



Ananya’s strategy

Actor Ananya Panday shares how she sustains confidence and self-worth while navigating life under constant public scrutiny

LEISURE | P2



Famine in Gaza

Gaza City and surrounding areas are officially suffering from famine, and it will likely spread to other areas, the UN said

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Ban hits business

Multiple online gaming platforms suspend their real-money online gaming operations in the wake of the Online Gaming Bill, 2025

BUSINESS | P11



Winning run

Dominant India score once in each half to blank Bangladesh 2-0 and record second straight win in SAFF U-17 Women's Championships

SPORTS | P12

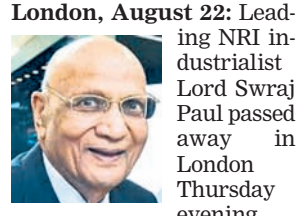
Srimandir: Queue system from Sept 15

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 22: In a significant move aimed at streamlining the flow of devotees and enhancing the darshan experience at the Shree Jagannath Temple in Puri, the much-anticipated ‘Dhadi Darshan’ queue system is likely to be introduced from September 15, pending final approvals and infrastructural readiness. This announcement was made by Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan, who revealed that preparations for the new system are in the final stages. A key development that will precede the launch is the relocation of the Hundi (donation box) — a matter to be discussed in the first meeting of the soon-to-be-formed Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee.

Lord Swraj Paul passes away at 94

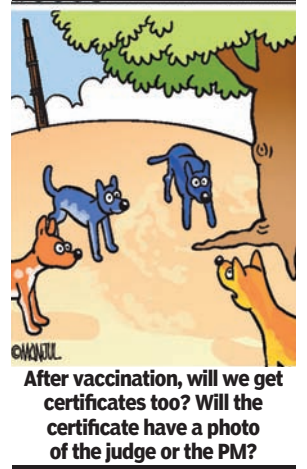
AGENCIES



London, August 22: Leading NRI industrialist Lord Swraj Paul passed away in London Thursday evening, leaving behind a legacy in entrepreneurship and philanthropy. He was 94. Lord Paul, founder of UK-based Caparo Group of industries, had been taken ill and hospitalised recently, where he passed away surrounded by members of his family. PM Narendra Modi expressed anguish at the death of Paul, and said his support for the UK’s close ties with India will always be remembered. Born to Pyare Lal, who ran a small foundry used to make steel goods, Lord Paul was exposed to business early in his life much before he went on to establish UK-based Caparo Group.

MORE P11

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



After vaccination, will we get certificates too? Will the certificate have a photo of the judge or the PM?



PARTYING PANDAS: Twin panda cubs Leni and Lotti, left, play at the Panda Garden during their first birthday party at the Zoo in Berlin, Germany, Friday

AP PHOTO

Class II girl locked overnight in school

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 22: Residents in a village in Keonjhar district Friday rescued an eight-year-old girl student whose head got stuck in a window grill of a government school where she was left locked overnight, police said.

The incident took place at the Government Upper Primary School at Anjar under Banspal block. The Class II student, Jyotsna Dehuri was left locked inside the classroom at school while she was sleeping on one of the benches, said Sanjita Das, one of the teachers.

The family members said that their daughter did not return home from school Thursday and they searched for her all night. However, they, along with some villagers went to the school early in the morning and found that the girl’s head had got stuck on the window grill and she was



screaming for help. “The villagers bent the iron grill and rescued the girl. She was immediately rushed to the local hospital. Her condition was stable after treatment,” said Sita Patra, the cook of the school. Keonjhar Collector Vishal Singh suspended the headmaster (in-charge) Gourahari Mahanta. A preliminary inquiry by the District Education Officer revealed that some Class VIII students were told to lock the school at 4 pm.

Free ride for school kids in govt buses

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 22: School and Mass Education Minister Nityananda Gond Friday announced that school students will be allowed to travel free in state government-run buses.

Speaking to media persons here, Gond said school students now can travel free of cost on

government-run buses plying under the ‘Mukhyamantri Bus Seva’ scheme. Gond, however, made it clear that students will have to be in school uniforms and must carry identity cards to avail the benefit.

While previously only SC&ST students received free textbooks, now all students will get the facility, the minister said.

Parl security breach: 20-yr-old man held

New Delhi: In a security breach, a 20-year-old man attempted to scale a wall of Parliament Friday morning but was caught by security personnel and handed over to police, officials said. Identified as Ram Kumar Bind, the man hails from Uttar Pradesh’s Bhadohi and works in a factory in Surat, Gujarat, police said, adding that he appears to be “mentally incoherent.” Sources said he tried to gain entry into Parliament by climbing a tree adjoining the boundary wall. Multiple central agencies, including the Intelligence Bureau (IB) and the Special Cell of Delhi Police, are questioning the man.

SC modifies ‘harsh’ stray dog ruling

AGENCIES

The Supreme Court has revised its earlier directive on stray dogs, now ordering that dogs picked up from the streets in Delhi and surrounding areas be released after sterilisation and vaccination. Earlier this month, the Court had mandated that all stray dogs in Delhi and its suburbs be relocated to shelters, following a rise in dog bite incidents and rabies cases. However, critics argued the plan was unfeasible due to a shortage of shelters. The ruling had sparked an outcry by animal lovers

New Delhi, August 22: The Supreme Court Friday modified its direction prohibiting the release of vaccinated stray dogs from pounds in Delhi-NCR calling it ‘too harsh’ and ordered the canines to be released post sterilisation and de-worming. A three-judge special bench headed by Justice Vikarm Nath expanded the scope of the stray dogs case beyond the confines of Delhi-NCR and directed all states

and union territories to be made parties in the matter. While pronouncing the order, the bench remarked all similar matters pending in the high courts across the country would come to the top court for a ‘final national policy or decision’ on the issue. The bench, however, said municipal authorities would continue to comply with the August 11 directions to pick up stray dogs from all localities of Delhi, Ghaziabad, Noida, Faridabad and Gurugram and create dog shelters or pounds.

LESS TAX, MORE LUXURY

Dubai magnet for the wealthy

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Dubai, August 22: Rich people are flocking to Dubai in record numbers, drawn to the desert city by its zero income tax policy and easy luxury lifestyle that has become harder to maintain elsewhere.

The United Arab Emirates and particularly Dubai have long welcomed wealthy people from nearby countries, and people helping millionaires to move there told AFP it is seeing more Westerners joining the fray.

Advisory firm Henley & Partners estimates that the UAE will attract an unprec-



edented 9,800 millionaires this year -- more than anywhere else in the world. The tightly-policed UAE has moulded itself into a magnet for the wealthy, offering economic and political stability with extremely low crime rates, an easygoing business environment and even easier access to luxury.

The Gulf state’s golden visa scheme, meant to attract wealthy or skilled foreigners, allows individuals to obtain a 10-year residence permit. Mike Coady, who heads Skybound Wealth Management, an advisory firm for high-net-worth individuals, said some of his clients “feel

like success has become a liability in their home countries.” “They’re being taxed more, scrutinised more, and offered less,” he said, but in Dubai, “wealth isn’t hidden, it’s normalised.” “In London, my clients whisper about their net worth. In Dubai, they can live freely.” A top destination for flashy influencers, Dubai has become synonymous with over-the-top displays of wealth. It is home to an enormous mall with an indoor ski area, the world’s tallest building, and the Palm -- an artificial island dotted with five-star hotels.

30K-km roads, 500 bridges in 5 yrs: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 22: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Friday said that the state has set a target to construct 30,000 km of roads and 500 bridges in five years.

The CM announced this while reviewing various programmes of the Rural Development department at Lok Seva Bhavan here. In the meeting, Majhi stated that it is the responsibility of the department to ensure all rural areas of the state are connected with all-weather roads.

He emphasised the optimal utilisation of funds received under various schemes to provide improved transportation facilities to the people. Majhi also directed that special attention be paid to the quality and maintenance of roads and bridges. The CM directed the authorities to take strict action against contractors and officials responsible for substandard work.

He advised the construction of high-quality roads in hilly areas for better connec-



tivity. Training programmes will be initiated to enhance the skills of contractors involved in construction.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Odisha has so far constructed 70,711.24 km of roads out of the approved 73,984.88 km, securing the fourth position in the country. Previously, the work was carried out under the first, second, and third phases of the PMGSY guidelines. The fourth phase has now been taken up.

In this phase, roads and bridges will be constructed in tribal-dominated areas, aspirational blocks, and Naxal-affected regions. Under this phase, proposals have been made to construct 942 roads and eight bridges to connect 1,021 unconnected habitations.

Similarly, under the PM Janman Yojana, to connect more than 100 habitations of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups, approvals have been received for the construction of 66 roads and four bridges in 73 villages.

Under the Mukhyamantri Sadak Yojana, 4,500.30 km of roads were constructed in the financial year 2024-25. In 2025-26, a provision has been made to construct 5,000 km of roads with an expenditure of ₹3,469.94 crore. Under the Setubandhan Yojana, 186 bridges were constructed in 2024-25, and a provision has been made for 300 bridges in 2025-26.

The Rural Development department is also continuing work to develop rural infrastructure, including the construction of hostels, college buildings, government offices, cyclone and flood shelters, and community halls. In the financial year 2024-25, 451 buildings were completed, and in 2025-26, 1,229 construction projects are planned to be executed.

REMEMBRANCE ON SECOND DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Late Shri Bhagaban Nayak

15.08.1947 TO 23.08.2023

FOR US YOU HAVE BEEN THE SYNONYM OF LOVE AND SACRIFICE. TO GIVE AND FORGIVE HAS BEEN YOUR ETHOS. WE WERE FORTUNATE TO BE A PART OF YOU IN THIS LIFE AND WE MAKE BEST EFFORTS TO LIVE WITH YOUR TEACHINGS AND DIGNITY.

YOU REMAIN IN OUR HEARTS FOREVER !

Sairaj & Sairah
Sonam and Shividutt Das
Shividutt Das Charity Foundation

Sdcf.in http://shivdutt.com

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST



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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*



ARIES

Your ability to let go things will reflect in your personal as well as your professional life. Today could be a significant day for you, and Ganesha advises you not to forget your special abilities. Make good use of them so that others too can benefit.

TAURUS

You will be very sensitive about the image you project socially and professionally. Ganesha sees you treating this very seriously and doing everything you can to make this right impression. Today, you will remain decent, dignified and focussed in all that you do. Do not be too eager to please others. Focus on your own interests and concerns.

GEMINI

Routine work bores you, and today you will go all out to break free from the shackles of boredom. The results, however, may not be as dramatic. You will have to depend on your children, if any, to rescue you from the tyranny of routine.

CANCER

Don't meddle in others' affairs today, suggests Ganesha. For they will not take it kindly. Adopt the middle path. Ganesha feels that you must keep your bravado and boldness in check.

LEO

Your pride and self-confidence will help you to excel in whatever task it is that you take up today. Other people will also praise you. You will buy new clothes and other possessions that you have been desiring since a long time, says Ganesha.

VIRGO

You will be faced with serious financial problems today. You may even have to pay through your nose to get what you desire. Later in the evening, you might accomplish some short-term goals. Ganesha predicts that some vital business agreements will end your day in high spirits.

LIBRA

Ganesha says you will be able to improve your relations abroad. There will be good news coming from friends or relatives living abroad. Your working ability and efficiency will make you popular in the office today.

SCORPIO

Be vigilant; keep your eyes and ears open for all the events happening around you, says Ganesha. Your intuition is trying to tell you something, trust it. Think and act positively, the rest would fall in place.

SAGITTARIUS

Work is likely to keep you on toes. At work place, you and your opinions will be in demand. Those who are associated with stock exchange and shares will be happy to gain profits during the afternoon. Wait and watch the end result in the evening.

CAPRICORN

You have projected yourself as a confused individual, and rightfully so, as the Lions are most of times in double mind. But, today you'll come up with a specific career plan that will surprise many of the people. Be clear about what you want to do in life, how you want your life to be and make sincere efforts to achieve that stage, guides Ganesha.

AQUARIUS

You will take the road to spirituality today and give a miss to materialism. You will visit temples, other religious places, and spiritual leaders to find answers for some of your questions. It will, however, take a while for you to distinguish between mysticism and materialism, and understand that you can have the best of both worlds.

PISCES

You will not take matters to heart needlessly today, and will instead calmly evaluate the bitter words of others to see if there is a grain of truth in them somewhere. This is a good practice and one that should be continued. While you won't be in the mood to tolerate any injustice, you will be able to forgive those who have wronged you and will thus be able to refrain from stoking further, the fires of enmity, says Ganesha.



MARGOT ROBBIE ON LIFE AS A NEW MOM

Hollywood star Margot Robbie has talked about becoming a first-time mom last year and declared life as a new parent is 'the best'. The 35-year-old Hollywood actress welcomed her son with her husband Tom Ackerley, whom she married in 2016, in October.

LIL NAS X CHARGED WITH BATTERY, MISDEMEANOR

American rapper Lil Nas X faces legal trouble after being arrested in Los Angeles for allegedly assaulting a police officer. The incident occurred Thursday when officers responded to reports of a nude man on Ventura Boulevard, leading to his booking in county jail.



Ananya: It's okay to be imperfect

Mumbai: Bollywood actress Ananya Panday agrees that constant public gaze can be overwhelming at times but staying connected to what matters keeps her balanced. She added that her confidence comes from self-acceptance and knowing it's okay to be imperfect. Asked how she maintains self-worth and confidence amidst constant public gaze, Ananya told this news agency: "It's not always easy. There are days when things get to you."

Over time she has learned to focus on valuing loved ones and meaningful work. "But over time, I've learned to focus on what really matters, my friends, family, my dogs Astro and Riot, and the work I genuinely care about," she added.

Ananya, who has hosted Airbnb's Original experience curated and led by the actress with her A-team, reminds herself that it's okay to be imperfect at times.

"I try to stay grounded and remind myself that it's okay to not be perfect. Confidence comes from being okay with who you are on the good days and the bad. It's as they say: 'Nobody's perfect!'," said the actress.

Talking about her upcoming film, *Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri*, it also features Kartik Aaryan, Jackie Shroff, Neena Gupta and others in pivotal roles.



Mumbai: Kriti Sanon, one of Bollywood's most versatile stars, recently delivered an inspiring address that struck a powerful chord with aspiring actors. Having ventured into production with *Do Patti* in 2024, she spoke candidly about the challenges of navigating an industry often perceived as exclusive and daunting.

Emphasising perseverance, Kriti declared, "You need to really be passionate about it and there is no shortcut. Nothing comes easy, there are no free lunches." Her words reflected the struggles faced by newcomers without legacy support, who often encounter rejection and criticism about their appearance, talent, or potential. She reminded dreamers that negativity is inevitable but should never become a roadblock. "No one's really going to tell you that you can do it other than you," she said, underscoring the importance of self-belief.

The *Crew* actress also urged patience, noting the industry's obsession with overnight fame. She reframed delays as growth opportunities, saying, "Maybe it's taking so long because you need that time to work on yourself." Her optimism radiated as she assured, "It'll happen when the time is right, but you have to be at it." Living her own message, Kriti continues to balance acting and production, with exciting projects like *Tere Ishk Mein* and *Cocktail 2* ahead.

Kriti drops 'truth bomb'

Shilpa shares her diet secrets

Mumbai: At 50, Shilpa Shetty continues to redefine fitness and wellness, proving that a healthy lifestyle doesn't require extreme diets or punishing routines. Instead, the actress, celebrated for her timeless beauty and energy, focuses on mindful eating, simple rituals, and balance.

Her mornings begin with small yet powerful practices. She drinks lukewarm water, takes a few drops of Noni juice for energy, and follows Ayurvedic oil pulling with coconut oil. These habits, she believes, set a positive tone for the day. Breakfast is non-negotiable for Shilpa. She prefers a nourishing, light spread—muesli with fruits and almond milk, or eggs, which she calls a complete meal.

Unlike many who fear fats, Shilpa embraces the right ones. Coconut milk, ghee, bananas, and brown rice form part of her diet, which she says aid energy, skin elasticity, and overall vitality. Her approach is simple: eat wholesome foods that keep you full while enhancing natural glow. She avoids late-night heavy meals, finishing dinner by 7:30 pm, even on social evenings. Snacks like eggs, soups, and dry fruits keep her energised. Advocating balance over restriction, Shilpa suggests alternating between low-carb and no-carb days—a sustainable tip for those managing weight without sacrificing nourishment.



Sanya responds to criticism

Mumbai: Sanya Malhotra has earned widespread praise for her nuanced performance in *Mrs.*, the Hindi remake of *The Great Indian Kitchen*. The film portrays a woman silently confronting domestic patriarchy, turning everyday household chores into a powerful metaphor for lack of freedom and choice. While many critics and viewers hailed its message, some men's groups, including the Save Indian Family Foundation (SIFF), accused it of promoting a one-sided feminist narrative.

Defending the film, Sanya clarified that the story is not about rejecting domestic responsibilities. "The problem isn't that she didn't want to cook—she was cooking and serving it with care but received no appreciation," she explained. The conflict arose when the protagonist expressed her desire to pursue something beyond the household. Her refusal to be confined by expectations highlighted how women are often denied autonomy despite fulfilling traditional roles. "The story has reached the people it needed to reach," Sanya added, standing firm against the criticism.

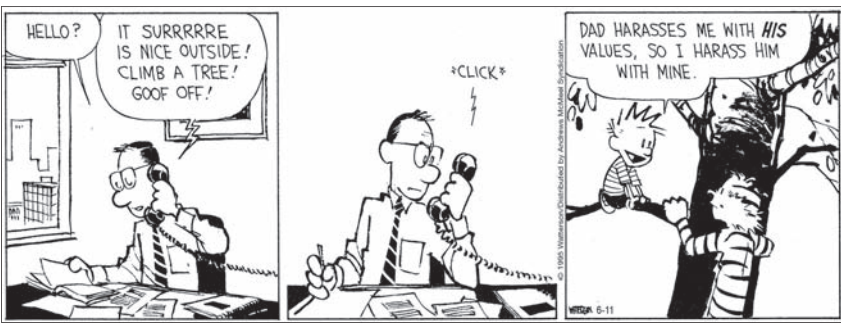
On the professional front, Sanya has an exciting lineup. She will be seen in Dharma Productions' romantic comedy *Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari* (October 2025), Netflix's offbeat comedy *Toaster* opposite Rajkummar Rao and an international action-comedy. Her film *Bandar* is slated to premiere at TIFF 2025.



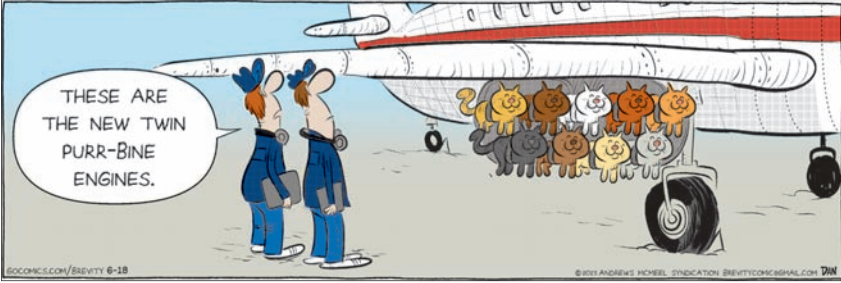
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD

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- Across**

1 Prospector's tool

5 Fix firmly

8 Fancy neckwear

9 Small sofas (4,5)

10 High hat

11 Hackneyed

13 Advantage

15 Bad day for Caesar

18 Sag
- 19 Olio

23 Disjointed

24 Vigour

26 Pizazz

27 Dangerous snake

Down

1 Gin mill

2 Fastener

3 Friends

4 Roof overhang

5 Supplement
- 6 Blew up

7 Escritoire

10 Abound

12 Glimpse

14 Big ape

16 Scaleless marine eel

17 Shot

20 Place for a pin

21 Minor quarrel

22 Lasting effect

25 Duffer's goal

SUDOKU

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

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Fresh low-pressure area over Bay August 25: IMD

According to the weatherman, various districts are likely to witness rainfall till August 27



AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 22: Amid heavy rainfall triggered by a low-pressure system battering various parts of Odisha over the past few days, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Friday forecast the formation of a fresh low-pressure area over the Bay of Bengal off the coast.

“A fresh low-pressure area is likely to form over the north-west Bay of Bengal off Odisha-West Bengal coasts around August 25, 2025,” informed IMD in its bulletin Friday.

Meanwhile, the IMD issued a red warning predicting heavy to very heavy rainfall with extremely heavy falls and thunderstorms to occur at one or two places over

the districts of Sundargarh. Similarly, an orange warning has been issued for very heavy rainfall accompanying thunderstorms to occur at one or two places over the districts of Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Sambalpur, and Jharsuguda.

The IMD announced a yellow alert predicting heavy rain at one or two places over the districts of Deogarh, Angul, Kandhamal, Kalahandi, Balasore, Bhadrak, Rayagada, Ganjam, Gajapati, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Bargarh, Dhenkanal, Nuapada, Nabarangpur, Koraput, Malkangiri, Boudh, Subarnapur, and Bolangir.

According to the IMD, various districts are likely to witness rainfall till August 27.

IMD issued a red warning predicting heavy to very heavy rainfall with extremely heavy rain and thunderstorms to occur at one or two places over the district of Sundargarh

On the other hand, the residents in Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Sambalpur, and Jharsuguda have been advised to keep a watch on the weather for worsening conditions and be ready to move to safer places accordingly. The IMD also alerted about localised landslides, mudslides, and landslips due to the incessant rainfall in Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Sambalpur, and Jharsuguda districts.

The low-pressure area formed over the Bay of Bengal off the northern Andhra Pradesh and southern Odisha coasts Sunday later concentrated into a depression. The system brought intense rainfall to several areas across the state.



ENCHANTING MOVES: Odissi dancer Abhijita Panda performs during Under Sixteen Odissi Dance Festival organised by Odissi Dance Council at Bhanjakala Mandap in Bhubaneswar Friday

PICT:RIKASH NAYAK

Local Radio 88.8 FM launched

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 22: A new community radio station, ‘Local Radio 88.8 FM’, was inaugurated by leading voluntary organisation Young India at the Press Club of Odisha here Friday. The event featured a special session on ‘15 Years of Community Radio in Odisha: Looking Back, Moving Forward with Local Radio 88.8 FM’.

Speaking on the occasion, dignitaries highlighted the role of community radio as a grassroot medium for promoting social change and civic participation.

The inaugural session, moderated by Piramal Foundation senior programme manager BN Durga included senior journalist Satyaprakash Nayak, Samadrusti editor Sudhir Pattnaik, UNICEF education specialist Lalita Pattnaik, ActionAid associate director Debabrata Patra, and Rabin-dranath Bahinipati of Konark Sahitya Sansad.

Young India and Radio Namaskar founder, NA Shah Ansari shared the vision behind Local



Radio 88.8 FM, and said, “Local Radio 88.8 FM will be the true voice of the common people in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, amplifying issues that matter to them”. On the occasion, NIPUN Odisha campaign report, prepared by Radio Namaskar was released and researcher Andaz Aaron presented findings from it.

In the second session, chaired by SA Safique, eminent speakers including journalists Sandeep Sahu and Sampad Mahapatra, former Utkal University of Culture VC DN Jena, and PIB ADG Akhil Kumar Mishra formally launched the station’s broadcast.

Appreciation certificates were also presented to peer community radios such as Radio Outreach, Radio Juhar, Radio Sampark, and Radio Namaskar.

RDWU hosts seminar on Home Science, NEP 2020

Bhubaneswar: The department of Home Science, Rama Devi Women’s University (RDWU), organised a national seminar on ‘Higher Education in Home Science & NEP 2020’ here Friday, with support from the department of Higher Education. The seminar brought together eminent academicians, policymakers, and researchers to deliberate on the National Education Policy’s (NEP 2020) vision for holistic, multidisciplinary, and inclusive higher education. Inaugurating the seminar, RDWU VC (I/C) Chandi Charan Rath emphasised the relevance of Home Science education and called NEP 2020 as a milestone in India’s educational reforms. Nearly 100 faculty members from the university and affiliated colleges took part in the seminar.

Dog census after rain: BMC Mayor

Bhubaneswar: Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Mayor Sulochana Das Friday announced that a dog census will be conducted in the City after the rainy season. Das welcomed the Supreme Court’s revised directive on stray dogs, emphasising the importance of sterilisation and medical treatment over relocation. She said that the preliminary estimation suggests over 80,000 dogs in the Capital city. The dog census will be carried out across all 67 wards of the City, with support from ‘Swachha Sathi’ volunteers, overseen by BMC’s veterinary officers. The Mayor urged residents to cooperate with municipal staff and dog-catching teams to ensure the success of the initiative and enhance public safety. The census aims to systematically tag and track both pet and stray dogs, recording details such as ownership details, sterilisation, vaccination status, and movement patterns.

RSC to celebrate Nat'l Space Day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 22: To commemorate the landmark milestone when India made history August 23, 2023, by becoming the first country to successfully soft-land on the South Pole of the Moon through its Chandrayaan-3 mission, Regional Science Centre (RSC), Bhubaneswar will observe the second National Space Day here Saturday.

On the occasion, RSC—a unit of the National Council of Science Museums, will inaugurate a special exhibition titled ‘From Ancient Skies to the Modern Horizons’.

Designed and developed by the National Council of Science Museums, Ministry of Culture, the exhibition will showcase country’s rich heritage in astronomy and space

exploration. It also chronicles the nation’s incredible journey — from ancient Vedic shadow-measuring devices to the sophisticated design and launch of modern satellites post-independence. The exhibition highlights India’s humble beginnings in space technology, including stories of rocket parts being transported by bicycles and bullock carts. The exhibition pays tribute to ISRO, founded by the visionary Vikram Sarabhai, widely regarded as the father of India’s space programme.

From the launch of India’s first satellite, Aryabhata in 1975, to the historic Chandrayaan-3 soft landing on the lunar South Pole, the exhibition celebrates the nation’s path breaking feats powered by indigenous technology and innovation.

Next decade is for urban devpt: Padhee

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 22: The next decade belongs to Urban Development, said Housing and Urban Development department Principal Secretary Usha Padhee Friday, urging the engineers, MIS professionals, accountants, and team leads of ULBs and DUDAs undergoing orientation on the Mukhyamantri Sahari Bikas Yojana (MSBY), to dedicate themselves to the mission with dignity and responsibility.

Urban transformation is not merely about infrastructure, but about building dignified, inclusive, and sustainable cities, Padhee underlined. Stressing the importance of today’s work in shaping tomorrow, she remarked, “Our present efforts will decide whether the



next generation faces challenges or inherits a better world. It is not positions but knowledge that gives true dignity.”

Encouraging the participants, she said, “Each one of us is an integral part of the system. It is our prime duty to ensure that the system functions in the right direction.

Bhub–Junagarh Road Exp upgraded to LHB

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 22: In order to ensure enhanced safety, comfort, and travel experience for passengers, East Coast Railway (ECOR) upgraded the Bhubaneswar–Junagarh Road–Bhubaneswar Express (20837/20838) to modern Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) coaches.

The LHB-equipped service will commence journey from Bhubaneswar August 25 and from Junagarh Road August 26. The express train was operating with one LHB rake and one conventional ICF rake. With the upgrade, both rakes in the up and down directions will uniformly feature LHB coaches. The new train composition includes two Second AC coaches, four Third AC coaches, five Sleeper Class coaches, four Second Class seating coaches, one Guard-cum-Power Car, one Guard-cum-Second Class coach with facilities for Divyangjan passengers.

The conversion marks a major improvement in passenger amenities and operational efficiency, strengthening rail connectivity between the coastal and tribal regions of Odisha, major towns of Andhra Pradesh, and the state capital—Bhubaneswar.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	87.53 ▲ 0.27	SENSEX	81306.85 ▼ 693.86	GOLD	₹100,265 ▲ ₹830
EURO	101.56 ▼ 0.17	NIFTY	24870.10 ▼ 213.65	SILVER	₹116,039 ▲ ₹2333

WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	28.6°	27.6°	Generally cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain or thundershower
Min Temp	25.8°	24.2°	
Humidity	92%	94%	
Rainfall	4.0mm	5.2mm	

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Notary Public, Bhubaneswar on dtd. 21st August, 2025, I, Mrs. Suprava Behera, address At - FCI Chhak, PO - Arabinda Nagar, P.S. - Phulabani Town, Dist. : Kandhamal, Pin - 762001, Odisha have changed my name from “Suprava Sethi” to “Suprava Behera”. Henceforth, I shall be known as “Suprava Behera” for all purposes.

I, Manmohan Dash, S/o- Gangadhra Dash, resident of Dashagoba, P.O./P.S.- Chandanpur, Dist- Puri, PIN- 752012, Odisha declare by this affidavit No.- 40110, dtd- 20.08.2025 that now onwards I shall be known as Manamohan Dash for all future purposes.

Govt’s Zero Accident Day drive in Keonjhar on cards

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 22: In a decisive step towards strengthening road safety under the ‘Come Home Safe’ vision of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, the state Commerce & Transport department has announced the launch of the second phase of Zero Accident Day (ZAD) campaign in Keonjhar.

The district, identified as one of Odisha’s major accident hotspots, has also been recognised by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) and IIT Madras as part of the Top 100 districts for Data-Driven Hyperlocal Interventions (DDHI), underscoring the urgency of this initiative.

The ZAD initiative has already demonstrated encouraging results in Bhubaneswar, where fatal accidents have shown a declining trend due to data-driven interventions and community participation. Building on this success, the government is now extending the campaign to Keonjhar with a targeted and comprehensive action plan.



A high-level strategy meeting chaired by the department’s Principal Secretary Usha Padhee and Transport Commissioner Amitabh Thakur, and attended by the Collector of Keonjhar, finalised the roadmap to reduce accidents and fatalities in the district. The meeting brought together state nodal officers, the district administration, and technical experts from RBG Labs, IIT Madras, the department’s technical consultant. During the meeting, IIT Madras presented a 14-day decentralised, data-driven ZAD action plan focusing on targeted interventions at identified accident-prone areas.

As part of the campaign, a series of multi-layered initiatives will be rolled out across blocks and villages. These include community-level dialogues under the banner of “Cha Au Charcha” near

accident-prone zones, training of ‘Sahayaks’ and ‘Raahveers’ as first responders, awareness sessions for schoolchildren to nurture them as future safe drivers, specialised training for drivers working in mining and industrial areas, and public messaging through All India Radio programmes, among other activities designed to promote road safety awareness at scale. Additionally, a teaser campaign on ZAD will be launched in the district at the earliest to highlight the importance of the initiative and sensitise citizens about road safety as a collective responsibility.

Speaking on the occasion, Padhee said the positive changes witnessed in the Capital City of Bhubaneswar following the observance of ZAD demonstrate the effectiveness of this campaign. She added that with Keonjhar witnessing high volumes of heavy vehicle movement, the focus must now be on driving behavioural change through sustained awareness. Road safety, she emphasised, is a shared responsibility, and the success of the campaign depends on collective participation and commitment.

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Illegal fish farming threat to Bhitarkanika ecosystem

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, August 22: Bhitarkanika National Park, a haven of biodiversity, is fast losing its ecological integrity with rampant illegal fish farming and exports overtaking protected forest zones.

Amid ongoing threats such as coastal erosion and forest land encroachment, both the coastal and interior regions of the sanctuary are now under pressure from commercial fish traders. The Gobari River near Kansapala in Baulakani panchayat of Mahakalapara block has become a major hub for fish exports, while unauthorised prawn farming continues unchecked within forested areas.

Local reports indicate that these activities are harming the region’s fragile ecosystem. “Every day, fish worth lakhs of rupees are transported from the Kansapala ferry point to Kolkata,” said Laxmidhar Swain, a local resident. Trawlers from Kolkata, Balasore and other locations are routinely used for this illegal trade. The operations, carried out along the rapidly eroding banks of the Gobari River, are destroying mangrove forests essential to the area’s ecological balance.

The site is barely 5 km from the Jambu forest and 5.5 km from the Marine Police Station, yet enforcement remains weak. According to Ramesh Sethi of Tantiapal, fish export operations are also conducted via a jetty at Jambu Lock. Despite a ban on the movement of large trawlers in the restricted zone, the Forest and Marine Police departments reportedly lack the necessary high-speed boats to monitor or intercept these vessels.

“The Forest department



personnel themselves are complicit in the destruction,” said Pratyush Kumar Nayak of Rajnagar. “They are promoting prawn gheries and are, in fact, partners with traders and fish farmers.”

Ashok Kumar Samal echoed these concerns, saying that environmental protection in Bhitarkanika has collapsed. “While prawn enclosures continue to expand, Rupchandi fish farming has been going on inside protected areas for the past five years,” he said. “Fish farming in the park’s creeks and ponds is disrupting the natural ecological balance.”

Bhitarkanika’s vast mangrove forests, rare wildlife and coastal landscape attract tourists from across India and abroad. The park is a habitat for endangered species including Olive Ridley turtles, estuarine crocodiles and dolphins. However, environmentalists fear that the mushrooming of prawn gheries and rampant illegal fishing is enabling fish traders to gain control of protected forest areas.

Social worker Mahesh Kumar Padhi noted that several public interest litigations

have been filed in the Orissa High Court to safeguard Bhitarkanika. “The court has issued directives for the removal of illegal prawn enclosures in and around the national park,” he said. He warned that waste discharged from fish farming activities is polluting the forest and damaging the environment.

Environmental scientist Prabhuprasad Mahapatra added that forest land within the national park is being misused for political gain. “Local political leaders are using forest areas as vote banks,” he said. “Encroachers are grabbing land, engaging in fish farming, poaching wildlife and destroying forest. If these intrusions are not curbed, Bhitarkanika could face irreversible damage.”

An official from the district administration confirmed that access to Bhitarkanika’s reserved forests has been restricted. “With administrative assistance, previously established prawn enclosures are being dismantled,” the official said. “No permission has been granted for fish farming in restricted zones.”

60-yr-old awarded life term for raping disabled minor girl

PNN & AGENCIES

Baripada, August 22: A court in Mayurbhanj district Friday sentenced a 60-year-old man to life imprisonment for raping a specially-abled girl last year.

Fast Track Special Court Judge Santosh Kumar Nayak pronounced accused Birasing Hansdah guilty of raping the 12-year-old girl, and also imposed a fine of Rs 10,000 on the convict, with an additional six months of imprisonment in case of non-payment, Special Public Prosecutor Manaranjan Pattnaik said.

Hansdah was booked under sections of the POCSO Act.

The court also directed the Mayurbhanj District Legal Services Authority to pay Rs 4 lakh as compensation to the survivor to support her recovery and rehabilitation, Pattnaik said.

According to the case details, the convict, a resident of Kusumi village under Badampahar police station, abducted the victim May 28, 2024, while she was returning home from a nearby hospital.

Taking advantage of her vulnerability, Hansdah held the girl captive for two days and subjected her to sexual assault. After returning home, the victim confided in her family, who promptly lodged a complaint with the Badampahar police.

The police registered a case, recorded the victim’s statement and arrested the accused, who was later presented in court.

In a similar case, the Ad-Hoc Additional District & Sessions Judge, Fast Track Special Court under POCSO Act in Baripada, Mayurbhanj district, has sentenced a 60-year-old man to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment for raping a differently-abled minor girl.

The court also imposed a fine of Rs 10,000 on the convict, with an additional six months of imprisonment in case of default.



FINAL TOUCH: Artists put the final touches on an idol of Lord Ganesha at Dharakote in Ganjam district, Friday

Lover slits girl’s throat, makes suicide attempt

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir/Patnagarh, August 22: A 19-year-old woman was critically injured and left fighting for her life after her boyfriend allegedly slit her throat and later reportedly attempted suicide by consuming poison in Bolangir district early Friday morning.

The incident occurred in Mayabarha village under Bolangir Sadar police limits. According to police, 25-year-old Haldhar Bari visited the home of his romantic partner, whose family members welcomed him. After dinner, he stayed overnight at the house.

Early Friday, while the woman’s mother went out to fetch water, Bari allegedly attacked her with a sharp knife, slitting her throat, and fled.

The critically injured woman was rushed to Bhima Bhoi

Medical College and Hospital in Bolangir by an ambulance. Due to the severity of her condition, she was later transferred to VIMSAR at Burla for advanced treatment.

On the other hand, Bari reportedly returned to his village Pandripani and consumed poison in an apparent suicide attempt. Villagers discovered him in a critical state and took him first to Patnagarh sub-divisional hospital and then to Bhima Bhoi Medical College and Hospital in Bolangir. He was also transferred subsequently to VIMSAR for specialised care.

Police said the motive behind the attack is unclear, but preliminary investigation suggests it may be related to a love affair. The woman’s father has filed a complaint at Bolangir Sadar police station, and authorities have launched an inquiry.

CM halts merger of Nilagiri Sub-Jail

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, August 22: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi assured Friday that the Nilagiri Sub-Jail would not be relocated, reversing an earlier government decision to merge it with Balasore District Jail.

The state government had planned the merger because of the sub-jail’s low inmate count and proximity to the main jail, which is about 20 km away.

Balasore MP Pratap Chandra Sarangi raised the issue during a meeting with the Chief Minister, citing local concerns. At his request, Majhi directed officials to withdraw the previous order.

Sarangi thanked the Chief Minister on behalf of Nilagiri residents, describing the move as a relief for the local community.

Director General of Police YB Khurania and former DGP and Chief Minister’s Adviser Prakash Mishra also attended the meeting.

Ostracised over ‘witchcraft’, mother keeps vigil over son’s body for 18 hrs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jaleswar, August 22: A woman in Balasore district had to watch over her 26-year-old son’s body for 18 long hours after villagers refused to help with his funeral because her family had been ostracised over witchcraft suspicions.

Madan Besra, son of Raju Besra from Deulbar village in Nampo panchayat, collapsed during farm work and was left paralysed about 10 days ago. He died Thursday evening around 6pm due to his illness. Since then, his mother Champa had remained by the body as no villager came

The family has lived in isolation for more than 10 years after the woman as accused of practising witchcraft

forward to shoulder the bier.

Raju said his family has lived in isolation for more than 10 years after his wife was accused of practising witchcraft. When his father Meghray Besra died three years ago, villagers had also stayed away from the funeral, which was conducted only after the Biju Yuva Vahini volunteer group came out to help.

After Madan’s death, Raju informed the Nampo police outpost and local sarpanch, Lopamudra Raul, but villagers still refused to assist. Residents Bula Marandi and Kalia Marandi claimed they had not been informed about the death or asked to help with the funeral.

With the intervention of police, the sarpanch and the social group ‘May I Help You’, the cremation was eventually performed.

MBSSY boon for 1,398 patients in Malkangiri



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/Malkangiri, August 22: A total of 1,398 critical patients from remote areas of Malkangiri district received free specialist and super-specialist treatment under the Mukhyamantri Bayu Swasthya Seva Yojana (MBSSY) during a medical camp at the district headquarters hospital from August 18 to 21.

According to officials, 260 patients were treated in cardiology, 415 in neurology, 263 in gastroenterology, 229 in endocrinology, 231 in nephrology and six underwent laparoscopic surgery. In

addition, 130 patients underwent ECG tests and 59 performed endoscopy.

The camp was conducted by a team of specialists and consultants from Sriram Chandra Bhanja Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack. The team included Dr Kaibalya Ranjan Dash, assistant professor of gastroenterology; Dr Auijwalya Kumar Jena, assistant professor of neurology; Dr Aruna Acharya, professor of nephrology; Dr Ranjan Kumar Mohanty, assistant professor of cardiology; Dr Bijay Kumar Sahoo, assistant professor of endocrinology; Dr Jyotirmaya Nayak,

associate professor of surgery; and Dr Raj Mahapatra, assistant professor of anaesthesia at PGIMER Capital Hospital, Bhubaneswar.

They were assisted by senior doctors Dr Dhirej Kumar Lenka (nephrology), Dr Sanghamitra Sahoo (neurology), Dr Sitakanta Panda (endocrinology) and Dr Avansh Taunk (cardiology). The assisting team arrived a day in advance to take patient histories and prepare them for clinical interventions.

An ICU with modern equipment was set up at the hospital ahead of the camp to support diagnostic tests, procedures and treatment.

Local residents expressed satisfaction over the initiative. “Such high-level treatment for us in a remote rural area surrounded by hills and forests, which we could never dream of, has become a reality under the leadership of the Chief Minister,” said several patients after their discharge.

Locals in Kalahandi demand opening of bauxite mines

PNN & AGENCIES

Lanjigarh, August 22: A large number of people in Kalahandi district Friday staged a demonstration demanding immediate opening of bauxite mines to secure their livelihoods.

The villagers under the banner of Lanjigarh Anchalik Vikaash Parishad (LAVP) took out a rally led by Sridhar Pesnia, president of the outfit. The tribals’ rally also got support of the local people.

A number of district level leaders including Lanjigarh block vice-chairman, members of Zilla Parishad and others, said that there is no point to import bauxite when large deposits remain unexplored in Kalahandi. They urged the state government to act swiftly in unlocking the region’s mineral wealth for local development.

The local leaders also alleged that continued inaction in opening the bauxite mines has led to affecting Kalahandi’s

development.

“Our villages are drowning in despair. Kalahandi has fought decades of hunger

and poverty. Now, when hope stands before us, why should we be denied our own resources,” said a village elder.

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Care not for time and success.
Act out thy part, whether it be to fail or to prosper.



SRI AUROBINDO

CIC on Life Support

As of September 14, the Central Information Commission (CIC) may be headless. Chief Information Commissioner Heeralal Samariya retires, and unless the government acts at lightning speed (not its strong suit), the country’s transparency watchdog will be leaderless yet again.

This isn’t exactly uncharted territory. Back in 2023, when YK Sinha retired, the CIC post was left vacant until the Supreme Court had to step in and remind the Centre that the RTI law risks becoming a “dead letter” without a functioning Commission. Clearly, the warning didn’t sink in.

It’s not just the chief’s chair that’s emptying. Out of ten sanctioned Information Commissioners, only two are left. Eight seats have been vacant for nearly a year, even though 161 applications were received last August. Translation? A massive backlog of appeals and complaints, citizens waiting endlessly for decisions, and the RTI process quietly choking on delay.

Is this simply bureaucratic laziness, or a more deliberate attempt to starve transparency of oxygen? Either way, the outcome is the same. The citizens’ right to know is being casually sidelined. If the CIC continues like this, India’s most empowering democratic tool will be reduced to a paperwork graveyard.

Transparency delayed is transparency denied. And when the watchdog is asleep, or worse, missing, it’s the public that ends up paying the price.

Bihar denial, Bengal drama

The Election Commission of India is having one of those “look, but don’t touch” moments. On one hand, it’s vehemently denying any wrongdoing in Bihar’s electoral rolls, brushing off opposition allegations like a minor irritation. On the other hand, a very similar mess is unfolding in West Bengal, where Chief Secretary Manoj Pant had to rush to Delhi after the state dragged its feet on disciplining four officials caught handing out their login credentials for the voter database.

The ECI’s language is stern: “grave lapses” and a clear deadline of August 21 to comply. And rightly so. This isn’t just sloppy paperwork; in an era where data is currency, careless handling of electoral rolls is a direct threat to the integrity of elections.

The optics, however, are tricky. The Commission may be showing teeth in West Bengal, but the contrast with its vigorous denials over Bihar raises eyebrows. Opposition parties are quick to spot it, critics are ready with their tweets, and the public’s trust, which is already wearing thin, takes another jolt.

At the end of the day, credibility is everything for the referee in a democracy. Suspensions and deadlines can plug holes, but they can’t patch over the perception that the Commission is fighting fires selectively. Treat voter data carelessly in one state, deny problems in another, and suddenly the watchdog looks like it’s running, rather than keeping the game fair.

Cracking UPSC is just half the battle

Every year, lakhs of hopefuls pin their dreams on the UPSC exam. Only a tiny fraction — around 1,000 — make it through, and an even smaller club of 200–250 land the IAS, IPS or IFoS. But here’s the part outsiders often miss: clearing the exam doesn’t make you a government officer. The real game begins with training and, more crucially, cadre allocation.

Sounds simple, but in practice, it’s a mix of merit, vacancies, reservation rules, and a healthy dose of luck. Even toppers don’t always get what they want, some may recall Tina Dabi, the 2015 topper? Haryana was her first choice, but Rajasthan got her instead.

The system tries to balance insiders and outsiders using a 30-point roster, ensuring no cadre is overrun by locals while still giving states their share of homegrown officers. Add to that the five-zone grouping system, where candidates must rank their preferences. Skip this formality, and the UPSC decides for you, with no regard for dreams of a “home state” posting.

Why such complexity? To keep the services nationally integrated, spread talent across deficit states, and prevent bureaucratic fiefdoms. Noble goals, but for young officers, it often feels like fate being sealed by a spreadsheet.

In short, cracking UPSC is like winning a ticket to the big league. But where you play is decided in the quieter, less glamorous backrooms of cadre allocation. The steel frame of India, it seems, still bends first to the logic of rosters and quotas.

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BABUDOM BYTES
Dilip Cherian



DK Giri

THE RUSSIAN CONDITIONS ON THE TABLE AT ALASKA WERE-- RECOGNITION OF THE TERRITORIES IT HAS ALREADY ANNEXED, 'UKRAINE'S NEUTRALITY' AND 'DEMILITARISATION' ON THE BORDERS



Sourajeet Pradhani

THE DURABILITY OF INDIA-CHINA CLOSENESS WILL DEPEND ON SEVERAL FACTORS LIKE THE US POLICIES, BORDER TENSIONS AND GLOBAL ECONOMIC TRENDS

WISDOM CORNER

Clouds come floating into my life, no longer to carry rain or usher storm, but to add color to my sunset sky.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

The world breaks everyone, and afterward, some are strong at the broken places.

ERNEST HEMINGWAY

That best portion of a man’s life, his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and love.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1572:** The Massacre of St. Bartholomew’s Day, plotted by Catherine de’ Medici against the French Huguenots, was carried out by Roman Catholic nobles and other citizens.
- 1814:** During the War of 1812, British forces captured Washington, D.C., and burned various government buildings, notably the Capitol and the Executive Mansion (now known as the White House).
- 1932:** American aviator Amelia Earhart took off from Los Angeles, and, when she landed in Newark, New Jersey, the following day, she became the first woman to complete a solo nonstop flight across the United States.

LOL

MY WIFE IS MISSING

The man approached the very beautiful woman in the large supermarket and asked, “You know, I’ve lost my wife here in the supermarket. Can you talk to me for

a couple of minutes?”
“Why?”
“Because every time I talk to a beautiful woman my wife appears out of nowhere.”



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](#)

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FOCUS ALASKA SUMMIT

NO CEASEFIRE IN SIGHT

Despite two successive summits of world powers within days, the war in Ukraine continues unabated. Oddly enough, there is no ceasefire in sight as the international interlocutor and peace-maker Donald Trump prepares for a trilateral meeting between himself, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

In Washington summit on the 18th August, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz aptly remarked, “I cannot imagine that the next meeting could take place without a ceasefire”.

Let us recall the outcome of both the summits in order to pontificate on the future course of action on this horrific war in Ukraine that started in February 2022. The attention of the whole world was fixed on the Alaska Summit on 15 August between Trump and Putin. This was so because the former claims to be a deal-maker and a peace-broker although there are divided opinions about this across his country.

Talking of the outcome of the Alaska Summit, there was no concrete conclusion to the war, starting with a ceasefire. In that sense, it did not yield a breakthrough. The European Union as well as USA would have liked to see a ceasefire during the course of negotiations towards a peace agreement. At the same time, Russian leadership had resisted the calls for a ceasefire. The points on the table at Alaska were mainly the Russian conditions for a ceasefire and eventual peace agreement. They were: recognition of the territories it has already annexed, ‘Ukraine’s neutrality’



The attention of the whole world was fixed on the Alaska Summit because US President Donald Trump claims to be a deal-maker and a peace-broker although there are divided opinions about this across his country

and ‘demilitarisation’ on the Russian borders. Trump’s condition was only one; ‘peace at any cost’.

At the meeting in Washington, the conditions put forth by Zelenskyy and European countries present, are not fully known yet. The European leaders included Emmanuel Macron, Keir Starmer, Giorgia Meloni, Mark Rutte (NATO Secretary General), Friedrich Merz, Finnish President Alexander Stubbs and the EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. All these leaders constitute, ‘coalition of the willing’. At the end of the meeting, Trump called the Russian President and talked for 40 minutes mainly to fix a trilateral meeting sooner than later. He sounded out to the world that USA will extend security guarantees to Ukraine in a post-war scenario.

If the talks for a peace agreement in the aforesaid trilateral meeting fails, Trump did not rule out US involvement in the war with its ‘unique aviation power’, although he asserted that Europe will be the

first line of defence and USA will not put the boots on the ground. Zelenskyy came out of the meeting with a 90 billion USD arms deal comprising aviation system and anti-missile system.

Some of us have been focusing on the involvement of Poland and India in the Ukrainian war. Both India and Poland are frontline states, (India against China) having a great deal of stakes in the war. Poland borders Russia as India has a long stretch of border with China. So reactions of these two countries, shaping their strategies are important for observers and analysts to watch. Both countries are rising world powers with a fresh set of principles for world politics, having undergone, unlike many other European countries, the agony of colonisation

Alaska did not bring any fresh winds for India. There was no change of American current policy towards India. High tariffs on Indian goods will continue for now. Indian foreign policy based recent-

ly on Prime Minister Modi’s bonhomie consisting of handshakes and embraces is being pushed to its limit.

In Warsaw, there have been strong reactions to the Alaska meet.

Poland has not been in favour of Ukraine giving away its territories. Prime Minister Donald Tusk had said, “State borders may not be changed by force”.

Also, Poland was left out of the high table in East Room at Oval where Trump met Zelenskyy and other European leaders. That was a conspicuous absence of Poland as Warsaw bears the brunt of Russian invasion, and now a continental military powerhouse. The foreign policy portfolio of Poland is split between the President and the government.

Interestingly, Donald Trump wants the new Poland’s President Karol Nawrocki, a MAGA (Make America Great Again) supporter to represent Poland not the Prime Minister, Donald Tusk. The Prime Minister is a robust pro-European with a nationalist bent of mind.

To reiterate, what I have been advocating in this column, India and Poland need to come closer in sharing and shaping their international outlook. Both countries can successfully contribute to a permanent peace agreement between Russia and Ukraine. Poland should mobilise Europe as India works on Russia. Europe must play a bigger role commensurate with its potential in international issues over which it currently has limited influence.

The writer is Professor of Practice, NIIS Group of Institutions. INFA

SPECTRUM GEOPOLITICS

US tariffs and Sino-Indian closeness

Global trade dynamics are undergoing a significant transformation as the United States doubles down on tariffs and protectionist policies aimed at safeguarding its domestic industries. While the immediate targets of these measures have often been China and, in some cases, India, the ripple effects are shaping an unexpected realignment in Asia.

Ironically, US tariffs—which were designed to isolate China and counterbalance its global dominance—are slowly nudging India and China closer together. The critical question now is whether this closeness represents a sustainable long-term shift or merely a tactical, short-lived alignment of convenience. More importantly, does this trend signal the dawn of a truly multipolar global order?

Since 2018, when the United States initiated its trade war with China, tariffs have become one of Washington’s principal geopolitical tools. US has largely continued this trajectory, expanding duties on Chinese technology, green energy products, and steel, while also scrutinizing Indian exports in sectors like pharmaceuticals, textiles, and IT services. These measures are part of a broader strategy to

reshore manufacturing, protect US jobs, and reduce reliance on foreign supply chains.

However, such tariffs often create unintended consequences. For China, they have accelerated the search for alternative export markets and strategic partners. For India, while tariffs disrupt certain export channels, they also highlight the importance of diversifying economic ties beyond the US and Europe. In this shared environment of external pressure, both Asian giants find a rare common ground.

Despite political tensions, bilateral trade between India and China has continued to grow. The US tariffs have, in part, made Chinese goods more competitively priced in Indian markets, while Indian exporters look to plug gaps in China’s supply chains disrupted by American restrictions.

Both nations are major consumers of energy and importers of advanced technologies. At international forums like BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), and G20, India and China are increasingly speaking in unison about the need for fairer trade rules.

Yet, it would be naïve to assume that US tariffs alone can erase deep-seated distrust between India and China. The

two nations remain competitors in Asia, and several structural barriers continue to limit any long-term partnership. The Line of Actual Control (LAC) remains militarized, and incidents like Galwan in 2020 continue to cast a long shadow on bilateral trust.

India’s strategic partnerships with the US, Japan, and Australia through the QUAD directly counterbalance China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Indo-Pacific ambitions. China’s economy is nearly five times the size of India’s, creating an uneven playing field that complicates cooperation.

Thus, while the US tariffs might temporarily align their economic interests, political and strategic divergences could still override this newfound closeness.

America’s strategy of using tariffs as a weapon has incentivized nations to explore alternative systems and alliances. India and China, despite their differences, both advocate for reforms in global institutions like the WTO, IMF, and World Bank. Their mutual push for settlements in local currencies, reduced dependence on the US dollar, and emphasis on South-South cooperation point towards an emerging multipolar order.

Multipolarity does not necessarily imply a permanent India-China alliance, but it does mean that both countries will increasingly have the leverage to chart independent paths while coordinating on specific issues where their interests align.

The durability of India-China closeness will depend on several factors like the US policies, border tensions and global economic trends. In all likelihood, their alignment will remain issue-based and pragmatic rather than ideological or permanent.

The US tariffs have unintentionally pushed India and China closer together, at least in certain spheres of trade and diplomacy. However, this closeness is not without its fragility. Structural rivalries and geopolitical mistrust continue to weigh heavily on their relationship.

Whether temporary or enduring, the current India-China engagement is a reminder that global power is no longer unipolar. As nations recalibrate their strategies in response to American protectionism, the world may well be entering a new era—messy, multipolar, and marked by fluid alignments.

The writer is Founder and CEO of fintech startup FinCist

Fading dominance

Sir, This refers to “A stealth target,” **Orissa POST**, August 22. US President Donald Trump and his financial team appeared to grasp an unsettling geopolitical reality: if the world gradually sheds its dependence on the US dollar for trade and reserves, America’s unrivaled leverage will erode. For decades, the dollar has functioned as the fulcrum of global commerce, enabling Washington to impose sanctions, dictate financial flows, and reinforce its dominance without firing a shot. Yet with rival powers promoting alternative mechanisms—China pushing the yuan, Russia favoring ruble-based energy trade, and even regional blocs exploring local currency settlements—the dollar’s hegemony is no longer sacrosanct. Trump’s tenure underscored both recognition of this vulnerability and attempts to delay the inevitable. His administration wielded sanctions aggressively, yet also railed against global institutions that indirectly upheld dollar primacy. The contradiction lay in weaponising the dollar while alienating allies whose trust sustains it. The writing on the wall is clear: if alternatives solidify, America’s most potent instrument of soft coercion will dull. For the US, the challenge now is to recalibrate economic diplomacy, strengthening alliances and financial credibility before the world rebalances away from dollar dominance.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Power of courts

Sir, Apropos the report “Will courts be powerless: SC?” (**Orissa POST**, August 22), I happily admit that my respect to Chief Justice of India BR Gavai gets reinforced when he did not wish to see courts to be powerless in the event of Governors sitting over Bills passed by state Assemblies. If Governors and the President are allowed to sit over important Bills for an indefinite period many social projects intending to develop the socio-economic condition of the state shall remain in suspended animation. The apex court has rightly opined that a Governor is not permitted to forward a Bill to the President for consideration a second time after it had been re-passed by a state Assembly. I am at a loss to understand why an elected government shall always have to remain at the mercy of the ruling party at the Centre to get all Bills passed. Why the judiciary cannot intervene when a state becomes aggrieved?

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

Income Tax Act, 2025 receives President's assent

NEW DELHI: President Droupadi Murmu has given her assent to the Income-tax Act, 2025, which will replace the archaic Income Tax Act, 1961. The Income Tax Act, 2025, will come into effect from the next financial year, beginning April 1, 2026. The new Act will make tax laws simple and reduce wordage in the legislation, making it easy to understand. The Income Tax Bill, 2025, was passed by Parliament August 12. The new Act does not impose any new tax rate and only simplifies the language, which was required for understanding the complex Income Tax laws. The new law removes redundant provisions and archaic language and reduces the number of Sections from 819 in the Income Tax Act of 1961 to 536 and the number of chapters from 47 to 23.

India push for home-grown satellite constellation

NEW DELHI: India is mulling its own constellation of Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites to provide space-based broadband internet across the country, in an apparent attempt to catch up in an area dominated by global players such as SpaceX and OneWeb. The demand for a sovereign LEO constellation came up during the consultation the Department of Space had with different government departments to assess their requirements from the space sector."It is high time that India goes for its own LEO constellation, whether for civilian or for strategic sector," Nilesh Desai, director of ISRO's Satellite Application Centre, said, summing up the proceedings of the National Meet-2 organised by ISRO on the eve of National Space Day celebrations.

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1	104822922	Abakash Kumar Mohanty	Jeypore	119	105573887	Dandua Dehuri	Bhubaneswar	237	107169626	Krushna Chandra Pattnaik	Bhawani Patna
2	103779113	Abhi Kuldip	Jeypore	120	106586173	Debadatta Pradhan	Raghunathpur	238	107712615	Kshirod Meher	Bhubaneswar
3	102324436	Abhipsha Biswal	Jarasingha	121	104820516	Debashish Mahapatra	Bargarh	239	104118782	Kshitish Naik	Bhubaneswar
4	107872690	Abhishek Bagha	Jeypore	122	104606387	Debasish Mohanty	Cuttack	240	106968093	Kumudini Bag	Sambalpur
5	107120241	Abinash Singh	Jarasingha	123	107839277	Debasish Pagal	Keonjhar	241	102491641	Kumudini Rath	Jarasingha
6	107928961	Achyuta Sahu	Patnagarh	124	107415088	Debasish Pattanaik	Puri	242	107283590	Kuna Mantry	Langarasahi
7	102924302	Ajay Behera	Deogarh	125	105432860	Debendru Kumar Pradhan	Junagarh	243	105256909	Kusha Meher	Bhubaneswar
8	103175810	Ajay Ghosi	Sundar Garh	126	105403301	Debendra Behera	Bljipur	244	107115088	Laba Kirsani	Jeypore
9	107974201	Akash Kumar Biswas	Jeypore	127	106655326	Debendra Kumar Sahoo	Cuttack	245	103506239	Labanya Adabar	Deogarh
10	104898356	Akash Kumar Patra	Jeypore	128	103185902	Debraj Pradhan	Langarasahi	246	106084517	Lalita Mahanandia	Bhubaneswar
11	104187866	Akhe Naik	Attabira	129	104267429	Deepak Harijan	Jeypore	247	104945254	Laxmi Mishal	Jeypore
12	103843159	Akhuj Jena	Bhubaneswar	130	101466538	Deepak Kumar Jaysingh	Bljipur	248	107649287	Laxmi Oram	Sundar Garh
13	107273939	Akrura Kumar Sahoo	Nayagarh	131	104630599	Dhananjaya Dehuri	Bhubaneswar	249	103475951	Laxmi Nayak	Palla
14	107496325	Alok Samantaray	Bljipur	132	107600929	Dhanasea Gingara	Bargarh	250	107203256	Laxmidhar Barad	Nayagarh
15	102871804	Alok Chandra Meher	Redhakhol	133	104641504	Dhiraj Kumar Bagh	Jeypore	251	106633146	Laxmikanta Mishra	Deogarh
16	106029218	Alok Kumar Swain	Jagatsinghpur	134	105161934	Dhruba Charan Disiri	Bhubaneswar	252	107377191	Lijarani Dalei	Dhenkanal
17	103629912	Amar Sil	Jeypore	135	105963573	Dibakar Naraji	Jeypore	253	107603383	Lingam Nanaji	Paralakhe Mu
18	104589923	Amareesh Barai	Jeypore	136	106157730	Dibakar Sahu	Bhubaneswar	254	102220349	Lipak K Das	Patnagarh
19	105915431	Amareesh Chandra Panaka	Berhampur	137	101505913	Dillip Kumar Paikaray	Raghunathpur	255	102071160	M Srinivas Rao	Jeypore
20	102335838	Ambuja Kumar Nayak	Redhakhol	138	104424896	Dillip Kumar Sahu	Bhubaneswar	256	104291615	Madhab Jani	Jeypore
21	105936951	Amiya Kumar Panigrahi	Khariar Road	139	102830636	Dinesh Debasish Biswal	Cuttack	257	105194776	Madhaba Nag	Jeypore
22	106764560	Anadi Charan Padhan	Keonjhar	140	103106467	Dipti Ranjan Samal	Jagatsinghpur	258	104314946	Madhusudan Pati	Bhadrak
23	106776309	Anandini Barada	Balangir	141	102873044	Dolamani Bhue	Patnagarh	259	106197518	Madli Bhimaya	Dhanagarh
24	105113931	Ananta Bagha	Jeypore	142	105993708	Dora Sidhant Kumar	Bhawani Patna	260	102845875	Mahadeb Mali	Jeypore
25	104462055	Anjali Sandha	Redhakhol	143	106349486	Draupadi Behera	Nayagarh	261	103462786	Mahendra Meher	Bhubaneswar
26	105086708	Anjan Sahoo	Jagatsinghpur	144	105143990	Dumari Jagataryar	Jeypore	262	102372949	Maheshwar Pandu	Khaliguda
27	107806217	Anjan Kumar Mahakud	Keonjhar	145	107890434	Dunna Bhumiika	Dhanagarh	263	107792671	Malani Naik	Deogarh
28	104551950	Anjana Dalai	Jeypore	146	105115140	Durga Charan Singh	Sundar Garh	264	107623075	Mamata Sana	Jeypore
29	107581937	Anmaya Sahu	Balangir	147	104190469	Duryadhan Baidya	Jeypore	265	107629446	Mami Das	Deogarh
30	104266428	Ansuman Thanapati	Sambalpur	148	107515665	Elio Mandal	Bhawani Patna	266	106209873	Mana Bisoi	Jeypore
31	106126540	Anup Kumar Das	Berhampur	149	101020430	Em Durganibas Rao	Attabira	267	107032432	Manarajan Kanhar	Bhubaneswar
32	105872025	Anusuya Dehuri	Redhakhol	150	102896482	Gadadhara Behera	Jeypore	268	106083188	Mandeep Samantaray	Bhubaneswar
33	107237429	Apasari Sahu	Bhubaneswar	151	103312998	Gajanan Mesua	Balangir	269	107933538	Mangala Santa	Jeypore
34	104148839	Arjun Bisoi	Jeypore	152	105013377	Gajendra Kumar Nayak	Jeypore	270	107694695	Mangala Prasad Choudhury	Dhanagarh
35	104210052	Arjun Gond	Berhampur	153	107592954	Ganga Harijan	Jeypore	271	103647779	Manini Rani Badu	Jeypore
36	106771007	Arun Kumar Sahoo	Rourkela	154	105134516	Gangadhar Harijan	Jeypore	272	105064350	Manohar Sunani	Khariar Road
37	107741707	Aruna Kumar Behera	Langarasahi	155	106216059	Gangotri Priyadarshini	Bhubaneswar	273	107286061	Manoj Pradhan	Bhubaneswar
38	102918327	Ashim Kumar Biswas	Jeypore	156	106659937	Gaurang Naik	Patnagarh	274	108022563	Manoj Kumar Mohanty	Bhubaneswar
39	105471251	Ashis Kumar Baikar	Bargarh	157	106664602	Geeta Gouda	Rourkela	275	102868068	Manoj Kumar Negi	Sundar Garh
40	107708843	Ashisa Kumar Kodamasingh	Palla	158	104466017	Giridhar Santa	Berhampur	276	102731528	Manorajan Dalai	Nayagarh
41	107762171	Ashok Mahar	Redhakhol	159	102843525	Girish Chandra Barik	Nayagarh	277	102206832	Manu Khan	Bhubaneswar
42	104467413	Ashok Kumar Karma	Dunguripali	160	106244009	Gita Majhi	Jeypore	278	102742520	Md Sahil	Cuttack
43	104755741	Ashok Kumar Naik	Keonjhar	161	105531026	Gobinda Jani	Jeypore	279	107687300	Mid Soheb Alam	Rourkela
44	107914056	Asilam Khan	Bhubaneswar	162	106107617	Gomati Naik	Deogarh	280	105773038	Meena Patra	Jeypore
45	103376579	Asim Mandal	Jeypore	163	105764356	Gopabandhu Khara	Jeypore	281	101338092	Metta Murali Rao	Bhubaneswar
46	105323801	Babita Rautaray	Bljipur	164	102862777	Gopal Nayak	Jeypore	282	107249562	Mili Dalbehera	Deogarh
47	105496068	Babita Lima	Bhawani Patna	165	103596744	Gopal Pradhan	Berhampur	283	106201029	Mili Patra	Redhakhol
48	106263811	Babli Pattanaik	Khariar Road	166	105695904	Gopinath Budaek	Bhubaneswar	284	101845896	Mitranjali Mirdha	Redhakhol
49	105428642	Babula Bangari	Jeypore	167	106309454	Gottipalli Ramaraju	Paralakhe Mundi	285	102826845	Mohammed Sajid	Sambalpur
50	107890897	Babula Gouda	Khaliguda	168	105754152	Goutam Bhatra	Berhampur	286	103814376	Mohan Bissoyi	Jeypore
51	107401924	Baburam Swain	Jeypore	169	104275170	Gujrati Balaji	Bhubaneswar	287	105975028	Monalisa Pattanaik	Bljipur
52	104151733	Badal Malakar	Jeypore	170	102204339	Gupteswar Sahu	Khaliguda	288	107582853	Monoj Harijan	Berhampur
53	10289576	Baichandra Podh	Balangir	171	105618478	Gurubaru Bachha	Sambalpur	289	104945404	Montu Sarkar	Jeypore
54	103400194	Baladeb Rath	Bhubaneswar	172	107821766	Hareram Gahir	Dhanaramgarh	290	103857932	Mukesh Kumar Ojha	Bhubaneswar
55	105734491	Balaram Meher	Bhubaneswar	173	105294772	Hari Murmu	Bhubaneswar	291	106041251	Mulla Dehury	Sambalpur
56	107943379	Balaram Rout	Jagatsinghpur	174	104258988	Harichandran Satapathy	Bhubaneswar	292	105252606	Muna Majhi	Jeypore
57	106143554	Balaram Santa	Berhampur	175	103273297	Harihar Kurumi	Jeypore	293	106809781	Muni Khillo	Jeypore
58	105137178	Balaram Seth	Bargarh	176	104624408	Hariranga Patro	Dhanagarh	294	105179171	Musleha Begum	Dhenkana
59	105609536	Banamali Bhuyan	Jagannathpur	177	102826806	Hasmat Ali	Berhampur	295	107027482	Naba Kishor Jhankar	Deogarh
60	106286596	Bandana Behera	Keonjhar	178	106905583	Hemanta Kumar Swain	Cuttack	296	107176188	Nanda Kishore Barik	Joda
61	104990976	Bandana Mahananda	Rourkela	179	107708739	Himansu Sekhar Pattnayak	Jeypore	297	102104581	Narayan Pradhan	Redhakhol
62	107875847	Bandana Pradhan	Cuttack	180	105497037	Hrushikesh Tripathy	Bhadrak	298	107521957	Narayani Jagat	Khariar Road
63	102548790	Barada Prasanna Mohanty	Bhubaneswar	181	105689739	Indu Das	Deogarh	299	103832279	Nareesh Naik	Sundar Garh
64	106005271	Basanti Apat	Sundar Garh	182	106748660	Isma Majhi	Khariar Road	300	101423942	Nareesh Kumar Sahoo	Cuttack
65	104285063	Basanti Naik	Jeypore	183	105712993	Isar Sahu	Bargarh	301	107792083	Nayana Dalei	Bhubaneswar
66	107287993	Batakrishna Bhoi	Deogarh	184	103562103	Iswar Sahu	Bargarh	302	105745652	Nepala Chakrabarti	Jeypore
67	104848013	Batakrushna Pattnaik	Bhubaneswar	185	103750821	Itishree Sahoo	Jagatsinghpur	303	102901414	Netitini Sanjay Reddy	Jagannathpur
68	103554652	Belalasan Khila	Jeypore	186	103757725	Jagabandhu Pandey	Dunguripali	304	106646260	Netrananda Sethi	Bargarh
69	105008846	Bhabani Dhai	Bhubaneswar	187	104214517	Jagadish Mali	Jeypore	305	107318832	Nihar Ranjan Takri	Jeypore
70	105587041	Bhagban Biswal	Jagatsinghpur	188	102030492	Jaganath Behera	Dhanagarh	306	102843552	Nila Gemel	Jeypore
71	105598951	Bhagirathi Sahoo	Jagatsinghpur	189	103244289	Jagannath Lenka	Rourkela	307	106037320	Nilamani Sahu	Bargarh
72	101964255	Bhagirathi Behera	Jarasingha	190	106916753	Jagannath Majhi	Berhampur	308	105063627	Niranjan Maharana	Jeypore
73	107910727	Bhaskar Harijan	Jeypore	191	101630918	Jagannath Barik	Patnagarh	309	104770928	Nirmal Bhatra	Jeypore
74	103640750	Bhishmadev Dunge	Sundar Garh	192	106976854	Jagyanseni Bhukta	Deogarh	310	107173308	Nrupen Mandal	Jeypore
75	102935902	Bhogi Golder	Berhampur	193	105667609	Jagyanseni Naik	Deogarh	311	106415591	Pabitra Sabar	Khariar Road
76	101671077	Bibekananda Sahu	Jarasingha	194	105017722	Jasobanta Suhula	Deogarh	312	102626481	Pabitra Kumar Sahoo	Cuttack
77	105509388	Bibekananda Sana	Jeypore	195	107887582	Jaya Krushna Panigrahi	Bhawani Patna	313	106190868	Padam Samaratha	Jeypore
78	104218910	Bibhishan Kakalpadia	Jeypore	196	107848257	Jayanti Meher	Bargarh	314	102760578	Padman Majhi	Jeypore
79	105122762	Bibhu Prasad Behera	Bhubaneswar	197	103413250	Jayaprakash Adhikary	Berhampur	315	101851632	Paili Mohan Reddy	Dhanagarh
80	105737921	Bibhuti Meher	Bhubaneswar	198	104196366	Jayaram Tripathi	Dunguripali	316	101166628	Palkurti Maleswar Rao	Attabira
81	105761756	Bibhuti Bhushan Dhai	Bhubaneswar	199	104590632	Jharana Nag	Balangir	317	102856036	Pana Patra	Deogarh
82	103437108	Bibhuti Sethi	Deogarh	200	106955658	Jharana Penthei	Bhubaneswar	318	100947730	Panchanan Lohara	Jagannathpur
83	101062955	Bidishi Nanda	Attabira	201	102438751	Jharana Samal	Bhubaneswar	319	102652415	Parikshita Das	Cuttack
84	106746739	Bijay Kumar Das	Rourkela	202	104944711	Jharana Bhoi	Deogarh	320	104899814	Parwana Batul	Patnagarh
85	102299652	Bijaya Kumar Naik	Sundar Garh	203	102927510	Jhasketan Naik	Sambalpur	321	104218708	Pasinapilli Usha Rani	Jeypore
86	106660027	Biki Ray	Sambalpur	204	103131484	Jhumpa Doria	Jeypore	322	107300159	Patilapaban Satpathy	Bhadrak
87											

of the day quote

In my 42 years of political life, never such an incident took place. I had never seen 11 people dying in a stampede. I am pained. I expressed my sorrow the same day

SIDDARAMAIAH | CHIEF MINISTER, KARNATAKA

YSRCP has once again been unmasked, clearly proving itself to be nothing more than the B-team of BJP

YS SHARMILA | ANDHRA PRADESH CONGRESS COMMITTEE PRESIDENT

Our government has promoted investment through the 'Rising Rajasthan Summit', signing MoUs worth Rs 35 lakh crore. At the same time, we are ensuring availability of water through major projects like Ramjal Setu Link, Yamuna Water Agreement, Dewas Project, Indira Gandhi Canal, Gang Canal and Mahi Dam

BHAJANLAL SHARMA | CHIEF MINISTER, RAJASTHAN

SHORT TAKES

Drugs worth over ₹75 crore seized

Aizawl: In a major drug haul, huge quantities of Methamphetamine tablets and heroin worth over Rs 75 crore were seized and eight people arrested in Mizoram in a special joint operation launched by BSF, NCB and Mizoram Excise and Narcotics department, the paramilitary force said in a statement Friday. The special operation was planned and launched Thursday based on specific intelligence developed by BSF, it said. The joint team intercepted four suspected vehicles on the Aizawl-Champhai highway (NH-6), between Keifang and Seling villages, approximately 60 km from Aizawl. During the search, three plastic bags containing 50 packets filled with about 50 kg (5 lakh tablets) of methamphetamine (Yaba) were seized, the statement said.

Tiger found dead in MP's Satpura reserve

Narmadapuram (MP): A tiger was found dead in the Satpura reserve in Madhya Pradesh's Narmadapuram district Friday with one of its paws of a right leg missing, a forest department official said. The missing paw led to suspicion that the tiger was killed by poachers, but forest department officials did not confirm the same. This was the second feline to have been found dead in the Satpura Tiger Reserve (STR) in the last 10 days. STR deputy director Risibha Netam said the wild animal's carcass was spotted by a motorboat patrolling team in the backwaters of the Tawa river near Badh Chapda village in the reserve.

2 workers die after inhaling toxic gas

Anand (Guj): Two workers died and as many were hospitalised after they inhaled toxic gas while cleaning the tank of a food processing factory in Gujarat's Anand district Friday, police said. Two workers suffocated to death after entering a tank of an effluent treatment plant at Ekta Fresh Food Company in Sokhada village of Khambhat taluka, an official said. Two other workers were shifted to a hospital in a critical condition and were undergoing treatment, he said.

“Our chief minister will neither be scared, nor tired and defeated. I will continue to struggle alongside you till Delhi gets its rights. This is my unwavering resolve

REKHA GUPTA | CHIEF MINISTER, DELHI

FIJIAN PM SITIVENI RABUKA TO VISIT INDIA

Fijian Prime Minister Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka is scheduled to visit India from August 24-27 during which he will meet President Droupadi Murmu and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi, the Ministry of External Affairs said Friday. In an advisory, the MEA said the prime minister of the Republic of Fiji, Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka, and his spouse, Suluweti Rabuka, will visit India from August 24-27



PM to visit Japan, China from August 29 to September 1



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 22: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will embark on a four-day visit of Japan and China August 29, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced Friday. In the first leg of his trip, Modi will be in Japan on a two-day visit.

From Japan, he will travel to China, primarily to attend the annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

The announcement of the prime minister's visit to the two Asian countries came just days after Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's trip to India.

The MEA said Modi will be in Japan August 29 and 30 to participate in the 15th India-Japan annual summit.

This will be Modi's eighth visit to Japan as the prime minister.

The ministry said Modi and his Japanese counterpart, Shigeru Ishiba, will review the Special Strategic and Global Partnership between India and Japan.

It said the two prime ministers will deliberate on cooperation in the areas of defence and security, trade and economy, technology and innovation, and people-to-people exchanges, as well as discuss issues of regional and global importance.

“The visit will reaffirm the longstanding special bond of friendship between the two countries,” the MEA said in a statement.

In the second leg of his visit, Modi, at the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping, will travel to the neighbouring country from August 31 to September 1 to attend the SCO summit to be held in the Chinese city of Tianjin August 31 and September 1.

“On the sidelines of the summit, the prime minister is expected to hold bilateral meetings with several leaders,” the MEA said.

ISRO unveils model of Bharatiya Antariksh Station

India plans to launch the first module of the BAS, its own home-built space station, by 2028, marking its entry into the group of a handful of nations that operate orbital laboratories

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 22: ISRO Friday unveiled a model of the Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS) module during the two-day National Space Day celebrations that began here.

India plans to launch the first module of the BAS, its own home-built space station, by 2028, marking its entry into

the group of a handful of nations that operate orbital laboratories.

Presently, there are two orbital laboratories -- the International Space Station operated by five space agencies, and the Tiangong space station of China.

India plans to have five modules of the Bhartiya Antariksh Station in place by 2035 as part of its ambitious plans for the space sector.

The BAS-01 module is expected to weigh 10 tonnes and will be placed in a low earth orbit at 450 km above the earth.

Salient features of the BAS include, indigenously developed Environmental Control and Life Support System (ECLSS), Bharat Docking System, Bharat Berthing Mech-



anism, automated hatch system, platform for microgravity research and technology demonstration, viewports for scientific imaging and crew recreation.

The BAS will also have provision for refilling of propulsion and ECLSS fluids, radiation, thermal and Micro Meteoroid

Orbital Debris (MMOD) protection, space suits, airlocks to support extra vehicular activity and plug and play integrated avionics.

The BAS is expected to serve as a research platform for studying various aspects of space, life sciences, medicine, and interplanetary exploration.

STRAY DOGS ROW

Animal rights activists laud top court order



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 22: Animal rights activists and several politicians including Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Friday welcomed the Supreme Court's revised directions on stray dogs, even as various residents welfare associations (RWAs) in the city expressed concern over the proposed feeding points in every municipal ward, calling it “impractical and difficult to implement”.

Mayor Raja Iqbal Singh said that the MCD will implement the direction with “full strength” and pick up only those dogs that are aggressive or have attacked people, while other canines will remain “undisturbed” after vaccination and sterilisation.

The Supreme Court Friday modified its recent direction prohibiting the release of vaccinated stray dogs from pounds in Delhi-NCR, calling it “too harsh” and ordered the canines to be released post sterilisation and deworming.

The top court, however, said municipal authorities would continue to comply with the August 11 directions to pick up stray dogs from all localities

of Delhi, Ghaziabad, Noida, Faridabad and Gurugram and immediately create dog shelters or pounds.

Rahul Gandhi welcomed the revised direction and said it marks a progressive step towards balancing animal welfare and public safety.

In a post on X, the leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha said, “I welcome the Supreme Court's revised directions on stray dogs, as it marks a progressive step toward balancing animal welfare and public safety.”

“The approach is both compassionate and rooted in scientific reasoning,” he said.

Hailing the top court's order “scientific”, former Union minister Maneka Gandhi said, “We are very happy with it.”

“Until now, dogs were picked up, sterilised and thrown in another place. There was no benefit to sterilisation because when a dog is left in a strange area after a major operation, it is scared, in pain and does not know who will feed it. That is when it bites,” she told PTI Videos.

Soon after the pronouncement, animal lovers broke into celebrations at Jantar

Mantar and hugged each other and raised celebratory slogans. Some thanked God with “Har Har Mahadev”. Many described the ruling as a “victory” of compassion.

“Now we will not have to send our kids anywhere,” said one of the celebrants.

“This is a historic day. The court has upheld the right way of caring for community animals. Our ‘street kids’ will remain with us, and we will continue to take care of them,” the person said.

Another activist said the judgment brought “immense relief” to those who share a close bond with stray dogs.

Meanwhile, a group of animal welfare groups and activists demanded that they must be included as official “stakeholders” in all decisions related to stray animals.

Various RWAs in the city have expressed concern over the court's directive to set up designated feeding points for stray dogs in every locality, calling the move “impractical and difficult to implement”.

They maintained that such feeding points may create disturbances in the residential colonies.

USAID denies \$21mn for India voter turnout

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 22: The US Embassy has said that “US-AID/India did not receive or provide funding of \$21 million for voter turnout in India” from fiscal years 2014 to 2024, nor has it implemented any voter turnout-related activities in India, the Centre has told Rajya Sabha.

The government said this in a written response to a query from CPI(M) MP John Brittas Thursday, asking the status of the actions taken by it on the “reports suggesting the utilisation of United States Agency for International Development (US-AID) funds” to “increase voter turnout in Indian elections”.

Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh, in his response said, February 28, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) requested the US Embassy in New Delhi to “urgently furnish details” of expenditure incurred on all USAID-assisted or funded projects in India over the last ten years (other than those being implemented under the seven Partnership Agreements with the government of India).

The MEA also sought a list of NGOs or implementing partners through which such initiatives were executed. The US Embassy shared data



ta July 2 that “it said covered USAID funding in India from 2014 to 2024”, including details of implementing partners, objectives, and key accomplishments of each activity undertaken, he said.

In his response, the MoS further said, “The Embassy also maintains that ‘USAID/India did not receive or provide funding of \$21 million for voter turnout in India from fiscal years 2014 to 2024, nor has it implemented any voter turnout-related activities in India.’”

The US Embassy conveyed to the MEA July 29 that it plans to bring all USAID operations to a close “by 15 August 2025,” the Centre told Rajya Sabha.

The US Embassy in New Delhi August 11, in a letter to the Department of Economic Affairs, “conveyed that all seven Partnership Agreements signed with the government of India would stand closed with effect from 15 August 2025”, the minister said.



Volunteers decorate the Golden Temple with flowers ahead of the anniversary of the Sikh holy book Guru Granth Sahib's installation, also known as Guru Granth Sahib Parkash Utsav, in Amritsar, Friday

PTI PHOTO

India, Bangladesh to hold DG-level border talks in Dhaka

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 22: India and Bangladesh will hold their bi-annual border talks in Dhaka beginning August 25, officials said.

The two sides will discuss measures to curb cross-frontier crimes with the Border Security Force (BSF) expected to raise issues related to attacks on Indians and its personnel by miscreants from the neighbouring country.

This will be the first time that the Indian delegation will travel to Dhaka post the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government last year.

The two countries share a



4,096 km long international border. The BSF is designated

as the lead security and intelligence-gathering agency for

this front.

These talks are held between

the border guarding forces of the two countries -- BSF and its counterpart the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) -- twice a year. A BGB delegation visited India for the talks from February 17-20.

“The 56th director general level border co-ordination conference between the BSF and BGB will be organised by the BGB in Dhaka between August 25 and 28,” a BSF spokesman said.

The Indian delegation will be led by BSF Director General (DG) Daljit Singh Chawdhary, while the Bangladesh side will be headed by BGB DG Major General Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman Siddiqui.

“The conference is being or-

ganised to discuss border-related issues and for better co-ordination between the border guarding forces,” the spokesman said.

Discussions will be held on prevention against attack/assault on BSF personnel and Indian civilians by Bangladesh-based miscreants/nationals, how to prevent trans-border crimes, construction of single row fence, action against Indian Insurgent Groups (IIGs) in Bangladesh, issues related to border infrastructure, joint efforts for the effective implementation of the Coordinated Border Management Plan (CBMP), Confidence Building Measures (CBM) and other issues, he said.

international

of the day quote

Protection of workers from extreme heat is not just a health imperative but an economic necessity

KO BARRETT | DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL, WMO

China's actions in the South China Sea are a matter not only of concern but of condemnation,

GILBERT TEODORO | DEFENSE SECRETARY, PHILIPPINE

Indian companies are ready to work hand-in-hand with South African partners to strengthen local manufacturing and ensure affordable healthcare for all

HARISH KUMAR | DEPUTY CONSUL GENERAL IN JOHANNESBURG

SHORT TAKES

Thai clears ex-PM in royal insult case

Bangkok: A court in Thailand dismissed a royal insult case Friday against influential former premier Thaksin Shinawatra, clearing the first hurdle in a series of high-stakes court rulings involving the powerful Shinawatra political dynasty. The court said the case, brought by the royalist military stemming from a 2015 Thaksin interview with foreign media, lacked sufficient evidence to prove he had insulted the powerful monarchy, an offence punishable by up to 15 years in prison. "Evidence from the plaintiff showed the interview by the defendant did not defame, insult or threaten the king, therefore the defendant is not guilty," the criminal court in Bangkok said. The divisive 76-year-old tycoon remains a major force in Thai politics despite being retired and having previously spent 15 years in self-imposed exile before his return in 2023.

Largest SCO summit

Beijing: China Friday said the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit to be held in Tianjin later this month will be the largest in the bloc's history, with 20 world leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, attending it. The Tianjin meeting of the 10-member grouping from Aug 31-Sept 1 is the fifth summit being hosted by China. It will be the largest in SCO history, China's Assistant Foreign Minister Liu Bin told a media briefing here. Besides Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, the summit will be attended by PM Modi and a host of world leaders, Liu said. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, his Indonesian counterpart Prabowo Subianto, Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim and Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh are other prominent leaders to attend the summit, he said.

Imran's nephews held

Lahore: Two nephews of jailed former prime minister Imran Khan have been arrested by Pakistan's Punjab police for their alleged involvement in the May 9, 2023, riots. In a statement, police said that they have arrested Shahrez Khan and Shershah Khan -- sons of Aleema Khan -- for their involvement in the May 9 riots. Shahrez was arrested Thursday during a raid at his house in Lahore, while Shershah was nabbed on the way to his home Friday afternoon. The Lahore anti-terrorism court (ATC) handed over Shahrez to police for an eight-day physical remain in connection with a May 9 riots case, more than two years after his name surfaced in the investigation.



The gates of hell will soon open on the heads of Hamas' murderers and rapists in Gaza – until they agree to Israel's conditions for ending the war

ISRAEL KATZ | DEFENCE MINISTER, ISRAEL

FIRST EVER ECONOMIC CENSUS

There are over 6,00,000 mosques and 36,000 religious seminaries in Pakistan as compared to 23,000 factories, according to the country's first ever economic census report. The report comes at a time when the cash-strapped country continues to negotiate with the International Monetary Fund for the second review of the \$7 billion bailout package



MISUSE OF STATE FUNDS

Lanka arrests former prez Wickremesinghe



REUTERS

Colombo, August 22: Former Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe was arrested by the Criminal Investigation Department Friday in connection with allegations of misuse of state funds, local television channel Ada Derana reported. Wickremesinghe, 76, was taken into custody after arriving at the CID office in the capital Colombo to record a statement in an investigation into his visit to London to attend his wife's graduation ceremony, the report said. A Sri Lankan police spokesperson did not immediately confirm the arrest. Wickremesinghe's office did not respond to a request for comment from Reuters. He was due to appear in court later Friday. A lawyer who served as Sri Lanka's prime minister a record six times, Wickremesinghe was made president in 2022 during the Indian Ocean island nation's debilitating financial crisis. Wickremesinghe, who is the leader of the United National Party (UNP), took over after widespread protests caused by a economic meltdown forced his predecessor Gotabaya Rajapaksa to flee the country and later resign.

Pak ready for dialogue with India to discuss Kashmir, says FM Dar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, August 22: Pakistan was ready for a comprehensive dialogue with India to discuss Kashmir and all other pending issues, Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said Friday. "Talks, whenever held, will be not just Kashmir but on all issues," Dar said while talking to journalists outside the parliament in Islamabad, where he was asked about talks with India. India has made it clear that it will only have a dialogue with Pakistan on the return of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and the issue of terrorism. Dar, who is also the Deputy Prime Minister, emphasised that Pakistan had made it clear from the outset that discussions with India would not take place on any single-point agenda. He said Pakistan had not requested any mediation but was offered a meeting at a neutral venue. "We were told to sit down at a neutral location, and I said if that is the case, we are willing to meet," he claimed. Dar said he received a call from the US for a ceasefire with India. "I received a call from the US for a ceasefire," Dar said. "I had made it clear that Pakistan did not want a war."

No food, no hope: Gaza's descent into famine

Famine has officially struck Gaza, says global hunger monitor

REUTERS

United Nations, August 22: Gaza City and surrounding areas are officially suffering from famine, and it will likely spread, a global hunger monitor determined Friday, an assessment that will escalate pressure on Israel to allow more aid into the Palestinian enclave. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification system said 514,000 people - nearly a quarter of Palestinians in Gaza - are experiencing famine, with the number due to rise to 641,000 by the end of September. Some 280,000 of those people are in a northern region covering Gaza City - known as Gaza governorate - which the IPC said was in famine following nearly two years of war between Israel and Palestinian militants Hamas. It was the first time the IPC has recorded famine outside of Africa, and the global group predicted that famine conditions would spread to the central and southern areas of Deir al-Balah and Khan Younis by



People are starving. Children are dying. And those with the duty to act are failing ... We cannot allow this situation to continue with impunity

ANTONIO GUTERRES | SECRETARY-GENERAL, UN

the end of next month. It added that the situation further north could be even worse than in Gaza City, but said limited data prevented any precise classification. Israel dismissed the report as false and biased, saying the IPC had based its survey on partial data largely provided by Hamas, which did not take into account a recent influx of food. "There is no famine in Gaza," the Israeli foreign ministry said in a statement. For a region to be classified as in famine at least 20% of people must be suffering extreme food shortages, with one in three children acutely malnourished and

ILLEGAL U-TURN

PIO truck driver faces homicide allegations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, August 22: An Indian-origin truck driver is facing charges of vehicular homicide in the US after three people were killed when he allegedly took a wrong turn while driving a truck on a Florida highway, according to a media report. Harjinder Singh, 28, who fled to California after the incident, has been brought back to Florida following arrest, the New York Post reported Thursday. "He thought he could run. @GovRonDeSantis and I brought him back to face justice," Lt Governor Jay Collins said. Singh faces three counts of vehicular homicide for allegedly making an illegal U-turn across a busy Florida highway in his tractor-trailer August 12, the report added. A viral video shows Singh driving the massive truck through an "Official Use Only" cut-through on a highway and blocking nearly all lanes of traffic - resulting in a minivan crashing into it, leaving three occupants dead, the report said. Over a week after the incident, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced a pause to all issuances of commercial truck driver work visas. "The increasing number of foreign drivers operating large tractor-trailer trucks on US roads is endangering American lives and undercutting the livelihoods of American truckers," Rubio posted on social media. The report said that Singh entered the US illegally in 2018 and somehow managed to obtain commercial driver's licenses in both California and Washington.

Russian forces currently control a fifth of Ukraine, an area about the size of the American state of Ohio

REUTERS

Moscow, August 22: Vladimir Putin is demanding that Ukraine give up all of the eastern Donbas region, renounce ambitions to join NATO, remain neutral and keep Western troops out of the country, three sources familiar with top-level Kremlin thinking told Reuters. The Russian president met Donald Trump in Alaska Friday for the first Russia-US summit in more than four years and spent almost all of their three-hour closed meeting discussing what a compromise on Ukraine might look like, according to the sources who requested anonymity to discuss sensitive matters. Speaking afterwards beside Trump, Putin said the meeting would hopefully open up the road to peace in Ukraine - but neither leader gave specifics about what they discussed. In the most detailed Russian-based reporting to date on Putin's offer at the summit, Reuters was able to outline the contours of what the Kremlin would like to see in a possible peace deal to end a war that has killed and injured hundreds of thousands of people. In essence, the Russian sources said, Putin has compromised on territorial demands he laid out in June 2024, which required Kyiv to cede the entirety of the four provinces Moscow claims as part of Rus-



PRICE FOR PEACE

Putin demands Ukraine cede Donbas region, Russian sources say

Russia could freeze front lines in Zaporizhzhia and Kherson

Russia won't countenance Western peacekeeping troops in Ukraine

Source close to Kremlin: if Kyiv refuses deal, war will go on

sia: Donetsk and Luhansk in eastern Ukraine - which make up the Donbas - plus Kherson and Zaporizhzhia in the south. Kyiv rejected those terms as tantamount to surrender. In his new proposal, the Russian president has stuck to his demand that Ukraine completely withdraw from the parts of the Donbas it still controls, according to the three sources. In return, though, Moscow would halt the current front lines in Zaporizhzhia and Kherson, they added. Russia controls about 88% of the Donbas and 73% of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson, according to US estimates and open-source data. Moscow is also willing to hand over the small parts of the Kharkiv, Sumy, and Dnipropetrovsk regions of Ukraine it controls as part of a possible deal, the sources said. Putin is sticking, too, to his previous demands that Ukraine give up its NATO ambitions and for a legally binding pledge from the US-led military alliance that it will not expand further eastwards, as well as for limits on the Ukrainian army and an agreement that no Western troops will be deployed on the ground in Ukraine as part of a peacekeeping force, the sources said. Yet the two sides remain far apart, more than three years after Putin ordered thousands of Russian troops into Ukraine in a full-scale invasion that followed the annexation of the Crimean peninsula in 2014 and prolonged fighting in the country's east between Russian-backed separatists and Ukrainian troops. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has repeatedly dismissed the idea of withdrawing from internationally recognised Ukrainian land as part of a deal, and has said the industrial Donbas region serves as a fortress

Matcha madness leaves Japan's tea ceremony pros skeptical

The concern is that with labour shortages as aging farmers leave their fields, the matcha crunch may worsen in coming years

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tokyo, August 22: Clad in an elegant kimono of pale green, tea ceremony instructor Keiko Kaneko uses a tiny wooden spoon to place a speck of matcha into a porcelain bowl. She froths up the special powdered Japanese green tea with a bamboo whisk after pouring hot water with a ladle from a pot simmering over hot coal. Her solemn, dance-like movements celebrate a Zenlike transient moment, solitude broken up by the ritualistic sharing of a drink. No wonder Kaneko and others serious about "sado," or "the way of tea," are a bit taken aback by how matcha is suddenly popping up in all sorts of things, from lattes and ice cream to cakes and chocolate. No one knows for sure who started the global matcha

boom, which has been going on for several years. But it's clear that harvests, especially of fine-grade matcha, can't keep up with demand. A booming market Matcha is a type of tea that's grown in shade, steamed and then ground into a very fine powder. It's processed differently from regular green tea, with the best matcha ground using stone mills, and switching from one to the other takes time. No farmer wants to switch and then find that matcha fever has died. The Japanese agricultural ministry has been working to boost tea growth, offering help for farmers with new machines, special soil, financial aid and counselling to try to coax tea growers to switch to matcha from regular green "sencha" tea. "We don't want this to end up just a fad, but instead make



matcha a standard as a flavor and Japanese global brand," said Tomoyuki Kawai, who works at the tea section of the agricultural ministry. Production of "tencha," the kind of tea used for matcha, nearly tripled from 1,452 tons in 2008, to 4,176 tons in 2023, according to government data. Japan's tea exports have more

than doubled over the last decade, with the US now accounting for about a third. Much of that growth is of matcha, according to government data. Other countries, including China and some Southeast Asian countries, also are producing matcha, so Japan is racing to establish its branding as the origin of the tea.

An art form turned into a global fun drink

Tea ceremony practitioners aren't angered by the craze, just perplexed. They hope it will lead to people taking an interest in sado, whose followers have been steadily declining. But they aren't counting on it. The tea ceremony is "reminding us to cherish every encounter as unique and unrepeatable," said Kaneko, who is a licensed instructor. She pointed to the special small entrance to her tea house. Noble samurai had to stoop to enter, leaving their swords behind them. The message: when partaking of tea, everyone is equal. The purity and stillness of the ceremony are a world apart from the hectic and mundane, and from the craze for matcha that's brewing outside the tea house. The Matcha Crème Frap-

puccino is standard fare at the Starbucks coffee outlets everywhere. While matcha, a special ingredient traditionally used in the tea ceremony, isn't meant to be drunk in great quantities at once like regular tea or juices, it's suddenly being consumed like other fruit and flavours. Matcha drinks have become popular at cafes from Melbourne to Los Angeles. Various cookbooks offer matcha recipes, and foreign tourists to Japan are taking home tins and bags of matcha as souvenirs. It's a modern take on traditions perfected by the 16th century Buddhist monk Sen no Rikyu in Kyoto, who helped shape the traditions of tea ceremony and of "wabi-sabi," the rustic, imperfect but pure and nature-oriented aesthetic often seen as synonymous with high-class Japanese culture.

of the day

quote

It is encouraging to see that 72 per cent of employers are planning work-force expansion through net new job creation, rather than just replacement hiring



PAWAN GOYAL | CBO, NAUKRI

To encourage greater participation of women in mutual funds, markets regulator Sebi is planning to introduce additional incentives for investments by first-time female investors



TUHIN KANTA PANDEY | SEBI CHIEF

Rupee continued to weaken for a second day against US dollar mainly on account of the strength of the US dollar ahead of the speech of Fed Chairman Powell and renewed concerns over steep US tariffs on Indian exports



ANIL KUMAR BHANSALI | HEAD OF TREASURY, FINREX TREASURY ADVISORS LLP

SHORT TAKES

SIB launches product offering loans

New Delhi: Private sector lender South Indian Bank (SIB) Friday said it launched a new gold loan product, SIB Gold Xpress, designed to offer customers quick and convenient access to credit. With this scheme, borrowers can unlock up to 90 per cent of their gold's value, availing loans ranging from Rs 25,000 to Rs 25 lakh with a flexible tenure of up to three years, the bank said in a statement. Targeted at MSMEs, non-MSMEs, and small businesses, the product enables customers to fund business expansion, working capital needs, or personal ventures with ease, it said, adding that the loan comes with zero hidden costs, ensuring complete transparency for borrowers. The eligibility process for SIB Gold Xpress is simple, hassle-free, and the whole end-to-end process can be completed digitally, allowing even new-to-credit customers to avail loans through basic checks, it said. Customers can pledge their jewellery with complete safety assurance and benefit from South Indian Bank's PAN India network, it added.

PNB, CRPF to offer insurance

New Delhi: State-owned Punjab National Bank (PNB) Friday said it has signed an agreement with Central Reserve Police Force to offer enhanced insurance coverage and other benefits to all CRPF personnel as well as pensioners. PNB is offering a bouquet of services with enhanced insurance coverage and other benefits to all the serving personnel and pensioners of the CRPF under the bank's flagship scheme of 'PNB Rakshak Plus', the bank said in a statement. In addition, several benefits are being offered to the dependents and families of Rakshak Account Holder, it said. The agreement was signed by PNB Chief General Manager Binay Kumar Gupta and Zaki Ahmad, Inspector General of Police (Adm), Directorate General, CRPF, New Delhi

E-scooter Chetak supplies resumed

New Delhi: Bajaj Auto Friday said it has resumed supplies of its electric scooter, Chetak, across all dealerships after overcoming constraints caused by global rare earth magnet availability. In recent weeks, temporary supply constraints linked to international component availability had moderated deliveries. The sustained and growing demand for Chetak added further pressure on supply, Bajaj Auto said in a statement.



Under ₹ 76,000 crore India Semiconductor Mission, ₹ 65,000 crore was allocated for chip production, ₹10,000 crore for the modernisation of the Semiconductor Laboratory in Mohali and ₹ 1,000 crore for the design-linked incentive scheme

S KRISHNAN | ELECTRONICS AND IT SECRETARY

BAN HITS BUSINESS

ACCORDING TO THE INDIA GAMING REPORT 2025, INDIA HOLDS 20 PER CENT OF THE WORLD'S GAMING USER BASE AND 15.1 PER CENT OF GLOBAL GAMING APP DOWNLOADS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 22: Online gaming platforms WinZO and Nazara Technologies-backed Moonshine Technologies (PokerBaazi) Friday said that they have suspended their real-money online gaming operations in the wake of the Online Gaming Bill, 2025, passed in the Parliament Thursday.

The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025, enforces a blanket ban on all forms of real-money online games, while encouraging the growth of e-sports and free-to-play social games.

In a regulatory filing, Nazara Technologies said that its associate company Moonshine Technologies Pvt Ltd, which owns and operates PokerBaazi, has suspended its real-money offerings in line with the new legislation.

"Pursuant to the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025, passed by the Parliament on August 21, 2025 and pending enactment, we wish to inform that, as a matter of abundant caution and in due respect of the government's mandate, Moonshine Technologies Private Limited, an associate company in which Nazara Technologies Limited holds a 46.07 per cent stake, has ceased offering real money online gaming operations," it said.

WinZO, which holds a portfolio of over 100 real money games, said it is "responsibly



withdrawing impacted offerings" in full compliance with the law of the land, effective immediately.

Its real-money gaming portfolio included titles like Rummy, Solitaire, Dehla Pakad, Fantasy Cricket, and Poker.

Mobile Premier League (MPL) has also suspended all of its real-money gaming offerings in India.

"Effective immediately, we are suspending all gaming offerings involving money on the MPL platform in India.

"Our foremost priority is our users. While new deposits will no longer be accepted, customers will be able to withdraw their balances seamlessly. However, online money games will not be available on the MPL platform anymore," it said in a LinkedIn post on Thursday.

MPL has over 120 million registered users across Asia, Europe, and North America.

Similarly, Zubeer announced that it has discontinued all paid games, though its free titles—including Ludo Supreme, Ludo Turbo, Snakes & Ladders, and Trump Card Mania—will continue to remain available.

According to the India Gaming Report 2025, India holds 20 per cent of the world's gaming user base and 15.1 per cent of global gaming app downloads.

The domestic gaming sector, valued at \$3.7 billion in 2024, is projected to touch \$9.1 billion by 2029, growing at a CAGR of 19.6 per cent.

Over the past five years, the country has attracted nearly \$3 billion in foreign direct investment and is home to more than 1,800 gaming startups.

TOLL OPERATORS TO GET PAYOUTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 22: Highway toll plaza operators will get compensation from NHAI for three months for difference in user fee collections due to introduction of FASTag annual pass for private non-commercial vehicles beginning August 15.

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) said in a circular that in continuation of the implementation of the annual pass for cars/van/jeep with effect from August 15, it has been decided to adopt a uniform compensation mechanism for user fee collection agencies. NHAI collected Rs 72,931 crore in toll in 2024-25.

"This mechanism will be for existing contract agreements as well as for bids invited in next three months period. After three months i.e. when the annual pass usage at each toll plaza is available, the bidders will be intimated about these annual pass figures in bids document and will be asked to bid duly accounted for the annual pass and thereafter no compensation will be given," the state-owned agency said.

TAXBUDDY LAUNCHES INDIA'S FIRST AI-POWERED TAX FILING PLATFORM

TaxBuddy, India's most trusted tax filing platform, has announced the launch of the country's first AI-powered tax filing system, a move set to change the way millions of Indians file their income tax returns. With this new platform, taxpayers can now file returns in just three minutes while getting their doubts resolved instantly. Just with sign up, answer a few guided questions and the AI will auto-prepare the return



OpenAI to set up first India office in Delhi



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 22: OpenAI Friday said it will set up its first India office in New Delhi later this year, underlining the swift uptake of its AI tools in a market that is ChatGPT's second-largest after US and among its fastest-growing.

OpenAI said it has officially established an entity in India and has begun hiring a dedicated local team.

Opening an office in India reflects OpenAI's support for IndiaAI mission and commitment to partnering with the government to build AI for India, with India, it said in a statement.

The move will also enable OpenAI to better serve its users in India, including millions of students, educators, professionals, and developers who use its tools to learn, be more creative, and solve problems for themselves and others.

This expansion, it said, underscores India's global leadership in AI, its thriving ecosystem, and the growing demand for OpenAI's advanced tools

ADVANCE AUTO

Hyundai, Kia partner with S Korean battery makers

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Seoul, August 22: Hyundai Motor and Kia have partnered with South Korea's leading battery producers -- LG Energy Solution Ltd, Samsung SDI Co and SK On Co -- to advance electric vehicle (EV) safety technologies, the companies said Friday.

At Hyundai and Kia's Namyang research and development (R&D) centre in Hwaseong, south of Seoul, the companies unveiled the results of a yearlong collaboration with the battery makers on EV battery safety and signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to expand their cooperation going forward, reports Yonhap news agency.

The ceremony was attended by Hyundai-Kia R&D chief Yang Hee-won, LG Energy Solution chief executive officer (CEO) Kim Dong-myung, Samsung SDI CEO Choi Joo-seon and SK On CEO Lee Seok-hee, as well as officials from the transport and industry ministries.



The joint efforts began last August when Hyundai-Kia proposed setting up a task force on battery safety in the wake of a then public EV battery safety scare prompted by a massive fire incident.

Friday's MOU calls for the companies to continue joint research, share patent rights and develop new safety technologies, with the aim of setting industrywide safety benchmarks.

The companies have identified five priority projects covering safety-related patents, digital battery passports, design quality, manufacturing quality and firefighting technology.

"This collaboration was possible thanks to the determination of our leadership, the

dedication of our researchers and support from government ministries," said Yang. "We will continue to work closely with battery makers to deliver safer and more reliable EVs."

LG Energy Solution's Kim said, "With the government and industry working as one team, LG Energy Solution will keep pushing to secure Korea's future competitiveness."

Choi of Samsung SDI called the initiative "a breakthrough that redefines industry safety standards and technological direction," pledging further work on sustainable battery technologies.

"This collaboration will take battery safety quality to the next level," SK On's Lee added.

Lord Swraj Paul leaves behind legacy in entrepreneurship, philanthropy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 22: From the bylanes of Jalandhar to a regular name in the annual 'Sunday Times Rich List', Lord Swraj Paul, who died Thursday evening in London aged 94, was one of the most well known NRI entrepreneurs and philanthropists.

Born to Pyare Lal, who ran a small foundry used to make steel goods, including buckets and other farming equipment, Lord Paul was exposed to business early in his life much before he went on to establish UK-based Caparo Group, a diversified businesses entity with interests predominantly in design, manufacture, marketing and distribution of value-added steel and niche engineering products.

Born February 18, 1931, he completed high school educa-

tion at Jalandhar and Bachelors in Science from Punjab University in 1949. Then he went to the US to pursue his bachelors & masters degrees in mechanical engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

After completing his studies at MIT, he returned to India to join the family business, Apeejay Surrendra Group -- one of India's oldest business conglomerates.

But as fate would have it, he relocated to UK in 1966 in pursuit of treatment for his daughter Ambika who was suffering from leukemia. Unfortunately, she died aged four.

Later, he set up the Ambika Paul Foundation as a charitable trust that went on to donate millions to promote the wellbeing of children and young people all over the world through education and health initiatives.



The Ambika Paul Children's Zoo in London is one of the major beneficiaries of the foundation.

Lord Paul laid the foundation to set up Caparo in 1968 with headquarters in London and it went on to become one of the largest steel conversion and

distribution businesses in UK.

Today, Caparo, which has a turnover of over \$1 billion, is managed by his three children -- Ambar, Akash and Anjali Paul -- and operates internationally from over 40 sites, serving customers globally, primarily from operations

based in UK, North America, India, and the Middle East.

While he was blessed with success in business, his life had a fair share of tragedies. Besides the loss of daughter Ambika at a very young age, he lost his son Angad Paul, who was Caparo Group's CEO in 2015 and his wife Aruna in 2022.

The personal losses drove him to undertake more philanthropic endeavours in their memory.

After the death of his wife the Ambika Paul Foundation was renamed as Aruna and Ambika Paul Foundation to honour her memory and to recognise her support and contributions to the many causes which the foundation supported during her lifetime.

He founded the Indo-British Association in 1975 to promote better understanding between India and Britain and served as

its Chairman. He was knighted by the British Queen in 1978 and became Lord Paul of Marylebone and a member of the House of Lords. He was sworn as a Privy Councillor in October 2009.

House of Lords peer Lord Paul was conferred with the prestigious civilian award Padma Bhushan by the Government of India in 1983.

In the Indian business landscape, late Lord Paul is also remembered for his hostile bids to take over Escorts Group and the DCM Group in the early 80s, which required the intervention of then government after legal battles.

He was a regular in the annual 'Sunday Times Rich List', this year he was ranked 81st with an estimated wealth of GBP 2 billion, largely derived from the steel and engineering multinational Caparo Group.

ORPHANED BY FATE, CROWNED BY DETERMINATION

ODISHA'S RASMITA BAGS CANOEING GOLD

It was the culmination of years of hard work that fetched the 23-year-old top honours when she clocked 53.53 seconds in Srinagar's iconic Dal Lake at Khelo India Water Sports Festival 2025

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, August 22: Two road accidents had brought devastation in the life of Odisha's Rasmita Sahoo, but her gold medal in the women's 200-metre canoe singles at Khelo India Water Sports Festival 2025 was no accident.

It was the culmination of years of the hard work that fetched the 23-year-old top honours when she clocked 53.53 seconds, ahead of athletes from Kerala and Madhya Pradesh in Srinagar's iconic Dal Lake.

Rasmita, who hails from a fishing community of Choudwar, Cuttack, was just nine years old when her father, a fisherman, met with a motor accident in 2011, leaving him critically injured, and their five-member family without livelihood. Four years later, in 2015, her mother met with

a similar road accident, but, unlike Rasmita's father, she could not battle her injuries and passed away. This left Rasmita shattered, and the family desolate.

It was not until a friend, who used to swim with Rasmita in the Mahanadi River, suggested that enrolling in the Sports Authority of India's National Centre of Excellence at Jagatpur, Odisha, and training in canoeing, kayaking, and rowing would provide her with a stipend that she took water sports seriously. "We had financial constraints and did not think twice before making the decision," Rasmita said. "I underwent a trial in canoeing and got selected."

Rasmita has never looked back ever since.

Having won a gold medal at a national event, Rasmita became eligible for recruitment in Odisha Police and has now been an officer since 2024, and takes care of a four-member family.



I WANT TO REPRESENT INDIA IN AN INTERNATIONAL EVENT AND WOULD DO MY BEST TO FULFILL THIS DREAM
RASMITA SAHOO

Recalling her struggles, Rasmita said, "We lived in a shack and my father was not able to earn much as a fisherman, but my career in water sports changed that. Now we live comfortably, and I am building a house for my family."

She credits Laishram Johanson Singh, the Odisha water sports team coach, for her success. "When I started participating in national-level events, I

didn't have money to travel and diet. My coach used to pay money to me so that I could travel, have good food, and excel at these events," Rasmita said.

She is now preparing for the 2026 Asian Games set to be held in Japan from September 19, 2026, to October 4, 2026. "I want to represent India in an international event and would do my best to fulfill this dream," Rasmita said. "Recently, we practiced in a water body inhabited by crocodiles. I also practiced in the water body, which had a high water flow due to the outlet of the Hirakud Dam."

Future of ISL

AIFF, FSDL to hold negotiations after SC go-ahead amid crisis



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 22: The All India Football Federation (AIFF) on Friday said that it will "endeavour to arrive at mutually agreeable measures" with the Indian Super League (ISL) organisers to enable timely commencement of the event, having got the go-ahead from the Supreme Court to have discussions on the matter.

A SC bench of two judges allowed the AIFF and ISL organisers FSDL to start discussions on the Master Rights Agreement (MRA) and try to find a solution so that the upcoming ISL season goes ahead. The next hearing is scheduled for August 28.

"Pursuant to the proceedings in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India this afternoon, the AIFF will enter into good faith negotiations with Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL) in respect of the Master Rights Agreement that is set to expire on December 8, 2025," AIFF President Kalyan Chaubey said.

"The parties will endeavour to arrive at mutually agreeable measures to enable timely commencement of the 2025-26 football calendar so that the same may be presented for the consideration of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India at the next hearing, i.e., August 28, 2025," he added.

Odisha relay team sets new meet record



Chennai: On the third day of the ongoing 64th National Inter-State Senior Athletics Championships, Odisha Men Relay team comprising Sarun Payasing, Animesh Kujur, Lalu Prasad Bhoi and Amiya Mallick secured gold medal in 4x100m Relay with new meet record of 39.52 seconds. The old record was 39.88 seconds in the name of Tamil Nadu team in the year 2022.

Young Tigresses continue winning ways

India beat Bangladesh 2-0 for second straight win in SAFF U17 Women's Championship

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thimphu, August 22: A dominant India scored once in each half to blank Bangladesh 2-0 and record their second straight win in the SAFF U-17 Women's Championships here Friday. Pearl Fernandes (14th) and Bonifilia Shullai (76th) were the scorers for India, consolidating their top position in the group with six points from two victories.

Both sides came into the contest with a rich history of rivalry in the competition -- four finals contested, two titles apiece. Yet, the match never truly lived up to the expectations.

India's clinical performance ensured that Bangladesh were always playing catch-up.

From the outset, the Young Tigresses looked focused and alert. Their defence was rock-solid, denying Bangladesh even the faintest sniff of goal. The central defensive pairing stayed compact, while full-backs tracked runs diligently. Whenever the line was breached, goalkeeper Munni was in the perfect position to effect saves.

With such defensive assurance, the midfielders took charge, spraying passes wide



and keeping Bangladesh constantly on the turn. India's early pressure paid off swiftly.

In the 14th minute, centre-back Divyani Linda made an inspired run from the deep after picking up a loose ball and bulldozed her way through the midfield.

As defenders converged on her, she smartly laid it off to Pearl Fernandes, who had been left unmarked at the edge of the box. Given the time and space, Fernandes unleashed a powerful left-footed effort. Though Bangladesh keeper Yearzan Begum got her gloves to it, she

couldn't keep it out.

India nearly doubled the lead in the 25th minute when Pritika Barman broke down the right and whipped in a teasing low cross. But Fernandes' heavy first touch let the opportunity slip.

Bangladesh tried to find a response mostly through set-pieces. Sauravi Akanda Prity's free-kick landed straight into Munni's hands, while a Mamoni Chakma header from a corner went wide.

Their brightest moment came in the 37th minute when Fatema Akter found herself in

Asian Shooting Championship

Ela shoots down air rifle gold

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shymkent (Kazakhstan), August 22: Indian shooter Elavenil Valarivan clinched the gold medal in the women's 10m air rifle competition of the 16th Asian Championships here Friday with a characteristically composed performance in the final.

The 26-year-old from Tamil Nadu, who has won multiple gold medals in World Cups, shot a score of 253.6 to finish on top in the final and claim her second gold in the continental showpiece, the first coming way back in 2019 when she was honing her skills under the tutelage of Olympic medallist shooter Gagan Narang at his Gun for Glory Academy.

The silver went to China's Xinlu Peng with a score of 253, while Korea's Eunji Kwon (231.2) took home the bronze.

In the skeet mixed team, Abhay Singh Sekhon (65) and Ganemat Sekhon (73) shot 138 in qualification to make the second bronze medal match against Kuwait's Abdullah Al-rashidi, a 62-year-old legend of the sport and a double Olympic bronze medallist, partnering Afrah Almohammad.

The Indians prevailed 39-37 in the 48-shot team contest, going into the final station just a point ahead. However, Afrah missed a couple while the other three missed just one of the last four, to give India another senior medal.

Coming back to the women's rifle final, this was Valarivan's first individual podium finish in the ongoing event having won a silver and bronze in the team events previously.

Another Indian in the fray, Mehuli Ghosh, signed off in fourth position after scoring 208.9 in the eight-shooter final.

Valarivan had qualified



eighth for the final with a score of 630.7. Ghosh had originally finished 10th in the event with a score of 630.3 but made the final as two other higher-placed Indians -- Arya Borse (633.2) and Sonam Maskar (630.5) -- stepped aside since they were competing only for ranking points.

Meanwhile, Valarivan and Mehuli combined with Ananya Naidu (630.0) to win the team bronze in the women's 10m air rifle event with a total score of 1891. China won gold while Korea took silver. Valarivan's medal was only the second senior individual gold for India in the continental showpiece, where the country is topping the charts thanks to a strong showing by its junior shooters.

CONSISTENT VALARIVAN

One of India's most consistent woman rifle shooters for some years now, Valarivan has time and again proven her mettle against the best in the world to be it in the World Cup, the season-ending World Cup Finals, or the Asian Championship. Currently ranked 11th, she is

now set to storm into the top-10 which is not an uncharted territory for the Indian ace, having once achieved the world number one ranking in her category.

Known for her unwavering focus and mental fortitude under pressure, Valarivan is now aiming for glory at next year's Asian Games but before that, she will want to do well at the ISSF World Championships, where she has a team bronze but no individual honours.

JUNIORS CONTINUE TO DOMINATE

Harmehar Singh Lally combined with Yashasvi Rathore to win the gold medal in the junior skeet mixed team competition, defeating Kazakhstan's Maxim Pochivalov and Lidiya

Basharova 39-36 in the contest for the top prize.

The trio of Shambhavi Shrivastava, Hrudyasree Shrivastava and Isha Anil won the gold medal in the team gold in the women's junior 10m air rifle competition with a combined total of 1896.2, which is a junior world and Asian record.

Wrestler Kajal wins India's second gold at U20 World Championships

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Samokov (Bulgaria), August 22: Young wrestler Kajal won the second gold at the U20 World Championships while Shruti and Saarikka grabbed bronze medals, helping India secure runner-up trophy in the women's event, here Friday.

Kajal, the 2024 Cadet world champion and reigning U20 Asian champion, battle past China's Yuqi Liu 8-6 in a stiff 72kg final. Also cashing on the medal opportunities were Shruti (50kg) and Saarikka (53kg).

Shruti was in complete control in the bronze play-off against Germany's Josephine Wrensch, winning 6-0, and Saarikka too was impressive, winning by technical superiority (11-0) against Poland's Ilona Valchuk.

India's first gold medal in women's event had come through Tapasya while Reena (55kg), Srishti (68kg), and Priya (76kg) had won silver medals.

The women's team won the runner-up trophy behind powerhouse Japan after securing a total of seven medals.

Prince (82kg), though, could not utilise the opportunity. He lost by technical superiority to Japan's Taizo Yoshida.

Anuj (67kg) and Naman (97kg), though, bowed out early in the day after losing their



qualification rounds.

Anuj lost his bout by technical superiority (0-9) to China's Zhaoan Liu while Naman was ousted by Croatia's Andrej Rodin. Liu later lost his quarterfinal by fall to shut the repechage door on the Indian.

Naman lost his pre-quarterfinal 1-2 to Rodin to make an exit as the Croat failed to advance to the title clash.

Also making an exit from the competition was Vinit who lost by technical superiority to Egypt's Mohamed Shabaan Ibrahim in the 72kg competition.

Anil Mor (55kg) fought a brilliant pre-quarterfinal bout against Azerbaijan's Turan Dashdamirov but lost 9-9 on criteria. He had won 8-0 against Bulgaria's Yordan Topalov.

NEUFC seek dominance, Diamond Harbour FC chase history

THE WINNERS OF THE 134TH EDITION OF THE DURAND CUP WILL WALK AWAY WITH A PRIZE MONEY OF ₹1.21 CRORE, THE HIGHEST CHAMPION'S PURSE IN THE 137-YEAR HISTORY OF ASIA'S OLDEST FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, August 22: A dominant NorthEast United FC are standing in the way as giant-killers Diamond Harbour FC look to script history by becoming the first debutant team to win the Durand Cup title here Saturday.

This edition's summit showdown is more than just a title decider, it carries the weight of history on both sides.

For NorthEast United, victory would not only bring them their second successive Durand Cup crown but also etch their name alongside giants of Indian football, as no team has managed to retain the title in the last 34 years. The last to do so was East Bengal, who completed a hat-trick of wins in 1989,

There are no favourites in the final. This is a very psychological game. I think the team who is strong mentally will win the game

JUAN PEDRO BENALI | HEAD COACH, NORTHEAST UNITED

1990 and 1991.

For Diamond Harbour, the stakes are equally high. Having already enjoyed a dream run by reaching the final in their very first appearance, the Kibu Vicuna-coached side now stands on the cusp of creating history. Should they overcome the Highlanders, they would become the first debutant team in the modern era to lift Asia's oldest football trophy.

The clash at the Vivekanan-

We are playing with the champions who have a very good team. We are prepared but starting with humility. Pressure is a privilege. We don't have additional pressure

KIBU VICUNA | COACH, DIAMOND HARBOUR FC

da Yuba Bharati Krirangan pits the reigning champions' pedigree and consistency against the newcomers' fearless run.

CLASH OF STYLES

The showdown promises a fascinating clash of styles. NorthEast United rely on structured build-up, midfield control through Andy Rodriguez and Chema Núñez, and the ruthless finishing of



Ajaraie.

In contrast, Diamond Harbour thrive on unpredictability, blending Majcen's hold-up play with Jobby's direct runs

and the midfield work rate of Samuel and Paul.

Defensively, the Highlanders look the more settled, having conceded just four goals en