

downtown

CM resolves 88% grievances



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 11: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has resolved over 88 per cent of public grievances received during the last 13 sessions of grievance hearing in Bhubaneswar, official sources said Monday.

According to a statement from the Chief Minister's Office, Majhi received 12,252 grievances till the 13th round of the grievance

redressal programme. "Of those, 10,807 (88.20 per cent) grievances have been resolved. The pending ones are under process for redressal," it said.

Accompanied by Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, seven ministers and senior officials, Majhi Monday conducted the 14th session of the Chief Minister's Public Grievance Hearing since assuming office in June last year.

Majhi, after reaching at the CM's Grievance Cell in Unit-II area here, directly walked to 40 differently-abled persons and those with serious ailments, and heard their grievances first, it said.

"The CM directed the secretaries of the departments concerned to redress all the grievances received during the day," the CMO statement said. The public grievance hearing is also held in other districts of the state.

Health & Family Welfare Minister Mukesh Mahaling, Housing and Urban Development Minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra, Panchayati Raj, Drinking Water and Rural Development Minister Rabi Narayan Naik, S&ME, SSEPD and ST&SC Development Minister Nityananda Gond, Higher Education, Sports & Youth Services, OLL&C Minister Suryabanshi Suraj, Handloom, Textiles and Handicrafts Minister Pradeep Bal Samanta and Forest, Environment & Climate Change and Labour & ESI Minister Ganesh Ram Singkhuntia were also present during the grievance hearing.

Snake rescued

A snake was rescued from the premises where Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi was hearing public grievances Monday morning, an official said.

The reptile was found in the waiting hall for the differently-abled people minutes before the CM's visit to the grievance cell, he added.

"The snake fell from the roof and took refuge underneath a backpack," the official said.

On spotting it inside the hall, panic spread among those present. "A one-foot yellowish snake was rescued," the official pointed out.

Around 2,000 people, including women, children and journalists, were present on the premises when the snake was rescued.

12 FAKE SERVITORS ARRESTED IN PURI

AGENCIES

Puri, August 11: Puri police Monday arrested 12 men for allegedly extorting money from devotees by impersonating servitors of Srimandir.

The accused, aged between 20 and 51, were nabbed from Grand Road and Parikrama Road while duping devotees in servitor attire. Police said the gang had been operating for months, targeting pilgrims mainly from West Bengal, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh.

Police have seized 14 mobile phones and Rs 20,000 cash from the fake servitors.

They have been booked under multiple Sections of the BNS, police said.

Hit & run: Now, injured woman dies

A speeding vehicle hit Rebati, her eight-year-old daughter and three-year-old son when they were crossing the busy NH-16 near Patrapada area in Bhubaneswar Saturday evening

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 11: A woman, who was seriously injured along with her minor daughter and son in a 'hit and run' case in Bhubaneswar, succumbed to her injuries Monday, police said.

The deceased was identified as Rebati Raul of Patrapada area here under Khandagiri police station



limits. A speeding vehicle hit Rebati, her eight-year-old daughter and three-year-old son when they were crossing the busy NH-16 near Patrapada area here Saturday evening, the police said.

Rebati's minor daughter Jagruti died on the spot while she was under treatment at AIIMS-Bhubaneswar here.

Expressing deep grief over the death of the mother-daughter duo, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has announced an ex gratia of Rs 4 lakh to the next

of kin of the deceased.

After Rebati's death, locals staged a protest and blocked the NH-16 for nearly two hours from 4:00pm near Patrapada Monday.

Due to the protest, hundreds of vehicles were stranded on both sides of the NH.

They demanded the immediate arrest of the driver of the vehicle which hit Rebati and her two children. "Though three days have passed since the accident, why the driver of the vehicle not been arrested yet?" asked a protester.

After getting assurance from police officers, the locals withdrew their road blockade.

Bhubaneswar DCP Jagmohan Meena said, "The vehicle has been seized from Jatni area. We have identified the accused driver, who is absconding. We will arrest him soon."

Pachyderm landscape decimation behind human-elephant conflict

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 11: Relentless human activities like mining, agriculture, industrial development and urbanisation in Odisha's elephant landscape have severely disrupted traditional habitat corridors, leading to increased conflicts between humans and the gentle giants, experts said Monday on the eve of World Elephant Day.

According to the latest census, Odisha is home to 2,098 elephants. In 1979, there were 2,044 elephants, mostly confined to rich forested districts.

However, the state has now turned into a gruesome graveyard for the pachyderms. Between 2017 and November 2024, a staggering 634 elephants have died in the state due to reasons like deliberate electrocutions, train collisions and poaching. The 2024-25 period alone (until March 18, 2025) saw a record 94 elephant deaths—the highest in any year to date.

According to a study by the Asian Nature Conservation Foundation, Odisha's forest landscapes can sustainably support only 1,700 to 1,800 elephants. With the population now exceeding that limit, elephants are being pushed into farmlands, villages, and towns, sparking daily conflict.

Sangita Iyer, founder of Voices for Asian Elephants, said forests are vanishing at unprecedented rates. "In 2024 alone, India lost 29,000 hectares to roads, mining, dams, and defence projects," Iyer said, adding that the result is a 36 per cent rise in elephant attacks



and displacement, both human and animal, in thousands.

Ancient migratory corridors, used by elephants for generations, have been blocked by rail lines, illegal mining and urban expansion. With food and water sources gone, elephants are now trampling crops, entering homes, and often getting killed in retaliation, Iyer pointed out.

"While development and resource use are necessary, they must never come at the cost of irreversible damage to the natural world. The path forward demands sustainable development, strict enforcement of wildlife protection laws, community education and unwavering political will, Iyer added.

Jitasatru Mohanty, a former senior forest officer and trustee of Save Elephant Foundation Trust, said in the past, people had a respect for elephants and even welcomed them during harvest. But now, anger and fear dominate.

"Human casualties and crop losses are rising, but compensation is slow or inadequate, deepening resentment among affected communities," he added.

"Elephants taught us coexistence. Now it's our turn to remember that lesson before it's too late," Mohanty pointed out.

Wildlife biologist and Bikash Saathi founder Biswajeet Panda, who in association with Orissa POST and Dharitri launched Odisha's first community interaction platform on elephant conservation – 'Hati Sabha', said elephants today face a host of challenges like habitat fragmentation, shrinking corridors, railway accidents and food scarcity.

"These threats, highlighted through SWOT analysis, require urgent and integrated solutions. Measures like rail fencing, trench revival, rock wall construction, bamboo plantations within reserves, early warning systems,

and distribution of night torches to forest-edge communities can significantly reduce human-elephant conflict," Panda said.

He added that promoting alternative livelihoods can also go a long way to help reduce pressure on forest resources, fostering more sustainable coexistence. "Enhanced surveillance during migration and proactive efforts to prevent railway collisions are crucial. Ultimately, long-term elephant conservation depends on strong coordination between Forest department and local communities," Panda pointed out.

Sanjukta Basa, a local conservationist, has been advocating for ground-level interventions like restoration of corridors with tree and bamboo plantations, creation of water bodies, curbing illegal mining, avoidance of human activity during elephant migration, use of sound deterrents like tiger roars and fair as well as prompt compensation.

Noted environmentalist JK Panigrahi said, "On World Elephant Day, we honour their emotional lives and wisdom. "Odisha's forests are vital to their survival, yet habitat loss, conflict, and poaching threaten them. Urgent, united action is needed to protect these gentle giants and preserve India's rich elephant heritage," he said.

PCCF (Wildlife) Prem Kumar Jha said behavioural change is crucial. "We're guiding people on how to respond when elephants are nearby. This work will continue in a sustained manner," added Jha.

OSCW CHAIRPERSON TAKES CHARGE

BHUBANESWAR: Newly-appointed Odisha State Commission for Women (OSCW) Chairperson Shovana Mohanty takes charge at the commission's office in Bhubaneswar, Monday. "I assure all the women of the state that we will take necessary steps to address all issues affecting them," Mohanty said.

Suicide isn't solution to problem: Law min

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 11: Law Minister Pritihviraj Harichandan Monday appealed to distressed people to seek legal help instead of ending lives, saying suicide is not a solution to any problem.

Reacting over the alleged self-immolation death of a school girl at Gaisilata in

Bargarh district, Harichandan said, "The government has taken the incident seriously and steps are being taken in that regard. Such incidents have been happening for some time. Suicide is not a solution to any problem."

The Law Minister appealed to distressed people to seek legal help instead of ending their lives. "People are free

to vent their grievances. The Chief Minister's doors are open to all. The government is taking steps to prevent such incidents," he said.

On Opposition parties, the Law Minister said, "Their job is to target the government by telling lies. We are not worried about it. We are worried about the loss of lives."

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Dy CM Singh Deo reviews flagship energy schemes



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 11: Deputy Chief Minister and Energy Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo conducted a comprehensive review of key Central government flagship schemes under the Energy department—PM Surya Ghar and PM-KUSUM—Monday. These initiatives play a vital role in Odisha’s clean energy transition.

During the meeting, Singh Deo reaffirmed the state’s commitment to a sustainable and self-reliant energy future, highlighting innovation, inclusion, and the empowerment of households and farmers through renewable energy solutions. Sharing scheme updates post-meeting, the Minister highlighted that under the PM Surya Ghar Yojana, a total of 1,28,336 applications have been received. Of these, 1,27,820 applications have been deemed

Deputy CM Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo stresses timely grievance redressal and vendor accountability, warning of deregistration for underperformance

technically feasible, and 33.6 MW of capacity has already been installed. In the PM-KUSUM scheme, a total capacity of 50 MW has been approved by the Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC). Deputy CM Singh Deo also underscored the importance of timely grievance redressal, particularly those raised through the Chief Minister’s Grievance Cell. He instructed officials to regularly review the

performance of vendors, with poor-performing vendors facing deregistration. The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, Energy, Vishal Dev, FA-cum-Special Secretary Debidutta Tripathy, Additional Secretary Saidutta Biplab Keshari Pradhan, and senior representatives from OREDA, TP Central Odisha, and the Energy department. Officials presented strategic roadmaps and updates to further accelerate the implementation of these schemes. These efforts are part of Odisha’s broader energy vision that includes strengthening distribution infrastructure, promoting energy efficiency, and ensuring affordable and reliable power access across rural and urban areas. Recently, Odisha has submitted a proposal to the Centre under the Power System Development Fund (PSDF) for a 500 MWh Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), underlining the state’s commitment to grid innovation. Govt urged the Centre to provide proactive support for several critical initiatives. These include the sanction of ₹6,284 crore under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS), central financial assistance for disaster-resilient power infrastructure, and approval for 800 MW power allocations from the NLC Talabira Phase II project.



TIRANGA RALLY: Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) organises ‘Har Ghar Tiranga’ programme in Old Town area of Bhubaneswar, Monday PIC- BIKASH NAYAK

Non-student found dead in Utkal varsity

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 11: The body of a youth, not a Utkal University student, was found under mysterious circumstances near Fakir Mohan Chhatrabasa (hostel) inside the campus Monday, raising safety concerns among students. The deceased has been identified as Biswa, who is suspected to have died after falling from the roof of the hostel. According to reports, Saheed Nagar police reached the spot and sent the body to Capital



Hospital for autopsy. The police have initiated a probe into

the matter. After the body of the non-student was recovered from the campus, ABVP alleged that the victim was a driver of BJD leader Chinmay Sahoo. Bishwajit Patra, national executive member of ABVP has alleged that the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) is creating unrest in the campus. The deceased was the driver of BJD leader Chinmay Sahoo. Patra questioned how, despite being a non-student, he was staying in room number 94 of Fakir Mohan Hostel (Hostel 3). Patra further alleged that the BJD has been selling hostel rooms on campus and allowing non-students, including Ola and Uber drivers, as well as BJD student leaders’ associates, to use them as hideouts. ABVP has demanded that details be revealed about how many other hostels have been taken over by the Congress, BJD, and other political parties. We have tried to contact BJD over the allegations made by ABVP but no response was received regarding this matter.

BIITM’s SPARK 2025 for new I-MBA batch

Bhubaneswar: The Biju Patnaik Institute of Information Technology & Management Studies (BIITM), Bhubaneswar, inaugurated SPARK 2025, a three-day induction and orientation programme for its Integrated MBA (2025-30) batch here Monday. The event began with student registration, ceremonial lamp lighting, and the BIITM Anthem, followed by a welcome address from Principal Mihir Ranjan Nayak, who highlighted the institute’s vision to groom responsible and skilled business leaders. Guest of honour Lopa Mishra Jana, operations officer at AHRC-AI & HPC Research Center, IIT-Bhubaneswar, urged students to “create the future rather than predict it.”

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Gitanajali spouse of Army No. 15180995F Hav/ Pradip Kumar Mohanty resident of Vill - Chudamani, PO - Chudamani, Dist. - Bhadrak, State - Odisha, PIN - 756125 have changed my name from Gitanjali to Geetanjali Mohanty vide affidavit No. 71AA157533 dated 4th August 2025 before N.K. Das Notary, Bhadrak (Odisha).

LOST

My name is Dipankar Mandal, At - Kimbhiria Basti, Mundasahi, GGP Colony, Thana - Mancheswar, Dist. - Khorda has damaged by whiteant spite all Educational Certificate 10th, 12th, Diploma, B.Tech certificate and Marksheet. I want to apply for Duplicate Certificates and Marksheet from respective board.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 11: The Employees’ Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) recently held an interactive session on the “PM-Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana” (PM-VBRY), the Central Government’s flagship employment-linked incentive scheme, at Hotel Swosti, Bhubaneswar. The event aimed to guide employers and employees on how to avail the benefit of the scheme, promoting formal employment and economic growth, with a special focus on manufacturing sector. Maushumi Lata Padhi, Regional PF Commissioner-II



of the Regional Office was the chief guest at the session and briefed about the Scheme. Alekh Ch Sahoo, Enforcement Officer elaborated the key features of the PM-VBRY scheme and urged all employers and employees to take full advantage of the scheme which is being positioned as a key pillar in the Prime Minister’s mission for a Viksit Bharat. He also gave a detailed presentation on the

eligibility criteria, technical process and incentive structure under PM-VBRY. Sahoo also informed that the scheme has already been implemented from August 1, 2025 and will continue until July 31, 2027. The first-time EPFO registered employees earning up to ₹1 lakh per month will get incentives up to ₹15,000/- in two installments through DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer) mode us-

ing Aadhaar Bridge Payment System (ABPS) while employers will get up to ₹3000/- per month for each additional employment through their PAN linked Account. For the manufacturing sector, the incentives will be extended for additional two years. He also stated that generation of Universal Account Number (UAN) through UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance) mobile App has been made mandatory from 1st August, 2025 using Face Authentication Technology (FAT). However, EPFO has given some respite to adopt the new services till August 15.

Youth in Odisha driving local actions for change

RESHMI YADAV, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 11: Marking International Youth Day (August 12), which this year focuses on the theme “Local Youth Actions for the SDGs and Beyond,” Odisha stands out with its own youth power—nearly 34 per cent of its projected 46.95 million (4.70 crore) population in 2025 will be aged 15 to 34, according to an Asian Development Bank report. This aligns with India’s position as the nation with the world’s largest youth population, over 371 million aged 15–29, as per Unicef. The focus is on how young people—from Odisha’s cities to its rural heartlands—are transforming local initiatives into impactful efforts to combat climate change, promote mental health, foster entrepreneurship, and advance social justice. “You are not just the leaders of tomorrow—you are the change-makers of today,” said **Tr. Jitendra Nath Pradhan**, TGT (Social Sci-

ence) at Krishna Vikash Techno School, Brahmapur. He cited the lack of opportunities matching youth skills as a pressing challenge, alongside climate change, unemployment, mental health concerns, and unequal access to resources. “Education can empower young people with the problem-solving skills needed to tackle environmental issues. Schools should integrate sustainability into the curriculum, encourage eco-clubs, and promote ‘learning by doing’ through initiatives like composting, water conservation, and energy efficiency,” he added. Environmentalists underscored the urgency of addressing climate change and plastic pollution. “By 2050, our oceans could contain more plastic than fish,” warned environmentalist **Bapi Gochhayat**. “Plastic pollution is damaging our climate, wildlife, and health. While youth are stepping up, this must grow into a mass movement involving educators, civil society,

and communities. Large-scale tree plantations, mangrove conservation, and reducing plastic use are essential,” he said. Health experts highlighted the link between environmental degradation and youth well-being. “Stress is the biggest health challenge facing young people today,” said **Dr Dibya Singha**, Senior Consultant in Robotic Joint Replacement & Sports Medicine at Utkal Hospital. “Pollution, fuelled by climate change, is aggravating respiratory problems. We need more educational programmes that encourage youth to consider the impact on future generations,” he added. Students also voiced their concerns. “We have skills and dreams, but opportunities are limited and competition is intense. Climate change is not just a headline—it’s something we are living through: heatwaves, floods, polluted air. Our generation cannot ignore

it,” said **Monalisa Swain**, a graduate student. “Mental health strain is a major issue, as the gap between what youth aspire to and what they can achieve often leads to stress and anxiety. Today’s young Indians inherit both power and responsibility in shaping society. I believe in changes small enough to start now but big enough to matter—like reducing energy waste or using public transport. Youth voices can influence climate and policy more effectively when they move beyond protest to active participation in decision-making,” said **Arpita Mohanty**, 3rd-year LLB (Hons) student at University Law College, Utkal University. This International Youth Day is not only a celebration of youthful energy but also a call to action—empowering young leaders and supporting their local initiatives.



MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	87.79 ▲ 0.10	SENSEX	80604.08 ▲ 746.29	GOLD	₹100,399 ▼ ₹1,399
EURO	102.26 ▲ 0.10	NIFTY	24585.05 ▲ 221.75	SILVER	₹113,314 ▼ ₹1,567

WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	35.8°	35.8°	Partly cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain or thundershower.
Min Temp	25.4°	25.0°	
Humidity	78%	81%	
Rainfall	2.0mm	Nil	

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Widow slain in front of children; 2 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh: A 36-year-old widow, Jayanti Behera, was allegedly murdered Sunday night in Bhapur, within the jurisdiction of the Bhapur beat house under Fatehgarh police station limits in Nayagarh district, after her throat was reportedly slit inside her home in front of her son and daughter. Acting on a complaint, Fatehgarh police arrested two suspects — Manoj Kumar Sahu, a cousin of the victim's late husband from Baideswar police station area in Cuttack district, and Manoj's friend, Raja. A case (260/25) has been registered and an investigation is under way. Although there were rumours that the murder was linked to an extramarital affair, police said no such allegation had been formally made.

Dy CM announces ₹87.93cr package for Ranipur Jharial

POST NEWS NETWORK

With no such efforts made, the situation repeated itself this year. Not a single student has enrolled in the


POST NEWS NETWORK

**Regional Director
Reserve Bank of India
Bhubaneswar**

“

DELIGHT IS THE SECRET. LEARN OF PURE DELIGHT AND THOU SHALT LEARN OF GOD.

SRI AUROBINDO



Conscious Capitalism

Companies have long justified sustainability initiatives as a way to boost their reputation, comply with external and internal standards, or generate incremental profits. But the initiatives are rarely transformative, because markets disregard ecological limits and social goals, rewarding firms that burn through resources and often punishing those with regenerative models. No matter how compelling the business case, corporate sustainability strategies cannot escape their structural misalignment with the logic of our current economic system.

The problem runs deeper than many realize. In the absence of the narrative infrastructure needed to reshape economic logic, all the sophisticated sustainability standards and metrics we have developed – the technical infrastructure – are insufficient. Our efforts remain hostage to the quarterly earnings dance, and companies that should be leaders on sustainability are instead cautionary tales.

Consider a hypothetical manufacturing company that designs products for complete circularity: every material input retains value indefinitely through continuous reuse. This would dramatically reduce the company’s material costs and insulate it from volatile commodity prices. But today’s markets – which are accustomed to business models based on linear extraction – would see only the high upfront investment demands.

With investors favoring immediate returns over long-term value creation, and credit agencies struggling to price the benefits of resilience into ratings decisions, the circular manufacturer ends up starved of investment, while its resource-burning competitors have ample access to lower-cost capital. Rewarding companies for externalizing costs is economic insanity disguised as financial prudence.

That is why we must initiate a shift to what I call “aligned capitalism.” In such a system, ecological impacts would be priced into markets, regulators would reward ecosystem restoration, and investors would compete on resilience. Financial statements would capture natural and social capital, while credit ratings would factor in equity and environmental preparedness.

In other words, sustainability would move from cost center to profit engine. Under this system, our hypothetical circular manufacturer would flourish. The resourceefficiency and supply-chain independence of suchcompanies would deliver huge advantages. As materials become scarcer and more expensive, and trade becomes increasingly fractious, these companies would be able to build competitive moats that strengthen over time.

Of course, to change the economic logic, all stakeholders in the political economy – from board members to regulatory agencies, trade unions, local communities, and civil-society organizations – must do their part. But smart corporate leaders will not wait for others to act. They can demonstrate what good business looks like when systems align with environmental and social realities.The recent backlash against environmental, social, and governance (ESG) commitments makes this even more important.

The first and most important step is to construct the missing narrative infrastructure. Business leaders must engage in strategic, evidence-based storytelling that links corporate actions to broader realities, and build trust within and outside boardrooms by entering into dialogues with stakeholders that outlast political cycles. They should also invest in research that demonstrates the superior outcomes of aligned practices.

Some companies are getting it right. The Brazilian cosmetics group Natura’s partnerships with indigenous communities have improved business results and social outcomes. Interface, the global flooring manufacturer, has inspired other companies with its Mission Zero commitment, which resulted in a 74% reduction in its carpets’ carbon footprint. Schneider Electric, an energy-management and digital-automation company, has made sustainability a central part of its business strategy, embedding it deeply into its operations. These companies’ narratives helped create the economic logic that rewards their sustainability practices, setting the stage for regulatory and market shifts.

But corporate behavior is just one piece of the puzzle. To promote coordinated action, firms must adopt governance structures designed for advocacy, not just compliance, and then advocate for regulatory reform that entrenches environmental and social criteria in financial disclosures and decision-making. Regulators, for their part, must mandate the inclusion of comprehensive ecological-social disclosures in financial statements and set ambitious timelines for system realignment.

Investors also play a crucial role, especially because regulation follows, as much as it leads, market pressure. Investors must integrate resilience criteria into their mandates, develop new valuation methodologies, and compete on long-term value creation rather than quarterly profits. The smartest asset managers are already building these capabilities, recognizing that tomorrow’s winners will be companies that thrive within ecological and social boundaries.

Lastly, business schools should teach ecological and social literacy, as well as how to shape future economic realities as part of their core curricula. Today’s MBA students will inherit an economy in transition – whether orderly or disorderly – and need the tools to lead that transformation, instead of just managing resources within existing constraints.

Under aligned capitalism, today’s marginal business models can become profitable. Product-as-a-service companies could generate steady returns. With environmental benefits bringing cost advantages, carbon-negative manufacturers could scale rapidly. Firms focused on workforce development and community healthcare could earn direct payments for delivering positive social outcomes.

To create a system where sustainability is the natural winner, business leaders must first recognize that the current economic framework is fundamentally misaligned with ecological and social realities– the markets rarely reward transformative ESG initiatives, and that is unlikely to change. A better form of capitalism, under which the most regenerative and sustainable strategies are also the most profitable, is possible. But it will require executives to spur coordinated action among investors, regulators, and all of their stakeholders. When the dust settles, those who had the courage to act first will be the new market leaders.

The Writer is Associate Professor of Strategy and Entrepreneurship at London Business School.

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WISDOM CORNER

“Science is not only a disciple of reason but, also, one of romance and passion.”

STEPHEN HAWKING



Jagdish Rattanani

THE PEOPLE IN CHARGE OF THE ECI AND HOW THEY CONDUCT THEMSELVES WILL BE SEEN NOT ONLY IN TODAY'S CONTEXT BUT WILL ALSO BE REMEMBERED AND RECALLED YEARS FROM NOW

The response of the Election Commission of India to Rahul Gandhi’s detailed, well researched presentation raising specific concerns that go to the very heart of the working of India’s elections system is shocking to say the least. The ECI working under three worthy commissioners has no reason to turn this into a slanging match with the Leader of the Opposition (LoP). The ludicrous demand put up by the Chief Electoral Officer of Karnataka and two other states that Gandhi should sign off the charges under oath or apologise to the nation only indicates the unease within the ECI in the face of what to the common eye are credible questions and valid concerns on the integrity of the poll process. Ideally, it should be in the interest of the ECI to set up a task force and get to the bottom of this in a timely manner that satisfies all parties and lays all doubts to rest or results in corrective action.

After all, what is in doubt is not just the outcome of one seat with fake voters, but the very future of Indian democracy. Every Indian irrespective of political colour or party of preference would agree that at the heart of India’s constitutional democracy is a national commitment to conducting elections that are regular, free and fair. These are also the words headlined on the ECI website under its link titled “election management”.

This is now looking more like election mismanagement, less in the sense of slackness and more in the sense of sinister. “Regular, free and fair”



From Rahul Gandhi’s allegations on vote theft to ground reports from Bihar, it appears difficult to escape the thought that there is something very rotten in the state of Denmark

are three non-negotiables required for the integrity of the process. When fairness of the process is suspect, regularity of the process becomes meaningless and ‘free’ becomes a hollow term.

The bitterness of the attacks on Rahul Gandhi indicates just how much the exposé by Rahul Gandhi of voter list fraud has angered the BJP. Maharashtra is the state where ground reports indicated that the BJP would take a huge hit in the last Assembly polls of 2024 and would be penalised for its role in splitting the Shiv Sena. Most observers could read anti-BJP sentiment. But the results that brought Phadnavis to power with the BJP bagging 132 of the 288 seats in an alliance with a breakaway Shiv Sena group, surprised many.

What should be the road ahead if India is not to collapse as a democracy?

First, the election commis-

sioners should commit to the nation that all data on record including voter lists, polling records, video recordings, all camera feeds and paper trails as well as the EVM machines would be preserved and available for a full-fledged inquiry at any future date. The process of such a preservation should be independently audited and timelines must now stretch well beyond those specified in rule books since we are living through unusual circumstances and very serious allegations from the major opposition party. Original files need to be encrypted and vaulted. This would assure the nation that even if something has gone wrong in the field, including any concerted attempt by interested parties to defeat the process, the ECI is serious about getting to the bottom of it. Second, there is no reason why soft copies of voter lists should not be made available

with immediate effect. If for some reason these are not available, then prints provided to the LoP ought to be, at a minimum, machine-readable. Third, the hastily conducted Bihar Special Intensive Revision is fraught. There is enough material now from the ground to indicate that new names could be added without adequate verification so that those that may not qualify will become voters while at the same time many marginal groups run the risk of being disenfranchised.

Given the circumstances, from Gandhi’s allegations on vote theft to ground reports from Bihar, it appears difficult to escape the thought that there is something very rotten in the state of Denmark.

The ECI leadership should know and understand that this is an important moment in the history of free India. The people in charge of the ECI and how they conduct themselves will be seen not only in today’s context but will also be remembered and recalled years from now. When the very foundations of elections were under threat, what did the most important free institution charged with conducting elections do? What does a free and fair election mean? If the voter list is vitiated, then Indian democracy is effectively erased. India will be stripped of its most valuable jewel – a democratic process that the world admires and every India has been proud of. The ECI must act fast.

The writer is a journalist and faculty member at SP-JIMR. Views are personal @thebillionpress.org

SPECTRUM INVESTMENT

Black money parking in foreign banks

In today’s globalised world, investors are increasingly looking beyond their home country for attractive investment opportunities. There’s no definitive figure for the total amount of Indian deposits held in foreign countries. Some reports suggest that substantial sums of money, including both legal and illegal funds, potentially are held in foreign accounts. For non-resident Indians (NRIs), foreign currency fixed deposits have emerged as popular options for diversifying their earning for higher returns.

The unaccounted money that is concealed from the tax administrator is called black money. Black money includes all funds earned through illegal activity and otherwise legal income that is not recorded for tax purposes. Black money is a result of systemic issues like corruption, bribery, and inadequate measures to curb the generation of illicit wealth. There is income on which the taxes imposed by government or public authorities have not been paid.

Recognizing the need to curb black money, a comprehensive law ‘The Black Money Act’ was introduced in 2015 and announced a voluntary disclosure scheme till September 30, 2016, for declaring assets and until December 31, 2016, to pay tax at 30 per cent and penalty at 30 per cent. With the new law, it was mandatory to dis-

close foreign assets and income in your income tax return to avoid tax evasion and enhance transparency in cross-border transactions.

The Black Money Act specifically usually addresses undisclosed foreign income and assets, imposing tax and penalties on them. For returning NRIs, this include, foreign bank accounts and deposits. Undisclosed foreign income and assets are taxable at 30 percent with penalties. The Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015, is India’s strong measure against tax evasion through offshore holdings. Even if you’ve legitimately earned wealth abroad during the NRI years, failing to disclose these assets upon becoming an Indian resident can trigger the provisions of this act.

The root cause for the increasing rate of black money in the country is the lack of strict punishments for the offenders. The criminals pay bribes to the tax authorities to hide their corrupt activities. The criminals who conceal their accounts from the government authorities include big politicians, film stars, cricketers and businessmen. Thus, they are rarely punished in the Court. Some Indian corporations practice transfer mispricing, by under-invoicing their exports and over-in-

voicing their imports from tax haven countries such as Singapore, UAE, and Hong Kong.

The unlawfully acquired money kept abroad is routed back to India by the round tripping processes. Round tripping involves getting the money out of one country, sending it to a place like Mauritius and then, dressed up to look like foreign capital, sending it back home to earn non favourable profits. India has long witnessed controversy surrounding black money parked in Switzerland. It is seen as a safe bet to park the money in Switzerland. Some reports claim a total of US\$1.06 – \$1.40 trillion is held illegally in Switzerland. The circulation of black money across the tax heavens has always been a point of concern for the Income Tax Authorities.

Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties (MLATs) are agreements between countries to provide each other with legal assistance in criminal matters, such as exchanging evidence and information. India has entered into MLATs with 42 countries, as of November 2019. These treaties facilitate cooperation in investigations, prosecutions, and other legal proceedings related to criminal activity. Assets held by Indian residents in Switzerland would not automatically be seen as ‘black money’ and emphasised their active coop-

eration with India in tackling tax fraud and evasion.

Undisclosed foreign income/assets are Scheduled Offence under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA), which provides for imprisonment of minimum of 3 years (which can be extended up to 7 years) and a fine of up to Rs. 5 lakh and the tainted proceeds parked overseas can be recovered through Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties. The Ministry of Finance reported that investigations are ongoing and taxes are being collected from those implicated.

The anti-black money measures taken by the government during the last four and half years in the form of Black Money Law, the Fugitive Criminal Offenders Act, and Demonetisation, have brought undisclosed income of about Rs 1,30,000 crore to tax. These measures have also led to seizure and attachment of assets worth approximately Rs 50,000 crore and compelled holders of large cash currency to disclose their source of earnings.

Efforts are still on to bring back to India black money deposited in various foreign banks by some Indians. Treaties in this regard have been done with some foreign countries. It’s a lengthy legal process. The government is not sitting idle on this matter.

The writer is a retired banker. Views are personal

Letters TO THE EDITOR

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

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



On White Revolution

Sir, Operation Flood started the White Revolution in India and made our country self-sufficient in milk and this was achieved entirely through the cooperative structure. Today around 12 million farmers in more than 22 states across the country own around 250 dairy plants handling around 20 million litres of milk a day. This is a remarkable achievement. While we in India tend to take our achievement for granted, this feat elicited high praise and admiration throughout the world. In 1955 our butter imports were 500 tonne per year; today our cooperatives alone produce more than 12,000 tonne of butter. Similarly, we imported 3,000 tonne of baby food in 1955; today our cooperatives alone produce 38,000 tonne of baby food. Moreover when Amul started there were so many competitors in the market like Polson and other foreign players but Amul stood the test of time and over the years emerged as India’s favourite. By 1975 all imports of milk and milk products stopped. Hope and pray that we rise above small bickering and help the White Revolution. Thanks to Dr Verghese Kurien we came out of trying times and showing surplus.

Mani Ramani Jayanthi , VASHI (NAVI MUMBAI)

Islamabad unnerved

Sir, , Apropos to Pakistan Army chief’s provocative remarks; ‘If we go down, we’ll take down half the world’ and ‘If India builds dam, Pak will destroy it with 10 missiles.’ The highly provocative statements against India reflect the state of frustration of the neighbouring country due to its inability to respond to India’s Op Sindoor where it suffered heavy losses. India’s water bomb strategy without firing a single shot appears to be unnerving Islamabad. However India must not take such rhetoric lightly. India’s strength lies not just in its deterrent but in its ability to calibrate pressure — knowing when to maintain the heat and when to ease off before the situation crosses the threshold. Cornering an adversary without an escape route risks provoking a desperate, dangerous strike. Vigilance, preparedness, and strategic foresight remain India’s best safeguards.

RS Narula, PATIALA



Bastar shines in e-healthcare services

Once synonymous with Maoist insurgency, Bastar division is steadily rewriting the narrative, emerging as a model for digital healthcare in Chhattisgarh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Raipur, August 11: Chhattisgarh's Bastar division has been witnessing a major transformation in healthcare with the effective implementation of digital medical services in the tribal-dominated region, officials said Monday.

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai has been making consistent and determined efforts to strengthen healthcare delivery in Bastar, where effective implementation of the Next Gen e-Hospital system, Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission and Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana services are proving to be a game-changer, a government statement said.

The Next Gen e-Hospital system is functioning in six



district hospitals, two civil hospitals and 41 community health centres of the Bastar region comprising seven districts, including Bastar, Kanker, Kondgaon, Narayanpur, Bijapur, Dantewada and Sukma, it said.

This system brings the OPD registration, consultation, diagnostics, medicine distribution and all patient-related medical information on to a single digital platform, ensuring better and timely services for patients. The integration of digital technology has led to remarkable improvements in transparency, efficiency and patient satisfaction across these hospitals, the release said.

Under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, Health Facility Registration (HFR) for hospitals and Health Professional Registration (HPR) for doctors

and nursing staff have been completed in the region. Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) kiosks have been set up in hospital premises, enabling patients to create their health accounts.

The "Scan & Share" feature and ABHA ID-based online OPD registration have spared patients from waiting in long queues, allowing them to receive prompt services, the release said.

The impact of these digital innovations is visible, as the Bastar District Hospital recorded a total of 60,045 OPD registrations in May, June and July this year. Out of these, 32,379 (53 per cent) were linked with ABHA.

During the same period, Dantewada district hospital recorded 33,895 OPD registrations, with 13,729 (40 per cent) linked

to ABHA, as per the release.

This entire process not only saves time but also provides patients with digital health records which they can access anywhere in the country. It has improved transparency in the healthcare system while enhancing continuity and quality of treatment, it said.

CM Sai said the digital services have ensured timely, accessible and quality treatment to patients in the region.

"This initiative is not just a model for Bastar but for the entire state. We will soon implement it across all districts to realise the vision of a 'Healthy and Empowered Chhattisgarh'," he added.

State Health Minister Shyam Bihari Jaiswal said these services in healthcare go beyond mere digitisation as they serve as a powerful bridge connecting people in rural and remote areas to quality medical facilities.

The positive results from Bastar prove that when technology, administrative willpower and public participation come together, the pace of development multiplies manifold, he said.

This initiative will not only transform healthcare services, but also ensure Chhattisgarh's substantial contribution to building a 'Healthy India', he added.

The Lumineers to perform in Delhi-NCR next year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 11: American folk-rock band The Lumineers is set to perform in India as part of their 'The Automatic World Tour', the organisers said Monday.

The Grammy-nominated group, known for hits such as "Ho Hey", "Cleopatra", "Stubborn Love" and "Ophelia", will perform at Huda

Ground in Delhi-NCR February 1, 2026.

The concert, produced and promoted by BookMyShow Live, will be the band's only stop in the subcontinent and is part of their world tour in support of their fifth studio album 'Automatic'.

The Lumineers, led by founding members Wesley Schultz and Jeremiah Fraites, has performed at major ven-

ues including Madison Square Garden, London's O2 Arena, Glastonbury and Coachella.

"At BookMyShow Live, our mission has always been to bring world-class entertainment to Indian audiences and firmly place India on the global live entertainment map," Naman Pugalia, Chief Business Officer - Live Events, BookMyShow, said in a statement.

Delhi to build 21,000 smart classrooms

INDO- ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 11: Delhi Education Minister Ashish Sood said Monday that the government aims to build 21,000 smart classrooms in the next four years. He said that as part of reforms in the education sector, AI-based language labs and attendance systems using facial recognition will also be implemented in Delhi government schools.

Chairing the Golden Jubilee celebrations of Modern School, Vasant Vihar, Sood said AI will be utilised more and more for complex and important tasks like paper checking.

"The Chromebook model will equip schools with technology," he said, adding that under the guid-

ance of PM Modi and the leadership of Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, the Delhi Government is bringing about major changes in the field of education.

Sood extended his best wishes to Modern School's Principal, Trustees, President, Secretary, parents, and students on the eve of Independence Day.

Addressing the students present, the Education Minister said that this 50-year journey of Modern School is not just a number, but a half-century-long voyage filled with their hard work, dreams, and values, which has shaped thousands of students into responsible citizens.

He described the 79th Independence Day and the school's 50th year

as an opportunity for introspection, saying, "We must think about what we will give back to the country and to Delhi when we complete our education from school."

Today, India faces formidable challenges such as climate change, the ethical use of artificial intelligence, the geopolitics of semiconductors, and shortages of water and energy. To tackle these, the new generation must come forward as a confluence of Indian values and modernity, he said.

Sood further said that patriotism is not limited to just hoisting the tricolour but should also be reflected in everyday habits and discipline, such as the habit of cleanliness, following traffic rules, and respecting the rights of others.

Chhattisgarh boy gets calls from Kohli, AB de Villiers & other cricket royalty



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gariaband (Chhattisgarh), August 11: For Manish Bisi, a young man from Madagaon village in Chhattisgarh's Gariaband district, the simple act of buying a SIM card from a local mobile phone shop let loose a whirlwind of disbelief, celebrity, and a bizarre series of events that felt more like a movie script than reality.

The SIM card once belonged to rising cricket star Rajat Patidar, and soon an awestruck Bisi was fielding calls from legends like Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers.

What Manish and his friend, Khemraj, thought was a system glitch when they saw the profile picture of Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) captain Patidar after they installed WhatsApp soon turned as real as voices on the other end of the phone line.

The tryst with instant fame for Manish, son of farmer Gajendra Bisi, began on June 28 when he purchased a new Jio SIM from a mobile shop in Deobhog, around 8 kilometres from his village. Manish and Khemraj

were soon sucked into a world of disbelief as callers identified themselves as Kohli, de Villiers and Yash Dayal, though the two tried to remain grounded in reality thinking these were all part of some elaborate prank by friends.

In fact, the duo even played along, Khemraj claimed.

The story turned on its head when, on July 15, Patidar himself called up with a fervent "brother, please return my SIM".

Manish and Khemraj still believed it was a prank before realising the seriousness in Patidar's tone when he spoke about sending police to solve the matter.

A police team arrived some minutes later, putting a lid on any assumptions that it was a prank.

Gariaband Deputy Superintendent of Police Neha Sinha said the SIM had been deactivated as per telecom policy after 90 days of inactivity and was reassigned to a new customer, which in this case happened to be Manish.

"Manish was actually getting calls from cricketers who were in contact with Rajat Patidar. Patidar informed the Madhya Pradesh Cyber Cell that his number had been allotted to someone else and requested to have it back," she said.

The MP Cyber Cell contacted Gariaband police, who spoke with Manish and his family and with their consent, the SIM was recently returned to Patidar, the Deputy SP informed.

"There was no legal issue or fault on anyone's part. This was simply a result of standard telecom procedures," Sinha added.

For Manish, Khemraj, and their families, meanwhile, the experience has been like "something out of a film".

Khemraj, an ardent Kohli fan, excitedly said, "I never imagined I would speak to Virat Kohli one day and that too from our village. When AB de Villiers called, he spoke in English. We couldn't understand a word, but we were so thrilled."

The villagers are overjoyed because most people here are RCB fans and talking to legends like Kohli and de Villiers is something that cannot be described and even now seems like a dream, said Manish's brother Deshbandhu Bisi.

"Even if it was all due to a mix-up, these conversations happened out of sheer luck. People just dream of seeing them, we got to speak to them," Deshbandhu gushed.

**OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER
REDHAKHOL FOREST DIVISION**
Mobile No.- 06644-299949, Email Id:df.o.redhakhol@odisha.gov.in
No.MM-154: Notice No.11, Date: 11.08.2025

Corrigendum- Extension of Tender Submission Date
Name: Procurement of Solar Powered Early Warning System (EWS) for Redhakhol Forest Division.
It is to inform all prospective bidders that the last date and time for bid submission for the Tender invited for the above-mentioned work vide **Notice No-09 dated 04.08.2025** has been extended as per the details given below.

Sl. No.	Current Bid Submission last date and time	Extended Bid Submission last date and time
1	On 11.08.2025 upto 05.00 PM	On 16.08.2025 upto 1.00 PM

The Opening of the bid will be on **16.08.2025 at 04.00 PM**. All the other terms and conditions of the Tender documents will remain unchanged.

**Sd/- Divisional Forest Officer
Redhakhol Forest Division**
OIPR-08146/11/0029/2526

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Do join us to learn more about Mutual Funds.
Date and Venue:
Wednesday, 13th August 2025; 6:30 p.m. onwards.
at Hotel Radhika Regency, Birs Road, Rourkela - 769 001, Odisha.
For registration, please contact: Ranjit Mallik, Mobile: 99370 88035.
Wednesday, 13th August 2025; 7:00 p.m. onwards.
at Hotel Jasmin Palace, NH-55, Kandsar, Angul - 759 145, Odisha.
For registration, please contact: SK Mobarak Hosen, Mobile: 86372 70639.
Registration is compulsory. The registration time will be from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
No walk-ins will be allowed.

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Visit <https://www.hdfcfund.com/information/key-know-how> to know more about the process to complete a one-time Know Your Customer (KYC) requirement to invest in Mutual Funds. Investors should only deal with registered Mutual Funds, details of which can be verified on the SEBI website (www.sebi.gov.in/intermediaries.html). For any queries, complaints & grievance redressal, investors may reach out to the AMC's or Investor Relations Officers. Additionally, investors may also lodge complaints directly with the AMC's. If they are not satisfied with the resolutions given by AMC's, they may raise complaint through the SCORES portal on <https://scores.gov.in>. SCORES portal facilitates investors to lodge complaint online with SEBI and subsequently view its status. In case the investor is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaints raised directly with the AMC's or through the SCORES portal, they may file any complaint on the Smart ODR on <https://smartodr.in/login>.
Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.

भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक
मानव संसाधन प्रबंध विभाग
भुवनेश्वर

निविदा सूचना

भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक (जिसे आगे "बैंक" कहा जाएगा), भुवनेश्वर प्रतिष्ठित और अनुभवी केमिस्ट/स्टॉकिस्ट, जो भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक, भुवनेश्वर की डिस्पेन्सरियों को दवाइयों की आपूर्ति के लिए निर्धारित पात्रता मानदंडों को पूरा करते हैं, से दो भागों (तकनीकी और वित्तीय बोली) में ई-निविदा के लिए आवेदन आमंत्रित करता है।

निविदा के विवरण के लिए, कृपया बैंक की वेबसाइट (<https://www.rbi.org.in>) के "निविदाएं" खंड को देखें अथवा मानव संसाधन प्रबंध विभाग, भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक, भुवनेश्वर से संपर्क करें। एमएसटीसी पोर्टल (www.mstcecommerce.com/eprocn) पर निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की अंतिम तारीख 29 अगस्त, 2025 को अपराह्न 02:00 बजे तक है।

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As Rahul Gandhi started fight for democracy & restoration of the sacrosanct power of every Indian's vote... BJP has resorted to a dastardly act of detaining him and Priyanka Gandhi & other Congress leaders. Jails can't crush the resolve or silence the voice of Rahul Gandhi

A REVANTH REDDY


CHIEF MINISTER, TELANGANA



By 2047, when India will become a developed nation and Uttar Pradesh will also be 'Viksit Uttar Pradesh'

YOGI ADITYANATH

CHIEF MINISTER, UTTAR PRADESH



SHORT TAKES

Pak intruder killed after BSF opens fire

Jammu: A Pakistani intruder was killed after being shot at by the BSF while attempting to sneak into this side from across the International Border (IB) in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir Monday, officials said. The Border Security Force (BSF) said they are lodging a protest with their Pakistani counterparts over the incident. The officials said BSF troops noticed some intruders trying to sneak into this side between Chandwan and Kothey border outposts in the Hiranagar sector around 4 pm and were challenged to stop. "He was warned by alert troops but paid no heed. BSF troops sensing threat fired on his legs. Later on, he was taken into BSF custody. Protest being lodged with counterpart," the border guarding force said in a statement here.

Two tiger cubs die at Delhi zoo

New Delhi: Two tiger cubs have died over the past three days at the Delhi zoo, officials said Monday. The deaths came just a week after the zoo celebrated the birth of six Bengal tiger cubs — the largest litter in two decades. The cubs were born to a seven-year-old tigress, Aditi, August 4 between 9 am and 11 am. This was her first litter since being brought from the Gorewada rescue centre in Nagpur.

BSF launches 'Operation Alert'

Jaisalmer: Ahead of Independence Day, the Border Security Force (BSF) launched a week-long 'Operation Alert' along the Indo-Pak border in Rajasthan, aimed at strengthening security and preventing any infiltration attempts. The operation began August 11 and will continue till August 17, BSF Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Yogendra Singh Rathore said. "Although BSF remains vigilant throughout the year, surveillance is being further tightened during this period," he said.


8 killed as pick-up van falls off road

Pune: Eight women on their way to a temple were killed and 25 people injured after a pick-up van they were travelling in fell off the road on a hilly terrain in Pune district Monday, police said. According to preliminary information, the driver lost control, causing the pick-up van, carrying 30 to 35 passengers, most of them women and children, to veer off the road and plunge 25 to 30 feet.

“The grave problem appears to have remained unchecked and unnoticed for too long. The unscrupulous elements have played with the health and lives of people. This has to stop and those deliberately involved in playing with public health must face the law

OMAR ABDULLAH

CHIEF MINISTER, JAMMU AND KASHMIR



OVER 16L AFFECTED BY FLOODS IN BIHAR

More than 16 lakh people have been affected by floods in Bihar, where several rivers are in spate due to torrential rainfall in the past 24 hours, officials said Monday. A total of 32 teams of the NDRF and the SDRF have been engaged in rescue operations, they said



AI flight diverted to Chennai

Aviation watchdog DGCA said Air India's flight from Thiruvananthapuram to Delhi was diverted to Chennai Sunday evening due to suspected malfunctioning of the weather radar of the aircraft

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



Senior Congress leader and former Minister of State for Civil Aviation KC Venugopal, who was among the Parliamentarians onboard, claimed the flight came 'frighteningly close to tragedy'

who was among the Parliamentarians onboard, claimed the flight came "frighteningly close to tragedy".

The flight diversion incident has also sparked a political uproar, with BJP IT Department Head Amit Malviya Monday

cited Air India's denial of Venugopal's claim that an aircraft carrying MPs, including him, came close to a "tragedy" due to the presence of another plane on Chennai runway to demand that he should face consequences if his allegation is untrue.

Air India said Monday, the crew of the Thiruvananthapuram-Delhi flight followed the protocols and the first landing attempt had to be aborted due to suspected foreign debris presence on the runway.

The decision to divert the flight to Chennai was a precautionary measure and was taken in the best interest of the safety of passengers and crew due to a suspected technical issue. The flight was not diverted to Bengaluru as the weather in Chennai was clear, the airline said. "As the aircraft was over-

weight for an immediate landing the pilot had to hold over Chennai to reduce weight and no emergency was declared. During the first landing approach, the ATC asked the pilots to initiate a go-around as another aircraft that had taken off from the same runway had reported a suspected foreign object debris (FOD) on the runway," the statement said.

Deeply regretting the inconvenience, the airline said all the affected passengers were accommodated on alternate flights to Delhi and that the aircraft has also resumed commercial operations.

In a detailed statement Monday, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said the A320 aircraft VT-TNL during the flight encountered moderate turbulent conditions.

The flight AI2455, which was scheduled to depart at 19:15 hours Sunday, was delayed by 49 minutes due to the late arrival of the aircraft from Delhi, and took off from Thiruvananthapuram at 20:04 hours.

K C Venugopal, also the Chairman of Parliament's Public Accounts Committee, on Sunday night claimed the flight came "frighteningly close to tragedy".

"Further, Venugopal said, "we were saved by skill and luck" and that passenger safety cannot depend on luck.

SNIPPET

Parl passes bill to provide reservation to Scheduled Tribes in Goa Assembly

New Delhi: Parliament Monday approved a bill to provide reservation to Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the Goa Assembly. The Rajya Sabha gave its nod to 'The Readjustment of Representation of Scheduled Tribes in Assembly Constituencies of the State of Goa Bill, 2025' with voice vote without discussion. The Lok Sabha had passed the legislation August 5. Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal said the bill seeks to provide representation to the ST community in the state Assembly. "A special situation arose in Goa. There are 40 seats in the Goa Legislative Assembly. One seat is reserved for Scheduled Castes. Their number is 25,494. But not a single seat is reserved for STs because according to the 2001 census, their population was recorded as 566," he said. Meghwal said the bill was brought so that the Scheduled Tribe community is not deprived of representation in the 40-member Goa Assembly.

RS returns Manipur budget, GST Bill

New Delhi: The Rajya Sabha Monday returned the Manipur Appropriation Bill, 2025, and The Manipur Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2025 amid Opposition protests over the Special Intensive Revision (SiR) issue. A brief debate on the Bills was also held. The Manipur Appropriation Bill authorises payment and appropriation of certain sums out of the Consolidated Fund of the State of Manipur for services of the financial year 2025-26. The Manipur Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2025, which seeks to implement the decisions approved by the GST Council, would replace the Manipur Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, while replying to the debate on the Bills, accused the Opposition of opposing the Manipur budget. She called the Manipur budget one of the progressive, confidence-building budgets.

Parliament approves Bill aimed at ensuring safety, security of ships

New Delhi: Parliament Monday approved a bill aimed at increasing India's bankability in maritime sector besides ensuring safety and security of ships with minimal disruptions. Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal, while replying to the debate on 'The Merchant Shipping Bill, 2025', said the key focus of the bill is enablement of increasing India's bankability in the maritime sector. The Bill was passed with a voice vote, amid a walkout by the Opposition that was protesting in the House and demanding a discussion on the special intensive revision (SiR) of electoral rolls in Bihar. The Lok Sabha had passed the legislation August 6. The legislation seeks to expand the eligibility criteria for ownership of merchant shipping vessels and provide for investigation and enquiries on marine casualties among others.



Dasara elephants led by tusker Abhimanyu during a procession as part of rehearsals for the upcoming 'Dasara' festival, in Mysuru, Karnataka, Monday PTI PHOTO

India bans imports of jute products from B'desh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 11: India Monday banned imports of certain jute products and ropes from Bangladesh through all land routes with immediate effect, amid strained relations between the two countries.

However, according to a notification of the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), these imports are allowed through the Nhava Sheva Seaport.

"Imports from Bangladesh

shall not be allowed from any land port on the India-Bangladesh Border," it said, adding, "Import of certain goods from Bangladesh to India is regulated with immediate effect."

The products included in the list are bleached and unbleached woven fabrics of Jute or of other textile bast fibre; twine, cordage, rope of jute; and sacks and bags of jute.

Earlier June 27, India prohibited imports of a number of jute products and woven fabrics from Bangladesh through all

land routes. Those imports are, however, allowed only through Nhava Sheva seaport in Maharashtra. The curbs were imposed on items such as jute products, flax tow and waste, jute and other bast fibres, jute, single flax yarn, single yarn of jute, multiple folded, woven fabrics or flex, and unbleached woven fabrics of jute.

In April and May also, India had announced similar curbs on imports from Bangladesh.

India imposed port restrictions on the import of certain

goods like ready-made garments and processed food items May 17, from the neighbouring country. India withdrew the transshipment facility it had granted to Bangladesh for exporting various items to the Middle East, Europe and various other countries except Nepal and Bhutan April 9.

These measures were announced against the backdrop of the controversial statements made by the head of Bangladesh's interim government Muhammad Yunus in China.

Focused efforts being made to mitigate adverse impact of US tariff

As part of 'mitigation measures being taken', the govt is focusing on 'export diversification strategy', making concerted efforts to tap the potential of India's existing trade agreements with partners such as the UAE, Australia, ASEAN, Japan, Korea, and Mauritius

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 11: The government Monday asserted that certain red lines cannot be crossed in the trade negotiations with the US and that it is making "focused efforts" as part of an export diversification strategy to mitigate the adverse impact of the high tariff imposed by the US, sources said.

At a briefing to the Parliament's Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri suggested that India will take up with the US the use of its soil

by Pakistan Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir for making nuclear threat to New Delhi, the sources said.

Misri and Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal briefed the members of the panel headed by Congress MP Shashi Tharoor on the "US India trade negotiations and tariffs" amid uncertainty prevailing over the next round of negotiations scheduled in India from August 25.

Citing the briefing, a source said the trade ties between the two countries were considered to be passing through a "difficult phase" and the government



was taking measures to deal with the fallout.

Tharoor told reporters that a question was asked about Munir's "nuclear sabre-rattling", and Misri said India will not tolerate such nuclear blackmail. "It was not good that Munir used the soil of a friendly country to make such a statement, and this message will be conveyed," he added.

He said the US has so far not conveyed anything on a change of schedule for the next round of talks or calling it off.

US President Donald Trump has said that there will be no trade talks with India till the tariff issue is resolved.

A few industries like auto, textile, leather, and gems and jewellery are likely to be particularly hit by the high US

tariff, the sources said, citing the briefing by top government functionaries.

The sources said the reference to "red lines" by the top government functionary was related to India's uncompromising stand against the US demand that India open its agri and dairy sectors for its products.

Opposition members raised questions on the recent plunge in the India-US ties, the US hosting Munir and Trump targeting the Indian economy.

An opposition MP asked if it was triggered by the Indian stand on Trump's claim of mediating a "ceasefire" between India and Pakistan, a source said.

Government functionaries told the members that many countries, including traditional US allies, were hit hard by

tariffs imposed by Trump but they later managed to negotiate them down by making a few concessions.

As part of "mitigation measures being taken", the government is focusing on "export diversification strategy", making concerted efforts to tap the potential of India's existing trade agreements with partners such as the UAE, Australia, ASEAN, Japan, Korea, and Mauritius, officials said.

Preparations are on to leverage opportunities under new free trade agreement partners such as EFTA (European Free Trade Association) and the UK as soon as the agreements enter into force, they said.

Efforts are on to speedily conclude ongoing negotiations, such as with the EU, on the basis of mutually beneficial and balanced trade, they added.

of the day

quote

HERE NOW

Australia will recognise the State of Palestine at the 80th Sessions of the United Nations General Assembly in September, to contribute to international momentum towards a two-state solution, a ceasefire in Gaza and the release of hostages



ANTHONY ALBANESE | PM, AUSTRALIA

HERE NOW

I don't know what they're (Chinese govt) talking about, playing with fire? I was just stating facts. We do not want to go to war, but I think if there is a war over Taiwan, we will be drawn, we will be pulled in, whether we like it or not, kicking and screaming



FERDINAND MARCOS JR | PRESIDENT, THE PHILIPPINES

HERE NOW

As we work towards a sustainable and just peace, international law is clear: All temporarily occupied territories belong to Ukraine



KAJA KALLAS | FOREIGN POLICY CHIEF, EU

SHORT TAKES

Dengue grips B'desh

Dhaka: Bangladesh is experiencing a surge in dengue cases and deaths, with health experts warning that August could bring an even more severe outbreak of the mosquito-borne disease if urgent action is not taken. Dengue has killed 101 people and infected 24,183 so far this year, official data showed, placing a severe strain on the country's already overstretched healthcare system. A sharp rise in fatalities has accompanied the spike in cases. Nineteen people have already died of dengue so far in August, following 41 deaths in July — more than double June's 19 fatalities. "The situation is critical. The virus is already widespread across the country, and without aggressive intervention, hospitals will be overwhelmed," said Kabirul Bashar, an entomologist at Jahangirnagar University.

SK, Vietnam expand ties

Seoul: South Korea and Vietnam's leaders pledged to deepen economic cooperation Monday as their export-dependent countries try to shore up longstanding supply chains as US President Donald Trump's tariffs shake up global trade. There was no public discussion of the levies - 15% on South Korean products going to the US and 20% for Vietnamese goods - as South Korean President Lee Jae Myung hosted Vietnam's To Lam as his first state guest since taking office in June. But Trump's tariffs on products from Asian countries have increased uncertainty over future business commitments, with Vietnamese official data showing a slowdown in new investment.

Gaza becoming graveyard for scribes

At least 186 have been killed in Gaza

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jerusalem, August 11: Israel's military targeted an Al Jazeera correspondent with an airstrike Sunday, killing him, another network journalist and at least six other people, all of whom were sheltering outside the Gaza City Hospital complex.

Officials at Shifa Hospital said those killed included Al Jazeera correspondents Anas al-Sharif and Mohamed Qureiha. The strike also killed four other journalists and two other people, hospital administrative director Rami Mohanna told The Associated Press. Al-Sharif reported a nearby bombardment minutes before

XINJIANG-TIBET RAIL LINK NEAR LAC

Beijing deepens Himalayan presence

Strategic rail corridor near LAC highlights China's intent

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, August 11: China is set to build the most ambitious rail link connecting Xinjiang province with Tibet, part of which will "run near" the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with India, according to a media report.

Work is expected to get underway this year on one of the world's most ambitious rail projects with the launch of a state-owned company to oversee the construction and operations of a line that will link Hotan in Xinjiang and Lhasa in Tibet, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

The Xinjiang-Tibet Railway Company (XTRC) had been formally registered with 95 billion yuan (\$13.2 billion) in capital and wholly owned by China State Railway Group to build the project, the report said, quoting the state-run Shanghai Securities News.

"This ambitious project aims to establish a 5,000 km plateau rail framework centred on Lhasa by 2035," Hubei-based Huayuan Securities said in a research note Friday.

The project's registered capital represents initial funding, not total project costs. For example, the 1,800 km Sichuan-Tibet Railway required an



1962 WAR CONNECTION

The 1980 km railway line is expected to connect Hotan in Xinjiang to Shigatze in Tibet, from where a line to Lhasa is in place

This line is likely to run east of the G219 Xinjiang-Tibet Highway, where construction in the 1950s became a point of provocation for the 1962 war

India asserts Aksai Chin as an integral part of its territory based on historical claims and past treaties

estimated 320 billion yuan (\$45 billion) to build, according to the report published Saturday.

"Parts of the route will also run near the China-India Line of Actual Control (LAC), the de facto border between the two countries, giving it defensive importance in a frontier area with less infrastructure than the rest of China," the report said.

China's mega infrastructure project in the route, the Xinjiang-Tibet highway, also known as G219 highway, was built through the disputed Aksai Chin area, which was a major flashpoint in the 1962 war.

The Xinjiang-Tibet Railway is one of four lines planned to connect Tibet with the rest

of the country, with the other services linking the western region to Qinghai, Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, the report said. The Qinghai-Tibet line is up and running while construction continues on the other two, it said. The Tibet region in China is well connected by air, road and rail networks.

Its high-speed rail network from Lhasa stretches close to the Arunachal Pradesh border.

Significantly, China's plans for the new Xinjiang-Tibet rail link come just after Beijing and New Delhi began a normalisation of relations after over four years of a freeze in ties due to the military standoff in the sprawling Eastern Ladakh.

ALTERING BORDER DYNAMICS: Tibet continues to be the focus of China's mega constructions. China recently started the construction of the world's biggest dam over the Brahmaputra River in ecologically fragile Tibet, close to Arunachal Pradesh

Aksai Chin is part of the region.

The relations began looking up after last year's meeting in Russia between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the BRICS summit.

Modi is expected to attend the two-day Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit beginning August 31.

Tibet continues to be the focus of China's mega constructions. China recently started the construction of the world's biggest dam over the Brahmaputra River in ecologically fragile Tibet, close to Arunachal Pradesh. The mega dam raised concerns in the lower riparian countries - India and Bangladesh. Costing about \$170 billion, the dam is stated to be the world's biggest infrastructure project.

China defended the dam project, saying it would not have

any negative impact on the downstream countries.

According to the details provided in the registration of XTRC, its business scope also includes diversified operations such as real estate development, tourism, catering, accommodation and international project contracting.

Under the plan, the train route will join the existing Lhasa-Shigatse line with a new one from Hotan to Shigatse, forming a roughly 2,000km strategic artery linking northwestern and southwestern China, the Post reported. The route will have an average elevation of over 4,500 metres, and pass through the Kunlun, Karakoram, Kailash and Himalayan mountain ranges, going through glaciers, frozen rivers and permafrost.

The project posed many challenges as the winter temperatures on the Tibetan Plateau can plunge to -40 degrees Celsius, with oxygen levels at just 44 per cent of inland regions.

Along with the engineering challenges, the project team will have to cope with accelerated machinery wear, soaring logistics costs, and environmental conservation needs, the report said.

Planning for the Xinjiang-Tibet line dates back to 2008, when it was included in the revised "Medium and Long-Term Railway Network Plan" approved by the National Development and Reform Commission, the country's top economic planner.

Colombian prez hopeful Uribe dies after campaign shooting in June



REUTERS

Bogota, August 11: Miguel Uribe, a Colombian senator who was vying for his party's candidacy in upcoming presidential elections, died Monday, two months after being shot at a campaign rally. He was 39.

Uribe, a father and stepfather, was shot in the head while giving a campaign speech June 7 and underwent multiple surgeries during his subsequent hospital stay.

He had shown some improvement during July, but his condition worsened over the past weekend due to a hemorrhage in his central nervous system, the hospital treating him said Sunday.

Explosion at US Steel plant leaves one dead, dozens injured

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Clairton (US), August 11: An explosion at a US Steel plant near Pittsburgh left one dead and dozens injured or trapped under the rubble Monday, with emergency workers on site trying to rescue victims, officials said.

The explosion sent black smoke spiralling into the mid-day sky in the Monongahela Valley, a region of the state synonymous with steel for more than a century.

An Allegheny County emergency services spokesperson, Kasey Reigner, said one person died in the explosion and two were currently believed to be unaccounted for. Multiple other people were treated for injuries, Reigner said.

Allegheny County Emergency Services said a fire at the plant started around 10:51 am. The explosion sent a shock through the community and led to officials asking residents to stay away from the scene so emergency workers could respond.

"It felt like thunder," Zachary Buday, a construction worker near the scene, told WTAE-TV.

Dozens were injured and the county was sending 15 ambulances, on top of the ambulances supplied by local emergency response agencies, Reigner said.

The plant, a massive industrial facility along the Monongahela River south of Pittsburgh, is considered the largest coking operation in North America and is one of four major US Steel plants in Pennsylvania that employ several thousand workers.

Colombian prez hopeful Uribe dies after campaign shooting in June

The assassination has evoked memories of intense political violence in Colombia's past. In the 1980s and 1990s, four presidential candidates were murdered in separate attacks blamed on drug cartels allied with right-wing paramilitary death squads.

"You'll always be the love of my life," his wife Maria Claudia Tarazona said on Instagram early on Monday. "Thank you for a life filled with love, thank you for being a father to the girls, the best dad to Alejandro."

"I ask God to show me the path to learn to live without you," she added. "Rest in peace, love of my life, I will take care of our children."

The death of Uribe adds further tragedy to his family's fraught history.

His mother, journalist Diana Turbay, was killed in 1991 during a botched rescue mission after she was kidnapped by the Medellin Cartel, headed by drug lord Pablo Escobar.

The family is prominent in Colombian politics. His maternal grandfather, Julio Cesar Turbay, served as Colombia's president from 1978 to 1982, while his paternal grandfather, Rodrigo Uribe Echavarría, headed the Liberal Party and supported Virgilio Barco's successful 1986 presidential campaign.

COMBATING CRIME



National Guard troops to be deployed to Washington

Trump to take direct control of city police

Trump uses urban crime in latest political strategy push

after dropping 35% in 2024, and overall crime dropped 7%, according to the city's police department.

But gun violence remains an issue. In 2023, Washington had the third-highest gun homicide rate among US cities with populations over 500,000, according to gun control advocacy group Everytown for Gun Safety.

The deployment of National Guard troops is a tactic the Re-

India on UK's 'Deport Now Appeal Later' list

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, August 11: India is among the countries being added to an expanded UK government list of countries where foreign criminals will be deported once they are sentenced before their appeals are heard as part of measures to crack down on rising migration to the country.

In an announcement Sunday, the UK Home Office confirmed that the scope of its "Deport Now Appeal Later" scheme will be nearly trebled from eight countries to 23, with foreign nationals from these countries to be deported to their home countries before they can appeal against that decision.

Foreigners who have had their human rights claim re-



fused will have a chance to take part in their UK appeal hearing remotely from overseas using video technology.

The list of countries covered under the remote hearing scheme, revived in 2023 by then

Conservative home secretary Suella Braverman, included Finland, Nigeria, Estonia, Albania, Belize, Mauritius, Tanzania and Kosovo.

Now, India will be added along with Angola, Australia,

For far too long, foreign criminals have been exploiting our immigration system, remaining in the UK for months or even years while their appeals drag on. That has to end

YVETTE COOPER | HOME SECRETARY, UK

Botswana, Brunei, Bulgaria, Canada, Guyana, Indonesia, Kenya, Latvia, Lebanon, Malaysia, Uganda and Zambia.

The UK government said it remains in continuous discussions with "a range of other countries about joining the scheme".

"We are leading diplomatic efforts to increase the number of countries where foreign criminals can be swiftly returned, and if they want to appeal, they can do so safely from

their home country. Under this scheme, we're investing in international partnerships that uphold our security and make our streets safer," said Foreign Secretary David Lammy.

According to the Home Office, previously offenders from the countries on the expanded list could remain in the UK for months or years while their cases were worked through the appeals system as an "added burden on the British taxpayer" beyond the end of the prison sentences.

It also released the latest figures to highlight that around 5,200 foreign nationals were deported since July 2024 when the Labour government came into office, an increase of 14 per cent over the previous year.

Lok Sabha passes sports Bill

MANDAVIYA CALLS IT SINGLE BIGGEST SPORTS REFORM SINCE INDEPENDENCE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 11: The long-awaited National Sports Governance Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha here Monday with Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya describing it as the "single biggest reform in Indian sports since independence" amid opposition protests over revision of electoral rolls in Bihar.

The National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill was also passed when the Lok Sabha re-assembled at 2pm after an early adjournment due to opposition protests.

"It is the single biggest reform in sports since independence. This bill will ensure accountability, ensure justice, best governance in sports federations," Mandaviya said amid sloganeering by opposition members.

"It will have massive significance in India's sports ecosystem. It is unfortunate that such an important bill and reform does not have opposition's participation," he added.

Earlier, Chairman of the parliamentary committee on sports, Digvijaya Singh, requested Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to refer the National Sports Governance Bill to the panel. He felt that the bill should be examined and discussed before it is taken up by Parliament

Mandaviya said the two bills were key reforms aimed at building a "transparent, accountable and world-class sports ecosystem" in India as the country aims to bid for the 2036 Olympics.

"Efforts have been made since 1975 and in 1985, we had the first draft. But sports was also politicised for personal gains. Some ministers made efforts to bring this bill but could not move forward.



The National Sports Bill Governance Bill is a force of change...Despite being such a large country, our performance at the Olympic Games and on the international stage has not been satisfactory and this Bill aims to build India's sports capacity

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | SPORTS MINISTER



"In 2011, we had a National Sports Code. Another effort was made to turn it into a bill. It reached the cabinet, there was a discussion as well but the bill was deferred after that. It did not reach the Parliament," the minister stated while presenting a timeline of the bill's journey.

The sports governance bill has provisions for a National Sports Board (NSB) to create a stringent system of accountability. All National Sports Federations (NSFs) will have to attain NSB's recognition for access to central government funding.

The NSB will have the mandate to de-recognise a national body that fails to hold elections for its Executive Committee or has committed "gross irregularities in the election procedures."

Failure to publish annual audited accounts or "misused, misapplied or misappropriated public funds" would also be li-

able for action by the NSB but it would be required to consult the concerned global body before making its move.

Another feature is the proposal for a 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, 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 bylaws allow for it. It is a departure from the national sports code that capped the age limit at 70.

"...as a part of the preparatory activities for the bidding of Summer Olympic Games 2036, it is imperative that the sports governance landscape undergo a positive transformation to bring better outcomes, sporting excellence and aids in improved performance in major international competitions," read the bill's statement of objectives.

All recognised national sports bodies would also come under the ambit of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, something that the BCCI has ve-

hemently opposed since it is not dependent on government funding.

However, the cricket board has got some leeway on that front with the government amending the bill to ensure that RTI would be applicable only on bodies that rely on government funding or support.

The National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill-2025 that seeks to incorporate the changes sought by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), which objected to "government interference" in the functioning of the country's Anti-Doping Agency (NADA).

The act was originally passed in 2022 but its implementation had to be put on hold due to objections raised by WADA.

The world body objected to the institution of a National Board for Anti-Doping in Sports, which was empowered to make recommendations to the government on anti-doping regulations.

India eves aim to end ICC trophy drought

50-day countdown for ODI Women's World Cup starts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 11: India captain Harmanpreet Kaur Monday said her team is determined to end its ICC trophy drought during next month's ODI Women's World Cup and the preceding series against title favourites Australia will give the side a clear picture of where it stands.

India have never won a world title despite coming close on a few occasions including the 2017 ODI World Cup in England where they finished runners' up to capture the country's imagination.

"We want to break that barrier which all Indians are waiting for. World Cups are always special, always want to do something special for my country. Whenever I see Yuvi bhaiya (Yuvraj Singh) it gives me a lot of motivation," Harmanpreet said here at the trophy tour unveiling ceremony for the ODI World Cup. Former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh, former captain Mithali Raj and Harmanpreet's teammates Smriti Mandhana and Jemimah Rodrigues were also part of the function.

India go into the Australia series at home, starting Sep-

tember 14, high on confidence after beating England in an away ODI and T20I series. Yuvraj said players will have to individually believe that they can win matches for the country.

"(I would say) play the situation and not the expectation and be in the moment," he said.

"It's a great opportunity to create history. But that doesn't mean that from the start point you are thinking of winning it. You have to experience the whole enigma of it. You have to feel that you have put in the process and results will come."

Both Rodrigues and Mandhana noted that there has been a significant change in the team's attitude when it comes to preparations. "A lot has changed with my preparation and mindset. I want to have a lot of confidence coming from my preparation and that gives me clarity," said Rodrigues. Mandhana said, "Our whole team is heading into the direction where we know we have to put in a lot of hard work off the field and when we go on it, it's a reaction. That's been a massive change for the team as well as personally."

We want to break that barrier which all Indians are waiting for. World Cups are always special, always want to do special for my country

HARMANPREET KAUR | CAPTAIN, INDIA



Indian-American Megha Ganne stuns golfing world

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bandon (US), August 11: Indian-American golfer Megha Ganne created history by winning the 2025 US Women's Amateur title at Bandon Dunes here, beating Brooke Biermann 4 and 3 in the 36-hole final, to stun the golfing world.

Ganne, a rising senior competing in her seventh US Women's Amateur, defeated the 2025 Michigan State graduate Biermann.

The 21-year-old Megha's parents are Sudha Ganne, an endocrinologist, and Hari Ganne, an IT entrepreneur. Both are originally from India and are first-generation immigrants to the United States. They live in Holmdel, New Jersey, with their two daughters – Megha and Sirina.

In 2021, Megha, then a teen, held the lead after the first round at the US Women's Open and was tied for third going into the final round. She finished tied 14th but had the golfing world looking at her in amazement.

Alongside Indian-Americans Akshay Bhatia and Sahithi Thigala on the PGA Tour, Megha may well be the next big name in golf.

By winning the 125th edition of the world's second-oldest women's amateur competition, Megha has earned an exemption into next year's US Women's Open at The Riviera Country Club, in Pacific Palisades, Calif, as well as guaranteed spots on the 2025 USA Women's World Amateur Team that will compete in Singapore in October.



National Games gold medallist Gagandeep banned 3-yr for doping

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 11: National Games discus throw gold medallist Gagandeep Singh was among a slew of athletes across sports who were handed three-year ban by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) instead of four after they accepted their offence within 20 days of being charged.

Representing Services, Singh had won gold in men's discus with a best throw of 55.01m at the Uttarakhand National Games February 12. He later tested positive for testosterone metabolites and was handed provisional suspension.

In the NADA's latest update on dope offenders, the 30-year-old Singh got one-year reduction in his ban period under "case resolution agreement" provided in Article 10.8 and 8.3 of NADA Anti-Doping Rule 2021. His three-year ban period has started from February 19 this year.

Singh will be stripped off his National Games gold medal. Haryana athlete Nirbhay Singh's silver is expected to be upgraded to gold.

MILESTONE MOMENT

SURAJ NARREDU-LED TEAM ASIA MAKES HISTORY WITH SHERGAR CUP 2025 WIN

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 11: Suraj Narredu-led Team Asia has brought home the Shergar Cup 2025 trophy. From India to Ascot, Narredu delivered on his promise to leave a global mark. Alongside Japanese jockeys Ryusei Sakai and Mirai Iwata, he won two of six races and secured a crucial second place, snatching the win by just one point ahead of Europe.

Asia prevailed 68-67 over Europe, with Great Britain & Ireland third on 62 and the Rest of the World on 55. Hugh Bowman clinched the Silver Saddle as the leading jockey.

Trained by Dylan Cunha, Narredu piloted Fireblade at the prestigious Ascot Racecourse – winning Shergar Cup Stayers. Sakai also scored aboard Prince of India in the Shergar Cup Sprint.

In a steadily driven two-mile

Team Asia gallops to victory



event, the 40-year-old made his move early, keeping every opponent at bay by almost two lengths. "Being a debut team and winning today is icing

on the cake. I know this is a new team, but I'm sure in the future they'll be a force to be reckoned with," he said.

With over 2,400 career

Being a debut team and winning today is icing on the cake. I know this is a new team, but I'm sure in the future they'll be a force to be reckoned with

SURAJ NARREDU

wins, Narredu has left no soil untouched by his excellence. His passion for carrying the Narredu name like a crown - just as his father and uncle once did - adds deeper value to his game.

"It has been a dream come true. I had always imagined what it would feel like, but now that I'm living it, it's surreal. This is one of the greatest moments in my life- the one I'd always been waiting for. I feel honoured to take this win back to my country," he added.

To mark the milestone, Narredu celebrated with a signature flying dismount for the first time - a move made famous by his idol Frankie Dettori - lighting up the crowd and leaving fans smiling from ear to ear.

Bindra reminisces about 2008 Beijing Olympic gold

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 11: Former India shooter Abhinav Bindra reminisced about his historic gold medal win from the Beijing Olympics in 2008, when he became the country's first individual Olympic gold medallist after finishing in top spot in the men's 10m air rifle event.

In a gripping finale of the men's 10m air rifle finals at the Beijing Games, Bindra was tied with Finland's Henri Hakkinen at the top of the standings with one shot remaining. Bindra held his nerve, scoring 10.8 with his last attempt - his highest score of the finals - to see off the challenge of Hakkinen and secure victory.

On the 17th anniversary of his trailblazing victory at the Summer Games, Bindra took



HISTORIC GLORY

to X to share his emotion. "17 years ago, a medal was placed around my neck, but it truly belonged to a nation. It was built on the love of my parents, the wisdom of my coaches, and the belief of countless people who stood beside me."

"My hope has always been that the gold shone far beyond

that podium, lighting the way for every Indian athlete who dares to dream," he added.

The gold medal in the men's 10m air rifle at Beijing 2008 was the crowning glory in Bindra's stellar sporting career, which includes a World Championship gold and multiple medals at the Commonwealth Games

17 years ago, a medal was placed around my neck, but it truly belonged to a nation. It was built on the love of my parents, the wisdom of my coaches, and the belief of countless people who stood beside me

ABHINAV BINDRA

and the Asian Games.

Bindra hung up his rifle after the 2016 Rio Olympics, where he missed a podium spot by a tenth of a point after losing a shoot-off for the top three.

The legendary shooter, who featured in five Olympics (Sydney 2000, Athens 2004, Beijing 2008, London 2012, Rio 2016), was bestowed with the Padma Bhushan, India's third-highest civilian honour, as recognition for his efforts in 2009.

BOXERS RULING THE RING

Ritika bags heavyweight gold; India end Asian U22 Boxing Championships on overall fourth

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangkok, August 11: Ritika bagged gold in the women's 80+kg category as India finished a creditable overall fourth in the Under-22 category of the Asian Boxing Championships here Monday.

The Indian U-22 contingent concluded their campaign with a total of 13 medals, while the U19 group returned home with a total of 14 medals, including three gold, seven silver and four bronze. The effort helped the U-19 side to end up at overall second in the tournament.

However, the day's sole gold came through Ritika in the women's 80+kg final, where she kept her composure under pressure to beat



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Kazakhstan's Assel Toktassyn. Facing a strong boxer, Ritika mixed caution with aggression to land some telling blows, bagging India's fourth gold in the event. In the morning session, Yatri Patel settled for a silver after losing to Khumorabonu Mamajonova of Uzbekistan in the 90+kg gold medal clash, as both the Indian boxers secured silver.

Yu Tian of China in the 60kg final ended in a narrow 2:3 loss.

Later in the day, Neeraj went down against Shavkatjon Boltaev of Uzbekistan in the men's 75kg final. Later, Ishan Kataria lost to Khalimjon Mamasoliev of Uzbekistan in the 90+kg gold medal clash, as both the Indian boxers secured silver.