the latest ICC Test rankings following his match-winning performance in the fifth and final Test against England at The Oval.

Siraj jumped 12 spots following his nine wickets in the match, including a five-for, as India defeated the hosts by six runs in a thriller to draw the series 2-2.

With England requiring 35 runs on the last day with four wickets in hand, a charged up Siraj, who was adjudged 'Player of the Match', accounted for three batters including the last dismissal of Gus Atkinson, to earn India a remarkable win.

Siraj's best ICC ranking so far had been a 16th position that he reached in January last year.

Gill among nominees for ICC's Player of the Month



**Dubai:** India captain Shubman Gill was Wednesday named among the three nominees for ICC's Player of the Month award for July along with South Africa's Wiaan Mulder and England skipper Ben Stokes. Gill led India remarkably in the recently-concluded Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy against England as his young side emerged with a hard-fought 2-2 draw, a series in which the 25-year-old rewrote batting records. Gill scored 754 runs in the series against England with four centuries, including a double ton at 75.40 to break legendary Sunil Gavaskar's record (732) for the highest run tally for an Indian captain in a five-Test series. Gill's returns are now also the second-best behind Sir Donald Bradman (810 runs) in the all-time list for captains. "Shubman Gill had a sensational month, amassing 567 runs at an impeccable average of 94.50 in three Tests during India's gripping series in England," the ICC wrote on its website. "He played a starring role in India's record-breaking win at Edgbaston, where he scored a monumental 269 in the first innings followed by 161 in the second. His combined 430 runs across the two innings is the second highest tally, next only to Graham Gooch's 456," it added.

## Chennai Grand Masters postponed after fire at venue

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, August 6:** The Chennai Grand Masters chess tournament, featuring some well-established Indian and international names, has been postponed to Thursday after a fire broke out at the event's venue, the Hyatt Regency hotel.

The third edition of the competition was scheduled to start Wednesday.

"Fire at Hotel Hyatt Regency last night, the venue of the Chennai GM. All the players are safe and shifted to another hotel nearby. Tournament postponed by a day," wrote Indian GM and tournament director Srirath Narayanan on his X handle.

The players were eventually brought back to the hotel, but the tournament will begin a day later after a fresh round of safety checks.

The points will be vital for securing a spot in the 2026 Candidates Tournament, a case in point being reigning world champion D Gukesh, who entered the Candidates last year on the back of his strong showing here.

## Archana makes history with 11 freediving feats

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, August 6:** Archana Sankara Narayanan, India's leading freediver, has achieved another milestone by breaking two national records at the Manado Apnea competition in Indonesia held from August 1 to 3.

Archana reached 38 metres in Constant Weight Bi-Fins (CWTB) and an unprecedented 40 metres in Constant Weight (CWT), becoming the first Indian woman to cross the 40-metre mark in a competitive freediving event.

The achievement strengthens her position as India's deepest female freediver and brings her total to a record 11 national titles.

"Crossing 40 metres is more than a personal milestone - it opens new possibilities for Indian women in freediving," she said.



## Sub-jr Men's Hockey Nationals: Punjab to face Jharkhand in final



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, August 6:** Hockey Punjab and Hockey Jharkhand registered victories Wednesday to cement their places in the final of the 15th Hockey India Sub Junior Men National Championship 2025, held at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Hockey Stadium.

Hockey Punjab sealed their place in the final with a narrow 4-3 defeat of Uttar Pradesh Hockey while in the second semifinal, Jharkhand defeated Hockey Madhya Pradesh 3-1.

Hockey Punjab will now face Hockey Jharkhand in the summit clash, while Uttar Pradesh Hockey will meet Hockey Madhya

Pradesh in the third-place fixture Thursday.

In the first semifinal, Hockey Punjab overcame Uttar Pradesh Hockey, 4-3. Sukhdev Singh (51', 52') struck a late brace, after Mandeep Singh (19') and Varinder Singh (28') scored in the first half. Harsh Pratap Singh (9'), Ali Shahrukh (21'), and captain Ketan Kushwaha (28') were the scorers for Uttar Pradesh Hockey.

In the other semifinal, Hockey Jharkhand defeated Hockey Madhya Pradesh, 3-1. Though Love (21') gave Madhya Pradesh the lead, Jharkhand bounced back with goals from Soreng Sumray (29'), Ashish Tani Puri (44') and Jaysan Kandulna (56') to surge into the finals.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 6:** In what can be construed as a relief to the BCCI, the Sports Ministry has amended the RTI-related provision of the National Sports Governance Bill, placing only those bodies under its ambit which rely on government grants and assistance.

The bill was tabled in the Lok Sabha by Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya July 23 and its clause 15 (2) stated that "a recognised sports organisation shall be considered as a public authority under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005 with respect to the exercise of its functions, duties and powers under this Act."

The RTI has been a thorny issue for the BCCI, which has steadfastly opposed coming under it as the Board is not dependent on government funds unlike a majority of other National Sports Federations (NSFs).

The amendment proposed in the bill effectively puts an end to that apprehension.

"The amended clause defines public authority as an



entity that is relying on government funds or assistance. With this amendment, there is a clear definition of what is a public authority," a well-placed source told PTI.

"If this had not been done, it would have been a grey area that could have led to the bill getting held up or being challenged in court. So anything that involves public money will come under RTI. It defines the specifics," the source added.

"And even if a national sports body is not taking government funds, it can still be questioned if government assistance of any kind is involved in the conduct or operation of its events. Because government assis-

**Once the bill becomes an act, the BCCI will have to register itself as an NSF given that cricket has become an Olympic sport, which is set for a debut in the 2028 Games in the T20 format**

tance is not merely funds, it is also about infrastructure," he explained. The BCCI had earlier stated that it would study the bill before commenting on its provisions.

The RTI Act defines a "public authority" as any institution or body created by any law made by Parliament or a State Legislature, including bodies owned,

controlled, or substantially financed by the government.

The amended sports bill will be "in alignment with this definition."

Once the bill becomes an act, the BCCI will have to register itself as an NSF given that cricket has become an Olympic sport, which is set for a debut in the 2028 Games in the T20 format.

The bill has the provision for a National Sports Board (NSB) to create a stringent system of accountability and all NSFs will have to attain NSB's recognition for access to central government funding.

Another striking aspect of it is the National Sports Tribunal, which will have the powers of a civil court and decide disputes ranging from selection to election involving federations and athletes. Once instituted, the Tribunal's decisions can only be challenged in the Supreme Court.

The bill makes some concessions on the issue of age cap for administrators by allowing those in the bracket of 70 to 75 to contest elections if the concerned international bodies' statutes and byelaws allow for it.

## Chennaiyin FC suspends ops

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kokrajhar, August 6:** Indian club football appeared to be in complete crisis as Chennaiyin FC on Wednesday suspended its operations in view of the uncertainty surrounding the Indian Super League, days after Bengaluru FC and Odisha FC decided to stop paying salaries to their first-team players and staff.

Chennaiyin's decision came a day before a crucial meeting between the All India Football Federation (AIFF) top brass and eight ISL clubs Thursday. Chennaiyin FC is, however, unlikely to have a representation in the meeting as the club is not among the signatories calling for such a move.

"In the light of the continuing uncertainty surrounding the future of the ISL, Chennaiyin FC has taken the extremely difficult decision to temporarily pause club operations," the Chennai-based club said on its social media handle.

Last week, ISL side Odisha FC took the decision to suspend paying salaries to its first-team players and staff. Late Monday, Bengaluru FC indefinitely suspended contracts of its first-team players and staff.

## Out in the cold, lone Indian qualifier crowdfunds Milano-Cortina dream

REUTERS

**New Delhi, August 6:** Posters bearing the words "Don't stop when you are tired. Stop when you are done", "It always seems impossible until it's done" and "Hard work beats talent" adorn Arif Khan's modest room in the southern Indian town of Vijayanagar.

The 35-year-old Alpine skier needs these regular doses of motivation for he has very little else to lean on six months out from his second appearance in the slalom at the Winter Olympics.

Since not enough states participate, winter sports bodies in India do not enjoy the National Sports Federation (NSF) status that would entitle them to regular government funding.

Khan launched a crowdfunding appeal to finance his preparations for Milano-Cortina but has so far raised less than 4% of his target of seven million Indian rupees (\$80,158).

"It's not going so well at the moment," Khan told Reuters in a Zoom interview from the Inspire Institute of Sport (IIS), a high-performance centre run by the Mumbai-based JSW multinational conglomerate.

"I'm not asking for a huge sum. Providing this amount to an athlete representing a great country on the world stage - it's doable."

"I would have been on the snow right now instead of continuing my physical preparations here, if I had the funds."

The IIS has agreed to take

care of the core needs of the lone Indian to qualify to compete at the 2026 Winter Games, but it is not enough.

The Indian Olympic Association did not immediately reply to a Reuters request for comment on whether it plans to help finance Khan's preparation.

The icy indifference from officialdom is not new to Khan, who nearly quit the sport after running out of money in his bid to qualify for the 2018 Olympics.

**FESTERING INSURGENCY** Khan, who hails from mountainous Indian Kashmir, qualified for the 2022 Winter Olympics where he came 45th in giant slalom and failed to finish in slalom.

That he came this far is remarkable given he grew

up amid a festering insurgency in his homeland and could ski only because his father owned an equipment hire shop in the popular ski resort in Gulmarg.

"My childhood memories are of gunfights and the sound of grenades and bombs going off," Khan recalled.

"The situation improved after 2005 and tourists started visiting Kashmir again. My father started to earn a bit more and could put some of it into my training."

Kashmir was on the boil again in April when 26 tourists were shot dead by militants, triggering four days of clashes between nuclear-armed neighbours India and Pakistan before a ceasefire was agreed May 10.

There was a sense of deja



**I thought enough is enough. There's no proper system or help from the corporate. I could not handle it anymore and I almost quit. But as a sportsperson, you do not want to quit easily. For five months I did not train, but the skill was there and the desire never died**

ARIF KHAN

vu for Khan, who had just returned home after competing in an event in the United Arab Emirates.

"Once home, I realised there was no way I could train," Khan said. "I usually do high-altitude training but the areas I usually visit for trekking, trail running and mountain biking - everything was shut."

Not that it could deter the hardy skier, who postponed his wedding to realise his dream of competing at the Beijing Olympics in 2022.

"I delayed it by one and a half years because I needed that money to fund my travel. My wife Sabiena was fine with it. Her only worry was what if I ran away," Khan said, his face creasing with

a rare smile.

"She's been a great support. She watches all my videos and starts worrying whenever I do the extreme speed events or ski downhill at high speed."

"She's like 'be careful, be careful, do not crash'. We do crash and get injured and that's what she's most concerned about."